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## Introduction

**1.1** The purpose of this document is to consider the potential pupil impact on pupil numbers as a result of housing growth within County Durham and the resulting additional school places required as a result of future development.

**1.2** The report is not intended to address wider education matters relating to school organisation which is a matter for the School Places and Admissions Team in Children and Young People's Services.

## Background

**2.1** The [Sustainable Communities Strategy](#) and [Regeneration Statement](#) sets out where the County aims to be in 2033, which includes having a thriving economy and bridging the gap between its economic performance and that of other parts of the North East and the rest of England. The County will be a top location for business, capitalising on its strategic location in relation to road, rail and air transportation and a distinctive multi-centred settlement pattern will comprise sustainable and regenerated communities.

**2.2** To meet the vision for sustainable communities it is essential that residents can live close to employment opportunities and have access to local facilities. Where possible, new residential development should help support schools, including those where pupil numbers have fallen, plan for use of surplus capacity and where necessary contribute towards additional provision. Education provision is critical to ensuring this vision is achieved. Where there is insufficient capacity to meet the demands from a new housing proposal, it is critical that the developers engage with the local education authority through the Development Management process to ensure that additional provision can be secured.

## Education Provision - The National Picture (England)<sup>(a)</sup>

**3.1** The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has produced an overview of key findings from its analysis of pupil numbers using the 2016 School Census information. This represents the national picture and 'broadly' reflects the situation in County Durham.

### 3.2 Key Points:

- Overall pupil numbers (aged up to and including 15) in state-funded schools began to increase in 2011 and are projected to continue rising, although the numbers in primary and secondary schools will obviously peak at different stages;
- There was a 2.4% increase in the population in state-funded primary schools between 2015 and 2016. The annual rate of increase is then expected to fall slightly to 2.1% for 2017, due to reducing birth rates, it is then projected to continue falling to 0.9% for 2020 and turn to negative at -0.2% for 2023;
- The overall population in state-funded primary schools was 4,479,000 in 2016 and is projected to be 4,651,000 in 2025 (an increase of 3.7% on the 2016 pupil roll); and
- In 2016 the overall number of pupils in secondary schools increased for the first time since 2009 reaching 2,758,000. This is because increased births from 2002 onwards means there are now large numbers entering secondary school at age 11 than are leaving at age 16. Tolls will continue to rise to reach a peak of 3,325,000 which is 567,000 higher than it was in 2015 and a 20.5% increase over the whole 2016-2025 projection period.

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a 2016

## Education Provision - County Durham Picture

**4.1** Durham County Council has a statutory responsibility as the Local Authority to ensure there are sufficient school places for pupils within the County. Pupil place planning is a critical aspect of the Local Authority's duty to assess the local need for school places to ensure that every child can be provided with a place in a state funded school in County Durham. A pupil place planning document is produced annually which gives an overview of current and future pupil numbers which supports the future pattern and provision of school places across the County.

### Forecasting Primary and Secondary Pupil Numbers

**4.2** When Children and Young Peoples Services produce and update the Pupil Place Planning document all pupil projections are based on relevant data provided from a range of sources, which includes:

- Health Authorities (live births);
- Termly School Census (January, October, May each year);
- Primary School patterns of transition to secondary school;
- Neighbouring Authorities (transfer of information regarding pupil movement across borders and school re-organisation proposals);
- Housing data on new build developments and demolition programmes that have received planning permission;
- Early Years and Sure Start (nursery/childcare figures); and
- Staying on rate at Post-16.

**4.3** Pupil rolls in primary schools are projected by using data provided by the Health Authority on the number of children born in County Durham. The data has postcodes and birth dates for all of the children which are then used to estimate the intake for the reception year of primary schools in forthcoming years.

**4.4** Forecasting secondary school pupils is carried out at the same time as forecasting primary numbers. Primary numbers feed through to the secondary phase, so our current projections have the advantage that seven year groups are already in the school system.

**4.5** The basic technique for forecasting secondary pupil numbers is to project forward the numbers of children transferring to secondary schools from specific primary schools each year. This exercise is carried out by Performance and Data Team within Children and Young People's Services. We then adjust these forward projections to include other important factors.

**4.6** These key factors are:

- **Expected House Building** - The School Places and Admissions Team receive information from colleagues in Regeneration and Economic Development (Development Management) on proposed housing developments which are in the process of seeking planning approval;
- **Migration Trends** - Migration trends means taking account of the additional numbers of children expected to move in or out of a particular area or neighbouring authority and the arrival of new migrants from abroad. Currently, less than 2% of our primary school pupils have moved in from other authorities and less than 2% of our resident population go out of the Authority for their education. We do not monitor nationalities of children, but English is the first language of nearly 98% of primary children. In respect of secondary schools, less than 1.5% of pupils have moved in from other authorities, but more than 5.5% go out of the Authority for their education. English is the first language for more than 98% of secondary children;
- **Changes in School Organisation** - Recent or planned changes in number, size, age range, and location of schools has an impact on pupil place planning. Pupil planning takes account of

proposed changes to the current pattern and provision at primary age, 11-16, Post-16 and provision in Special Schools; and

- **Schools' Popularity** - The School Places and Admissions Team in Children and Young People's Services monitors parental preference and admissions into schools. Any change in patterns of admissions to both primary and secondary schools is taken into account.

### Surplus Places

**4.7** While it is not cost effective to maintain large numbers of surplus places, local authorities cannot and should not try to eliminate all surplus capacity. A certain level of surplus places is necessary because:

- It allows greater opportunity to respond to parental choice;
- There may be unpredicted changes to demographic patterns, with a sudden influx of children to particular areas; and
- There may be unexpected changes to house building patterns.

**4.8** There is no single 'ideal' level of overall surplus capacity, since this varies from authority to authority. It is reasonable to aim for between 5% and 10% overall surplus across the authority. Patterns show that a reasonable figure for urban areas is around 5% whereas in more rural areas it is around 10%. As Durham has a number of 'rural' areas the aim is to work to a target of no more than 10% surplus places overall. It is recognised that in some rural areas in County Durham it may be difficult to achieve this target.

**4.9** To enable effective planning and to respond to factors which cannot be predicted such as changes in parental preference, the Council, where practicable, will aim for no less than 5% surplus places across local school place planning areas. This figure was suggested by the Department for Education and the National Audit Office as being the bare minimum needed for local authorities to meet the statutory duty with operational flexibility while enabling parents to have some choice of schools.

### Rising Pupil Numbers

**4.10** As at 1 April 2017 in the primary sector there are 193 Primary Schools (12 of which are Academies), 11 Infant Schools (one of which is an Academy) and 11 Junior Schools (1 of which is an Academy). In the secondary sector there are 30 Secondary Schools (14 of which are Academies), 1 Sixth Form Centre and 2 14-19 Studio Schools.

**4.11** Children and Adult Services continuously review data to determine those pupil place planning areas and schools where there will be pressure on school places in the future and allocate resources to provide additional school places. These places can be provided by either remodelling current accommodation, extending the current building or providing demountable buildings. The aim is to provide the extra places required as soon as possible subject to funding being available.

### Projected Pupil Numbers (Primary)

**4.12** The total number of primary school places available across all schools in the County is currently 45,197.

### Projected Pupil Numbers (11-16)

**4.13** The total number of secondary school places available across all schools in the County for pupils aged 11-16 is currently 36,424.

## School Pupil Place Provision Context Statement

**5.1** Pupil Place Planning is a critical aspect of the Local Authority's statutory duty to assess the local need for school places to ensure that every child can be provided with a place in a state-funded school in County Durham. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to assess the local need for school places to ensure that every child can be provided with a suitable place in a state-funded school in its area within high quality, stimulating and successful learning environments. The Local Authority needs to identify what school places are needed at present and in the future and how they will be provided. The challenge for the Local Authority in attempting to secure "value for money" and good quality education for all, is to provide the right number of places in the right locations.

**5.2** Local Authorities need to show that they have robust procedures and systems for forecasting pupil numbers and identifying changes in local circumstances. These systems help to ensure there will be the right number of schools in the right places for the number of pupils expected in the future.

**5.3** Schools submit data on pupil rolls to the Local Authority in October, January and May each year through the Termly School Census. A review of the projected rolls (for approximately 10 years hence) is carried out annually. Schools are encouraged to play an active role in the pupil place planning process and to identify at an early stage any concerns with projections that may impact on future school planning.

**5.4** There is a diverse pattern of population distribution and school provision across County Durham so that there are both areas of place shortages and surplus places that currently exist both in specific locations and individual schools that see considerable levels of over and under subscription. The result is that specific locations and schools have either a deficient or a surplus of school places. It is important that any new house building should take account of available school surplus places, and that, new builds ought to strengthen community demand for school places. In addition, housing development needs to generate a pupil place demand which sits inside any council strategic vision for the primary school estate and its centrality to local community life.

### Pre-application Discussions

**6.1** The Council appreciates that developers will require certainty and expect to know the extent of any financial contributions necessary to mitigate the effects of their development prior to submitting a planning application in order to ensure the viability of their scheme. The methodology for contributions towards additional education provision is set out in this document and enables the level of contribution (if any) that is required on a clear and consistent basis. All advice provided by Council staff will be on a 'without prejudice' basis, and can only be accurate at the point in time it is given.

**6.2** It should be noted that circumstances can change between contributions being calculated and formal assessment of a planning applications. Scenarios which could have an impact include:

- Other planning applications;
- Changes to scheme (e.g. number of houses);
- Annual updating of pupil forecasts;
- EFA funding reviews; and
- Changes to school management and structures.

**6.3** Where a development is required to provide mitigation and it is uncertain if existing schools within a pupil place planning area can accommodate the additional places, a first stage feasibility study will be requested. The feasibility study can be undertaken by the County Council, however, the detailed specifications can also be provided to developers if they wish to procure their own study. All feasibility work will be at the cost of developers.

### Planning Applications

**6.4** When considering applications for housing, it is important for the council to also look at the long term education planning requirements. There are going to be significant changes to the way that schools are funded in the future, therefore, in planning our education provision, schools need to be financially viable. Nationally LAs are being encouraged to move towards two form entry primary schools (60 pupils in each year gap) to make them financially viable in the long term. It may therefore be the case that a more strategic approach for some areas is not simply to add more classrooms to existing primary schools if the council is to have significantly larger primary schools.

**6.5** The need or otherwise for developer contributions towards education provision will be identified at either the outline or full planning application stage, or where a developer subsequently seeks to vary the number or type of units.

**6.6** When a development site comes forward the County Council will identify which schools or school place area(s) are considered to be impacted on by the development. Where schools are in close proximity to the proposed development but are in a different pupil place planning area they may still be considered as related schools if they meet the criteria on lack of surplus capacity and can demonstrate a likely demand from families moving to the development.

### Assessing the Sufficiency of Places

**6.7** Contributions towards additional places will be sought where forecasts suggest that the appropriate education establishments or pupil place planning area in relation to the development cannot reasonably accommodate the expected increase in demand for places. Contributions will be requested in those cases where a development will result in a specific school or pupil place planning area having less than 5% surplus places.

**6.8** The Pupil Place Planning document referred to in section 4 sets out the current and projected school rolls. This data is updated on an annual basis. The need for additional places may be immediate or gradual and it is necessary to take into account the future demand for places as well as the current positions because:

- Time lag between the planning application and completion of the development;
- Additional demand for places generally comes a few years after a development is first occupied; and
- The development will be a permanent feature of the local community and it should not just cater for the immediate impact.

**6.9** When assessing the nearest school(s) to a development(s) to assess and calculate any developer contributions, the Council will apply a distance of 2 miles from the development measured by the shortest available safe walking route. In some cases the Council would not wish the nearest school to be the one that is extended. The Council's School Places and Admissions Team can provide advice and guidance in relation to school rolls and forecasted pupil numbers. In addition they will also be able to provide advice in relation to relevant national and local policy and regulations in relation to education matters and Council policies and procedures for admissions and home to school transport.

## Calculating Developer Contributions

### Pupil Yield Methodology

**7.1** New residential developments generate a demand for education places in all age groups over and above natural population changes. In terms of housing developments, some properties will clearly not generate a significant need for additional places such as student accommodation and care homes. Accurately predicting the number of pupils likely to be produced from new housing developments is not straightforward as it depends upon various factors including the location and type of housing.

**7.2** Research in line with guidance from the Education Funding Agency<sup>(b)</sup> has been undertaken on a number of existing housing developments<sup>(c)</sup> in County Durham to determine the number of pupils produced. Each residence in the development was allocated a postcode and this is cross checked with information provided by schools via the pupil census. The pupil census lists all pupils attending schools in County Durham together with their address including the postcode.

**7.3** The detailed research undertaken on a number of housing developments over the last 20 years has taken into account market trends and changes and indicates that the expected pupil yield from specific local 'family' housing developments as follows;

- 0.3 primary aged pupils per house<sup>(d)</sup> (i.e. 'broadly' 3 houses typically generate one primary aged pupil)
- 0.12 secondary aged pupils per house<sup>(e)</sup> (i.e. just under 10 houses typically generate one secondary aged pupil)

**7.4** The pupil yields reflect demand for places generated, rather than actual children moving to the development. It also recognises that some children will not need to change school and some may attend private, selective or faith schools.

### Cost of Additional Places

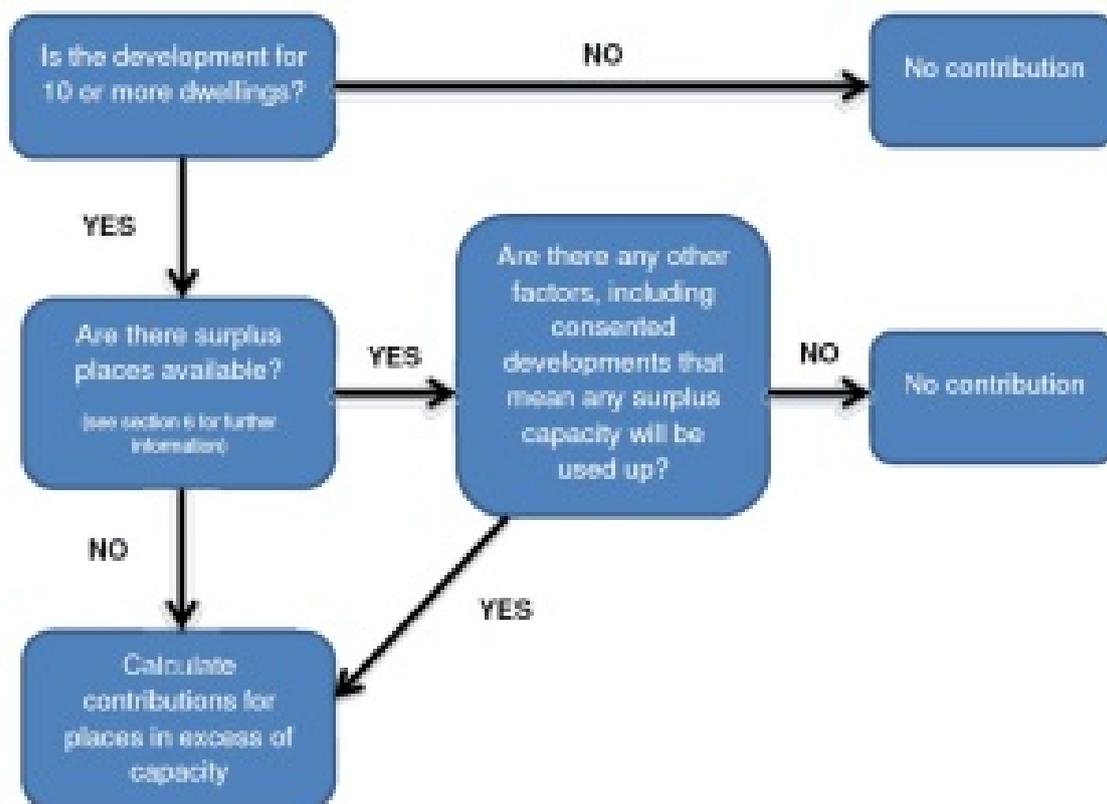
**7.5** There is no requirement to calculate demand on school places from developments of less than 10 dwellings. For schemes of 10 or more dwellings, officers will advise whether the development will be able to be accommodated within existing capacity or if a contribution from the developers will be required, for additional provision across an area in line with the council's long term vision for delivery of education.

b School Capacity (SCAP) Survey 2014 - Guide to forecasting pupil numbers in school place planning, June 2014, Education Funding Agency

c Relley Garth, Merryoaks, Meadowfield, Rosemount, Grayson Road, Winterton, Templetown, Bracks Farm, Cobblers Hall, Seaham, St Leonard's, Newcastle Road

d as at April 2015

e as at April 2015



**7.6** Sites with planning permission should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that schemes will not be implemented within five years, for example they will not be viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans.<sup>(f)</sup>

**7.7** The contribution for each excess space will be based on information supplied by the National School Delivery Cost Benchmarking exercise and BCIS all-in Tender Price Index (2017 quarter 2). The costs per additional pupil place from 2017 is as follows;

- Primary place £14,516
- Secondary place £16,344

**7.8** The Council will review the above costs on an annual basis using the BCIS all-in Tender Price Index and any revised cost per pupil place will be advertised in advance of adoption from the 1<sup>st</sup> April every year. The Council will seek to undertake a County Durham specific benchmarking exercise every 4 years which will be based on actual projects delivered within the County and this will inform the revised cost per place. Following this benchmarking exercise the Council will continue to use the BCIS all-in Tender Price Index until the next benchmarking exercise.

**7.9** To illustrate how the required developer contribution will be calculated, the example below shows the calculation for a 100 dwelling development in area where there is available surplus school capacity of 10 primary places and 5 secondary places (having regard to maintain 5% surplus places across pupil place planning area).

<sup>f</sup> NPPF (Para 47)

Number of Dwelling x Pupil Yield (less available surplus places) x Cost of Places = Developer Contribution

### Primary Example

*(if contributions are needed and includes surplus places)*

100 Dwellings x 0.3 = 30 place, less 10 surplus places = 20 places required

20 x £14,516 = **£290,320** (Developer Contribution)

### Secondary Example

*(if contributions are needed and includes surplus places)*

100 Dwellings x 0.12 = 12 place, less 5 surplus places = 7 places required

7 x £16,344 = **£114,408** (Developer Contribution)

## Large Scale Developments

**7.10** Where developments, including the cumulative impact of multiple or phased proposals are in excess of 300 dwellings, including triggering the need for new build schools, discussion and negotiations will need to take place to agree the following;

- Can the existing school(s) in the school place planning area be expanded;
- Location;
- Design;
- Specification;
- Size;
- Number of classrooms;
- Non-teaching space; and
- Play area provision etc..

**7.11** The full cost of the extension/new build will need to be agreed, along with developer contributions as part of the planning process. The methodology for determining contribution (paragraphs 7.5 to 7.9) detailed in this document will not be relevant in these cases and early discussions with Council officers are encouraged.

### **Securing the Financial Contribution**

**7.12** The Council has a role in assessing the likely impact of a new development on the service it provides, however, it is also the Local Planning Authority's role to decide whether or not the level of contributions requested are appropriate and in line with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation 2010 (regulations 122 and 123), which are;

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

**7.13** Where the CIL regulations above are satisfied, any financial contribution required would be secured at the time planning permission is granted (either outline or full) by way of a planning obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The section 106 agreement would set out an appropriate trigger for the payment of the contribution, and it is expected that the contribution should be a single payment rather than provided in stages. No more than five planning obligations will be pooled towards the same project.

### **Viability**

**7.14** In circumstances where the viability of a scheme is in question, the developer will be required to demonstrate that this is the case through a site-specific financial evaluation, undertaken to the Council's satisfaction at the earliest possible stage. Where a scheme is agreed to be unviable or marginal, we will review the contributions for the development and the timing or phasing of payments to assist the financial viability of the scheme.