

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 19 DECEMBER 2023****REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING.****LEAD OFFICER: RACHAEL WARDELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING****SUBJECT: CRANLEIGH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL****ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA: NO ONE LEFT BEHIND / GROWING A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY SO EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT / EMPOWERED AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES****Purpose of the Report:**

This report gives Cabinet oversight of the complex situation at Cranleigh Church of England Primary that includes: rationalisation of two sites on to one; the future of a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Unit for infant-aged children with Communication and Interaction Needs (COIN); the need for capital works at the school required to bring this school up to a reasonable standard; and the plan for the school to convert to an academy.

The proposals in this report are aligned with the Surrey's Community 2030 Vision that everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them to succeed in life. The proposals will allow the best opportunities for teaching and learning in the future, where children benefit from education, are safe and feel safe and confident.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Agrees Cranleigh Church of England Primary School will operate exclusively on the junior school site with reversion of the infant school site to Surrey County Council.
2. Approves the retention of Acorn Nursery on the infant site.
3. Approves the use of the reception building on the infant site by Acorn Nursery.
4. Notes the uncertain future of the SEND Centre for COIN at the school.
5. Approves the funding for the works to take place at the school to enable the junior school building to be transferred to the academy trust in a suitable state, as outlined in the Part 2 report of this report.

Reason for Recommendations:

The recommendations are based on securing the future of the school by enabling the academy trust to have the best opportunity on a consolidated school site to improve the education for the benefit of children in Cranleigh.

Executive Summary:

Context and Background

1. The local authority (LA) has a duty to ensure sufficient school places to meet demand as set out in the Education Act 1996 as subsequently amended. This duty applies to any status of publicly funded schools be that community, voluntary controlled, foundation, voluntary aided, academy, and academies in multi academy trusts. Local authorities are required to keep under review the educational provision for children and young people who have additional needs and disabilities (SEND).
2. Cranleigh C of E Primary School was formed as a voluntary controlled primary school by the merger of Cranleigh Infant School, Church Lane with St Nicholas C of E Junior School, Parsonage Road in September 2008. The merged school also included a unit for pupils with Communication and Interaction needs (COIN) for Key Stage 1 pupils, i.e., children aged 4 to 7 years of age.
3. The school admits one form of entry (1FE) of up to 30 pupils into YR; in year 3 the school accommodates two forms of entry (2FE) up to 60 pupils. This means that the one form of entry joining the school in the reception year typically stays at the school through to year 6, with an additional class admitted to the junior phase in year 3. This additional year 3 intake provides junior provision for children from nearby infant schools, predominately from Ewhurst C of E (Aided) Infant School.
4. Ofsted inspected the school in December 2022 and judged the overall effectiveness as Inadequate. An Interim Executive Board (IEB) was put in place. The Department for Education (DfE) issued an academy order for the Cranleigh Church of England Primary School in March 2023 with The Good Shepherd Trust as the preferred sponsor. DfE guidelines are that the school convert within 9 months (by 1 December 2023) to ensure support and measures are put in place as soon as possible; however, this can be extended in certain circumstances.
5. In March 2017, Cabinet agreed to relocate and rebuild the school, nursery and Communication and Interaction needs (COIN) unit onto one site in the grounds of the nearby Glebelands Secondary School within larger accommodation to allow for future growth. The two existing school sites would then be released for residential development. The business case for the

rebuilding of Cranleigh C of E Primary School was approved by Cabinet in October 2019.

6. In 2017, Waverley Borough Council's draft Local Plan indicated a need for additional primary provision in Cranleigh and the proposed rebuild and relocation included flexibility for expansion. The October 2019 Cabinet agreed a 1FE expansion across the school making the intake 2FE at reception/KS1 and three forms of entry for Year3/KS2 expanding the school from 330 places to 540 places. The rebuild included relocation of the SEND unit.
7. The relocation of the school met with significant local opposition and the school was also under pressure from local campaigners not to be supportive of the relocation. The planning application for the development of residential homes on the two sites was refused in November 2019. The relocation and expansion scheme was withdrawn in June 2020.
8. The Priority Schools Building Programme 2 (PSBP2) funding by DfE had been a contributor to the relocation scheme. With the relocation stopped the PSBP2 funding was reverted to the original intention to replace the reception year building on the infant site. This was completed and handed over to SCC in spring 2022. Prior to the Covid pandemic the school was operating across the two original sites. During the pandemic, the school operated entirely from the junior school building. The condition of the older infant block, including roof, electrics and heating have prevented the school from using the infant site and the new building. All pupils have therefore remained on the junior site.
9. Cranleigh C of E Primary School is part of the Cranleigh primary planning area that also includes: Ewhurst CofE Aided Infant; St Cuthbert Mayne Catholic Primary and Park Mead Primary schools. Forecast demand for reception places across the area indicated a small surplus for September 2023. In subsequent years demand for infant places is forecast to reduce with minor surpluses until 2026/27 and from then until to the end of the forecast period surpluses increase above 10% against places available. A graphic illustrates this at **Annex 1**. The need for expansion, as was originally planned, is not now needed given the projected future numbers. The IEB and Good Shepherd Trust have committed to maintain the current Published Admission Numbers (PANs) at reception and year 3 intakes, that continues to provide a capacity of 330 places. The forecasts are inclusive of new residential developments locally and there is a potential increase in pupil demand from the new homes across all year groups and this is illustrated at **Annex 2**. The new developments include the strategic site at Dunsfold. The likelihood, subject to agreements with Waverley Borough Council and the developer, is that a new school will be provided in the Dunsfold development to meet the needs of the new homes, **Annex 2** also illustrates the demand for the planning area excluding the pupil product from the Dunsfold development and this therefore gives a more realistic forecast for the current schools.

SEN Unit

10. The school includes a specialist unit for children with communication and interaction (COIN) difficulties. This includes speech and language communication needs (SLCN) and autism. The unit can provide up to 10 planned places for children aged 4 to 7 years, who would be on the roll of the main school. These places are in addition to the PAN of 30 for the mainstream infant school. The provision is for children who would benefit from attending mainstream classes and from regular social interaction with their mainstream peers but who also require regular access to additional specialist support to achieve their educational outcomes. There are currently no children attending the specialist unit and numbers in the unit had reduced in recent years. Placing children at the unit would be inappropriate with the current Inadequate Ofsted rating.
11. The proposal is for the unit to be temporarily closed until there are recognised improvements at the school that are confirmed by further visits by Ofsted. This would mean that pupils will not be placed at the school and the funding for places will be suspended. The future of the unit in liaison with SEND Commissioning will be determined by the demand for places and the type of need. Any changes will be a consultation made by the Trust followed by a final decision from DfE through the Regional Director. Cabinet is asked to note the uncertain future of the SEND Centre for COIN at the school.

Infant site and Nursery Provision

12. The existing buildings on the infant site are in extremely poor condition and require extensive maintenance and repair. Heating, boiler and fire alarm systems have all been condemned. The IEB wrote to Surrey County Council on 10 May 2023 advising that they would be handing back the infant school site to the Local Authority and that the school has enough space to accommodate the current combined infant and junior PAN within the 11 classrooms on the junior site. Some works to the junior block are to meet requirements for infant provision including appropriate toilets. It is proposed that this is met from S106 funding for these infant places at the school. Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal for the primary school to operate exclusively from the junior site.
13. An independent nursery provider, Acorn Nursery School, operates in the existing grounds of the infant school site in two temporary buildings. The nursery was judged by Ofsted in July 2019 as an Outstanding setting; the nursery has been co-located with the school since 1990.
14. As the school has served notice on its use of the infant school site, the reception building built using PSPB2 funding will remain vacant. It is proposed that Acorn Nursery School should move into the vacant reception block. There is a condition on the building that it should be utilised for education purposes, and this would meet this need. The ongoing access to the relocated nursery

will need resolving as will the ongoing site security, maintenance and deterioration of the original remaining infant building. Members are asked to approve the retention of Acorn Nursery on the infant site and the use of the reception building on the infant site by Acorn Nursery.

Buildings and Maintenance

15. The existing buildings on both sites are in extremely poor condition and require extensive maintenance and repair. There is a large amount of backlog condition issues on both sites that were not addressed when the school was still planned to be rebuilt elsewhere. Included in the capital works already identified on the junior site are; demolition of two old, temporary Horsa huts; drainage work; resurfacing of the playground; and a new car park. This is already within the 2023/24 capital programme.
16. An independent condition survey has been undertaken for the junior school site and this indicates circa £4.2 million cost of repairs to meet all identified works over the next 10 years. An academy trust will not accept a school with outstanding condition works that would be an ongoing financial burden to the trust. The quantity of repairs and replacements needed at Cranleigh C of E Primary School that were not addressed as the school was to be rebuilt account for the estimated costs on the junior site only. Good Shepherd Trust will not take on Cranleigh CofE Primary School without an agreed list and timeline of works detailed within the Commercial Transfer Agreement (CTA).
17. At the time of writing, SCC officers, the Good Shepherd Trust, Guildford Diocese and the school have met to discuss the levels of work to be met for the transfer and have agreed a way forward. The identified works in the condition report are shown to be life expired and these are either urgent or essential works within one or two years. The work identified in the forthcoming year that relate to structure and fabric, both internal and external, and mechanical & electrical, are to be met from the capital budget, meeting urgent needs arising from the backlog of condition works. The works in the same categories for the following year, with other works that the school and the trust see as urgent, are not to be met by the Council. The amount for this is being requested from DfE and will be considered by a panel in December 2023 or January 2024 (date to be confirmed). Details are given in the Part 2 report on this agenda.

Consultation:

18. Consultation has taken place with:
 - IEB
 - School - Headteacher and Site Manager
 - Good Shepherd Trust
 - Guildford Diocese
 - Department for Education – Regional Directors Office

- Early Years
- SEND Commissioning
- Colin Galletly- Assistant Director
- Glenn Woodhead – Assistant Director
- Carrie Traill - Head of Education
- Liz Mills – Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
- Rachael Wardell - Executive Director for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning
- Simon Crowther - Director Land & Property

19. Member engagement with the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning, and the Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure.

20. Property Panel and Capital Programme Panel.

Risk Management and Implications:

21. Surrey County Council has worked closely with the school. The school has been keeping parents, carers and young people informed about future changes at the school.

22. There is a risk that if the funding is not met by the DfE, Good Shepherd Trust will not wish to take the school as the liabilities will cause a severe risk to their budget.

Financial and Value for Money Implications:

23. Property colleagues and the Good Shepherd Trust have met and agreed that Surrey County Council will cover the costs to cover D1 and D2 categorized works. Please see the Part 2 of this report for further details proposed to be undertaken in relation to the academy conversion.

Section 151 Officer Commentary:

24. Significant progress has been made in recent years to improve the Council's financial resilience and the financial management capabilities across the organisation. Whilst this has built a stronger financial base from which to deliver our services, the increased cost of living, global financial uncertainty, high inflation and government policy changes mean we continue to face challenges to our financial position. This requires an increased focus on financial management to protect service delivery, a continuation of the need to be forward looking in the medium term, as well as the delivery of the efficiencies to achieve a balanced budget position each year.

25. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2023/24 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past

decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority, in order to ensure the stable provision of services in the medium term.

26. As such, the Section 151 Officer supports the recommendations of this report.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer:

27. The rationalisation onto one site does not require statutory process as the main entrance of the school’s remaining site is less than one mile from the site which is to be closed.

28. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council to secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in its area.

29. Section 27 Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on the local authority to keep under review the educational provision for children and young people who have special educational needs and or a disability.

Equalities and Diversity:

30. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposal is attached to this report as **Annex 3**.

Other Implications:

31. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	Safeguarding vulnerable children is a high priority in all Surrey schools. Schools have considerable expertise in safeguarding vulnerable children and adhere to robust procedures. The school will continue to apply effective arrangements around safeguarding as it does currently. In addition, safeguarding is a key area for monitoring when Ofsted conducts inspections.
Environmental sustainability	No significant implications arising from this report

Compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience.	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report.

What Happens Next:

- a. Subject to the Cabinet determination, Surrey County Council, the Governing Body and the Good Shepherd Trust will proceed to implement the proposals at Cranleigh CofE Primary School.
- b. The academisation of the school is set for 1st February 2024.

Report Author: Mike Singleton, Service Manager Place Planning, 07971 666108.

Consulted:

Headteacher of Cranleigh CofE Primary School
 Governing body and staff members of the schools
 Good Shepherd Trust
 Cllr Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Education and Learning
 Rachael Wardell, Executive Director for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning
 Liz Mills, Director Education and Learning
 Carrie Trail, Head of Education

Annexes:

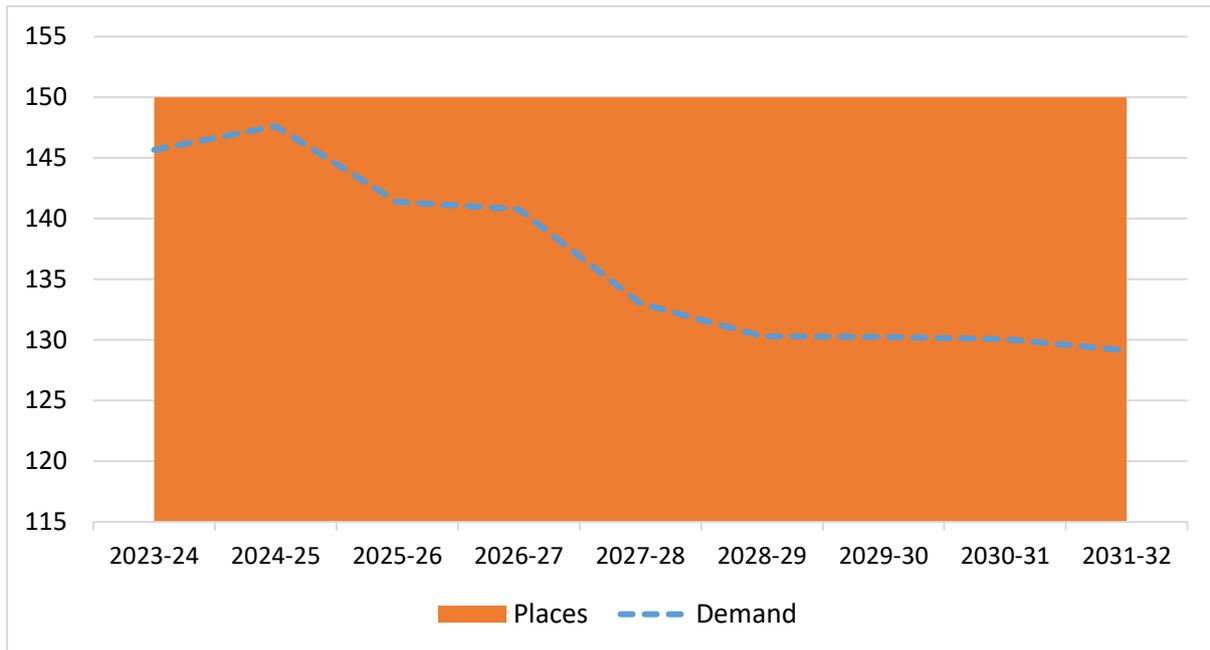
Annex 1 - Reception Forecasts for the Cranleigh Planning Area
 Annex 2 - Reception to Year 6 Forecasts for the Cranleigh Planning Area
 Annex 3 - Equality Impact Assessment
 Part 2 Report

Sources/background papers:

The Education Act 1996; the Education Act 2002; the Education Act 2005;
 the Education and Inspections Act 2006; Children and Families Act 2014

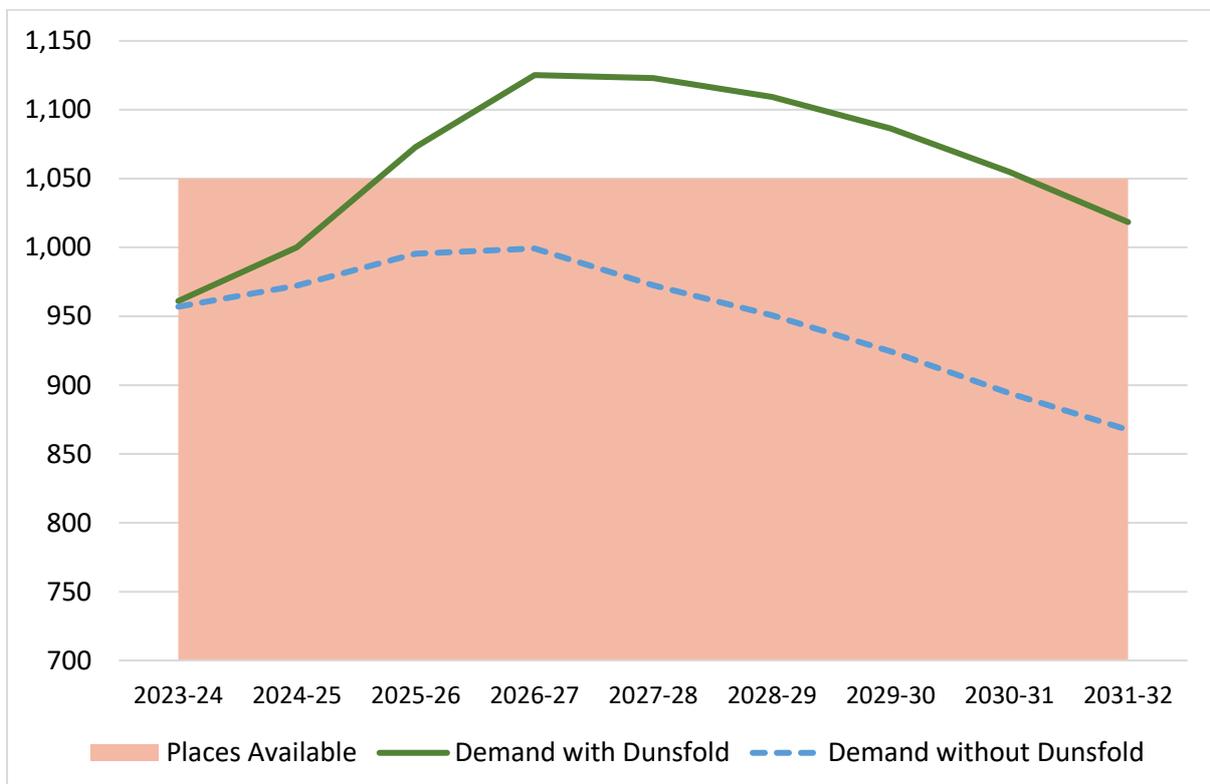
Reports to Cabinet: Cranleigh Church of England Primary School 28 March 2017
 and Cranleigh C of E Primary School 29 October 2019.

Annex 1 – Reception Forecasts for the Cranleigh Planning Area



11

Annex 2 Reception to Year 6 Forecasts for the Cranleigh Planning Area



This page is intentionally left blank