



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE  
(WOKING)**

**RESPONSE TO THE DEMAND FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES  
IN WOKING**

**27 JUNE 2012**

**KEY ISSUE**

The Local Committee has requested a report to consider the actions that have been taken to provide sufficient primary school places in Woking for 2012/13 as well as what is planned to meet the longer term demand for school places in the future.

Pressure for places has been felt most immediately in the primary sector. Further provision will be required to address the corresponding demand in secondary places, but discussions with secondary schools are at a more formative stage. This paper focuses on those actions that have been taken to address the need for primary places in Woking for 2012 and into the future.

**SUMMARY**

The demand for school places is increasing across the County. In Woking, as for other large conurbations, demand has become particularly acute.

The Local Authority is responsible for the provision of school places and works in partnership with schools to respond to these pressures.

For September 2012 an additional 6.5 classes will be provided to meet demand for the academic year 2012/13. Longer-term permanent expansions are currently being planned / consulted upon to meet future demand. This report sets out this position in more detail.

## OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

**The Local Committee (Woking) is asked to consider / agree that:**

- (i) The current planned actions are an appropriate response to meet the demand for primary places in Woking in the shorter term.
- (ii) Further monitoring of the position in Woking will be required on an ongoing basis that further additional places may be required in the longer term.
- (iii) Consideration will be given on the need to provide additional secondary places in the Borough.

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Officers met with Primary Heads and Chairs of Governors in a series of meetings from October 2011 to January 2012. The meetings were to consider (i) the demand for primary places in Woking in 2012 and in the longer term, (ii) the options that are available for meeting that demand.
- 1.2 Pupil projections had underestimated demand for primary places in Woking in 2011 by about 70-80 pupils so despite the forecast of a very small deficit in 2012, officers agreed with schools in October to plan on the basis of requiring 3 additional classrooms (on top of an expansion of Beaufort Primary School that was already agreed). It was agreed that, where possible, temporary expansions should lead to permanent expansions given that the longer term projected demand to 2020 was for 3 additional forms of entry. Temporary classrooms (where required) would be provided at each of the schools below leading in to permanent expansions. These options were discussed and approved by Headteachers and Chairs of Governors. A short rationale is given for each:

School	Rationale
Goldsworth Primary School (2 to 3 forms of entry from 2014)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greatest number of pupils within 1 mile of the school against other schools</li> <li>• Heavily oversubscribed - meets parental preferences</li> <li>• Rated outstanding by Ofsted</li> <li>• Proximity to future housing planned in central location – e.g Bradfield Close</li> <li>• No exceptional transport issues with the school expanding</li> </ul>
St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School (2 to 3 forms of entry from 2013)**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavily oversubscribed - meets parental preferences</li> <li>• Meets demand for additional Catholic places in Woking</li> <li>• Rated Good by Ofsted</li> <li>• No immediate planning or transport objections to expansion and school has access to large car park</li> <li>• Strong support from the Woking Deanery</li> </ul>

Westfield Primary School (1 to 2 forms of entry from 2012)**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School has existing accommodation – cost effective solution</li> <li>• 2fe primary a more viable model</li> <li>• Concentration of housing development planned for South Woking - Moor Lane housing developments in South Woking will yield high number of additional children given levels of affordable housing.</li> <li>• High number of housing completions expected for 2012 and 2013</li> </ul>
--	---

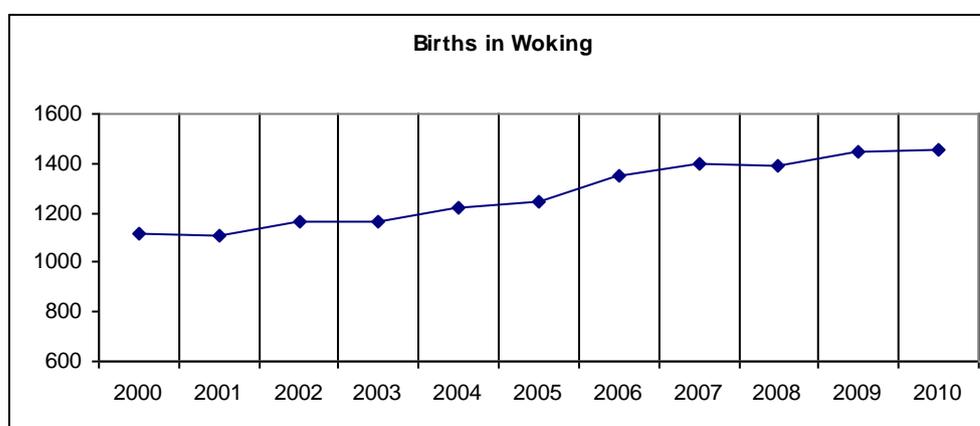
- 1.3 There was a further three schools placed on a 'reserve list' (West Byfleet Infants / Junior school and The Marist Catholic Primary School) as they had expressed an interest in expansion, but at the time, the projected need would have been met by the above expansions. Officers remain in discussions with primary schools in the East about any further expansions that are required for this area.
- 1.4 When the applications were collated, processed and reviewed in early February it was clear that the additional classes at the schools above would not be sufficient. There were 1234 on time applications for a primary school place in Woking for 2012/13 ('Reception' or 'Yr R'). This was against a total of 1155 available places (including the planned expansions above). The above excludes late applications that the Local Authority receives (at the time of writing there have been a further 66 late applications). Not all parents that apply for a place will choose to take up that place. There is a fall out rate where parents choose private or alternative education. This is difficult to model and the LA is obliged to offer all parents a place at a school irrespective of whether they choose to take that place up.
- 1.5 The need for additional places was discussed with Heads and Chairs of Governors in a meeting at the end of January and schools were asked to consider where additional classes could be provided. Based on feedback in this meeting, Officers recommended the following schools to take 'bulge classes' for 2012. Double demountables were provided to enable classes to be provided in 2013 as well if required. This approach was approved by Heads following the Woking Heads Primary Conference in February.
- Sythwood – double classroom demountable to be provided
  - St Johns – double classroom demountable to be provided
  - The Marist – additional 15 pupils to be admitted in existing accommodation (modified)
  - Pyrford Church of England – 30 pupils to be admitted in existing accommodation (modified)

## 2 ANALYSIS OF FUTURE DEMAND

- 2.1 Births in Woking - The number of births in an area is one of the key factors that will affect the demand for school places. The Local Authority collects birth data from the Office of National Statistics by electoral ward and estimates (based on previous experience) how many of those births will arrive in reception classes in 4 years time ('the transfer rate'). Transfer rates are estimated for each

succeeding cohort including into the secondary phase at year 7. Estimated pupil yield from new housing is also included in the projections.

- 2.2 Based on figures provided by the Office for National Statistics, births in Woking dipped from 1997 to a low point in 2001. Births then rose quite sharply year on year to 2007 before flattening out through to 2008. Births then rose again in 2009 and 2010. Over the period between 2001 and 2010 births have increased by about 30%.
- 2.3 It should be noted that the increase in applications in 2012 is unlikely to be the result of the number of births alone. Applications have dramatically increased in 2012 (e.g. children born between 2007 and 2008) yet the birth rate change in these years flattened out. It is therefore likely that the increased demand is also due to inward migration into Woking and additional children yielded from housing developments in the Borough. These variables are much more difficult to model and often affect densely populated urban areas to a greater extent.



- 2.4 Historic Numbers on Roll (NOR) - The table below provides historical information on the total number of available primary places in Reception in Woking (the PAN), compared with the actual pupils in reception year. This provides the number of spare places across the Borough (a negative figure shows a shortage of places compared with the current PAN). Parental preferences are given to indicate the demand for places each year. In 2011 the Local Authority opened up additional classes at schools with existing capacity, as well as providing demountable accommodation in the Byfleet area to cater for the additional demand.

Year	PAN	Highest Ranking Preference	Pupils in Reception Year	Spare Reception places	% Spare places
2005	1117	956	966	151	13.5%
2006	1039	891	929	110	10.6%
2007	1054	1107	993	61	5.8%
2008	1034	1009	987	47	4.5%
2009	1034	1056	1023	11	1.1%
2010	1045	1061	1074	-29	-2.8%
2011	1075	1173	1149	-74	-6.9%

- 2.5 Forecast Numbers on Roll - The table below estimates (as at November 2011) the number of pupils that will require a reception place in a primary school in Woking from 2012 – 2020. This is compared with the total number of available places in Woking in the future (the PAN). The 'spare' places refer to the projected demand compared with the total number of available places. In 2012, actual applications are higher than the forecast so temporary accommodation is being planned ahead of permanent expansions and further consideration will need to be given to these figures because projections have in the last couple of years under-estimated demand.

Year	PAN	Highest Ranking Preference	Pupils in Reception Year	Spare Reception places	% Spare places
2012	1065	-	1101	-36	-3.38%
2013	1065	-	1097	-32	-3.00%
2014	1065	-	1113	-48	-4.51%
2015	1065	-	1123	-58	-5.45%
2016	1065	-	1137	-72	-6.76%
2017	1065	-	1148	-83	-7.79%
2018	1065	-	1154	-89	-8.36%
2019	1065	-	1158	-93	-8.73%
2020	1065	-	1155	-90	-8.45%

### 3 OPTIONS

- 3.1 When considering school expansions the Local Authority must consider a number of different criteria. These include (i) parental preference, (ii) educational standards, (iii) diversity of provision, (iv) sustainability issues, (v) site issues/capabilities, (vi) planning constraints. These criteria are not always compatible. For example, the principle of meeting parental preferences is not always compatible with the principle of providing local schools for the local population.
- 3.2 An analysis of each primary school in Woking was undertaken against each of the criteria above. Options for new schools have also been considered but no land has yet been identified. Options were discussed in meetings with primary schools in November and January before settling on the final approach set out above.

### 4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Informal consultation has been taking place with schools since October 2011. Public consultations are required once there is a decision to proceed to this stage. The status of the planned permanent expansions set out in paragraph 1.2 is set out below.

- 4.2 St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School – Consultation took place between 23 April and 25 May. Governors at the school have decided to publish a statutory notice indicating their intention to expand to 3 forms of entry (from 2). A final decision on this proposal is expected to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning on 19 July.
- 4.3 Goldsworth Primary School (Academy) – The Governing Body have agreed in principle to consult on a proposal to expand the school from 2 to 3 forms of entry subject to agreement on the accommodation to be provided at the school. These discussions are currently taking place and a public consultation is expected to take place in the Autumn term.
- 4.4 Westfield Primary School – The school is informally consulting with parents on the expansion of the school. Formal statutory consultation is not required as the school already has existing capacity subject to the relocation of Surrey Arts who currently use part of the site.
- 4.5 The Marist Catholic Primary School – At the time of writing the Local Authority will be consulting on the expansion of this school from 1.5 to 2 forms of entry from September 2013. Consultation is scheduled to start on 18 June and will end on the 16 July.
- 4.6 Since the last meeting with schools in January, there are other schools that have now expressed an interest in future expansion. The Local Authority will need to review the applications for 2012 as well as the current forecasts for primary places in Woking against the current capital programme. The need for any further expansions will be considered in the next 'planning round' in the autumn term.

## **5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The planned expansions in Woking are included in the Basic Need Capital Programme and have been approved in principle by Members, Investment Panel and the Cabinet Member for Change and Efficiency. Given the pressure for places across the County, there is a growing pressure on this capital programme. Officers are working with schools to seek the most cost effective methods of delivery. Each scheme is in a different stage of development (feasibility, detailed design etc...) but all schemes will be subject to competitive tendering. All detailed business cases will go through an Investment Panel and Cabinet Member process to ensure that each project represents best value. This will take place following formal consultation on proposals where required.

## **6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Each proposal would enhance educational provision for all children in the community served by the schools. The Local Authority plans provision, where possible, on the basis that schools should serve their local communities rather than requiring children to travel greater distances for their education.

## **7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no crime and disorder implications of these proposals.

## **8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The above expansions are deemed necessary to meet the growing demand for primary school places in Woking. It should be noted that further provision may still be required in the future and officers will continue to work with schools to plan this provision as effectively as possible.

## **9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Although the position remains very tight, the proposals above meet the expected demand for primary places in Woking for 2012. The planned permanent expansions will meet the projected demand in the future but further consideration as to whether any additional expansions should be planned for the future is required given that projections have underestimated numbers in the past couple of years.

## **10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

- 10.1 The Cabinet Member for Children and Learning and Change and Efficiency will be asked to approve the building proposals being worked up for the permanent expansions at the schools identified in this report. The timing of decisions will vary depending on what stage in the process each project has reached.
- 10.2 Officers are now in discussions with secondary schools in the area to plan for the corresponding secondary provision that is required in the future. These discussions are at a formative stage and no proposals have been developed at this stage.

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Kieran Holliday, School Commissioning Officer  
**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** 0208 541 7383  
**E-MAIL:** [Kieran.holliday@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:Kieran.holliday@surreycc.gov.uk)