

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**18 NOVEMBER 2021**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**CABINET DECISION**

**Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Lisa Evans**

**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2021**

**SUMMARY**

Although the statutory requirement to publish an annual School Organisation Plan was abolished in 2004, the Council has continued to publish an updated plan to inform schools, parents, and the public. The Plan gives information about the number, types and sizes of schools maintained by the Council, Academies and Free Schools. It records the number of places available in those schools and it includes forecasts of pupil numbers over the next five years. This information is an important resource to support the Council in carrying out its statutory duty to ensure a sufficient supply of school places to meet the needs of children and young people in the borough.

When taken together with documents relating to the condition of school buildings and their suitability for purpose, the information in this plan may help to inform decisions about capital investment in existing or new school buildings.

The 'School Organisation Plan 2021' describes two specific issues to be confronted over the next five years:

- Falling numbers of four-year-olds starting school.
- The beginning of the end of increased numbers in our secondary schools.

The draft plan is attached as the **Appendix** to this report.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is asked to agree:

1. Note the information in the attached draft plan.
2. Agree that the 'School Organisation Plan 2021' be published on the Council website and made available to partner organisations.

## DETAIL

1. Although the statutory requirement to publish an annual School Organisation Plan (SOP) was abolished in 2004, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (the Council) has continued to publish an updated plan to inform schools, parents, and the public. The SOP gives information about the number, types and sizes of schools maintained by the Council, Academies and Free Schools.
2. The Council does however have a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough school places in the borough to meet demand. The Council must therefore plan, organise and commission places for all state-funded schools in Stockton so that high standards are maintained, diverse school communities created, and fluctuating pupil numbers are managed efficiently.
3. The demand for school places changes over time - this document is 'live' and, as such, is updated every two years. It sets out where the Council currently thinks there will be a need to provide more school places and if there may be a need to provide fewer places over the coming years. Increases in demand can lead to the creation of a new school or the expansion of schools, whereas decreases in demand can lead to a reduction in school provision.
4. Predicting school demand is a complex task because where children go to school involves a range of different and often conflicting factors, and as a result planning for school places is based on probabilities, not certainties. This means that while projections may be made from robust calculations, they do not offer any guarantees.
5. It is important for us to be as open and transparent as possible when considering school organisation decisions. We strive to communicate effectively with schools and school communities about the school place pressures in their area. However, the Council must also endeavour to manage expectations regarding school organisation proposals that are less certain.
6. This updated SOP aims to provide an overview of current and future pupil numbers which supports planning the provision of school places across the borough. This document will be produced every two years and be made available to our schools and partners.
7. School Place Planning is a critical aspect of the Council'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 Stockton-on-Tees. The Council needs to demonstrate that they have robust procedures and systems for forecasting pupil numbers taking account of changes in local circumstances to ensure there will be the right number of schools in the right places for the number of pupils expected in the future.
8. To enable the Council to gain a clearer understanding of where there are current and anticipated pressures in both primary and secondary school (including Academies) places in the borough, the Council have grouped all schools into specific local planning areas. This will allow more detailed analysis of need and inform decisions regarding the use of funding to meet demand. In Stockton we have broken the borough into the following separate planning areas. Six for primary namely Billingham & Wolviston, North Stockton, Central Stockton, Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick and Eaglescliffe & Yarm and three for secondary, namely Billingham & Wolviston, Stockton North & Central and Stockton South.

9. This plan also sets out the Council's policies and key aims on school organisation and the procedures required by law for making changes such as opening, closing, or enlarging schools.
10. The Council has in place a strategic group that meets regularly and uses the SOP and the data supporting it, in making school place planning decisions. These include increasing school level Published Admission Numbers (PAN's) in response to predicted demand for places and the allocation of Basic Need Capital monies to those schools deemed the most appropriate following feasibility options work.
11. The headlines captured within the SOP are also used to inform the commentary, School Capacity and Pupil Forecast data the Council submits in support of the 'School Capacity Collection' (SCAP) return to the Department for Education (DfE) annually. The SCAP provides the DfE with information on all schools which are maintained by the Council as well as the data for Academies and Free Schools.
12. The SCAP is used to inform Key Decisions regarding School Place Planning pressures across the borough and Capital allocation priorities across primary and secondary schools in terms of refurbishment and maintenance. This SOP should be read in conjunction with any Capital Papers to Cabinet on future Capital Plans for support and the allocation of appropriate funding.

#### **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

13. None

#### **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

14. None

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

15. None

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

16. The Council as Local Education Authority has a duty under The Education Act 1944 to ensure a sufficient supply of school places to meet the needs of the children and young people resident in the borough.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

17. This School Organisation Plan is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

#### **WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS**

18. None

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

19. None

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**CHILDREN SERVICES**

**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN**

**2021**

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## Section 1: Introduction and purpose of this plan

Although the statutory requirement to publish an annual School Organisation Plan (SOP) was abolished in 2004, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (the Council) has continued to publish an updated plan to inform schools, parents, and the public. The SOP gives information about the number, types and sizes of schools maintained by the Council, Academies and Free Schools.

The Council does however have a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough school places in the borough to meet demand. The Council must therefore plan, organise and commission places for all state-funded schools in Stockton so that high standards are maintained, diverse school communities are created, and fluctuating pupil numbers are managed efficiently.

The demand for school places changes over time - this document is 'live' and, as such, is updated every two years. It sets out where the Council currently thinks there will be a need to provide more school places and if there may be a need to provide fewer places over the coming years. Increases in demand can lead to the creation of a new school or the expansion of schools, whereas decreases in demand can lead to a reduction in school provision.

Predicting school demand is a complex task because where children go to school involves a range of different and often conflicting factors, and as a result planning for school places is based on probabilities, not certainties. This means that while projections may be made from robust calculations, they do not offer any guarantees.

It is important for us to be as open and transparent as possible when considering school organisation decisions. We strive to communicate effectively with schools and school communities about the school place pressures in their area. However, the Council must also endeavour to manage expectations regarding school organisation proposals that are less certain. This document does not seek to definitively set out all the actions the Council intends to take in the future, but rather is intended to provide an overview of issues that may arise in Stockton. The Council will only name particular schools in this document when there is sufficient assurance that a proposal will be implemented or where this has already taken place.

This updated School Organisation Plan (SOP) aims to provide an overview of current and future pupil numbers which supports planning the provision of school places across the borough. This document will be produced every two years and be made available to our schools and partners.

School Place Planning is a critical aspect of the Council'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 Stockton-on-Tees. The Council needs to demonstrate that they have robust procedures and systems for forecasting pupil numbers taking account of changes in local circumstances to ensure there will be the right number of schools in the right places for the number of pupils expected in the future.

Schools submit data on pupil rolls to the Council in October, January, and May each year through the School Census. Schools are encouraged to play an active role in the planning of pupil place process and to identify at an early stage any concerns with projections that may impact on future school planning.

To enable the Council to gain a clearer understanding of where there are current and anticipated pressures in both primary and secondary school (including Academies) places in the borough, the Council have grouped all schools into specific local planning areas. These planning areas are listed in 'Information on planning areas' from page 16. This will allow more detailed analysis of need and inform decisions regarding

the use of funding to meet demand. For Primary we have six planning areas namely Billingham & Wolviston, North Stockton, Central Stockton, Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick and Eaglescliffe & Yarm. For Secondary we operate three, namely Billingham & Wolviston, Stockton North & Central and Stockton South.

This plan also sets out the Council's policies and key aims on school organisation and the procedures required by law for making changes such as opening, closing, or enlarging schools.

The Council has in place a strategic group that meets regularly and uses not only the SOP and the data supporting it but also detail from the School Capacity (SCAP) return, in making school place planning decisions. These include increasing school level Published Admission Numbers (PAN's) / Capacity in response to predicted demand for places and the allocation of Basic Need Capital monies to those schools deemed the most appropriate following feasibility options work.

The headlines captured within the SOP are also used to inform the commentary, School Capacity and Pupil Forecast data the Council submits in support of the SCAP return to the Department for Education (DfE) annually. The SCAP provides the DfE with information on all schools which are maintained by the Council as well as the data for Academies and Free Schools.

The SCAP is used to inform Key Decisions regarding School Place Planning pressures across the borough and Capital allocation priorities across primary and secondary schools in terms of refurbishment and maintenance. This SOP should be read in conjunction with any Capital Papers to Cabinet on future Capital Plans for support and the allocation of appropriate funding.



## Section 2: School Place Planning in Stockton-on-Tees

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## **Making major changes to school organisation**

Changes to school organisation such as opening new schools, closing schools, or enlarging them cannot happen without consulting everyone likely to be affected. In April 2016 the Department for Education updated its guides that provided information on the procedures established by The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) and (Establishments and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013. The guidance sets out how any such proposals are decided. On 1 February 2011 the Education Act 2011 (EA 2011) amended the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) to change the arrangements for establishing new schools. Most new schools will now be established via the academy/free school presumption and the related departmental advice describe the department's expectations of how that process should operate.

### Academies

An Academy is a state-funded independent school which may have one or more sponsors. An Academy may be put forward in a competition for a new school, or the Council and potential sponsors may approach the government directly to suggest an Academy to replace one or more existing schools. The governing body of an existing school may decide to apply to the Secretary of State to convert to Academy status without a sponsor.

### Free Schools

A Free School is a new school set up with the consent of the Secretary of State by a group of parents or other interested people. Like an Academy, a Free School is an independent school funded directly by the government.

### Other changes to schools

Proposals for other changes such as closing a school, enlarging it, or changing the age range, may be published by the Council or sometimes by school governing bodies. In most situations the Council will decide these proposals. In some circumstances there will be a right of appeal to an adjudicator. In all cases the people likely to be affected by any change – particularly parents, school staff and governors – must be consulted before any decision is taken. The decision-maker must also take account of guidance issued by the government.

More information about this is available on the website of the Department for Education at [www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolorganisation](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolorganisation)

The aim is for schools to be more in charge of their own decisions about size and composition and to be able to respond to what parents want locally without being unduly restricted by process.

## **Forecasting Primary and Secondary pupil numbers**

Since 2015 the Council has been producing its own pupil forecasts that have been the basis of SCAP submissions and informed the SOP. However, for SCAP 2021 the Council has returned to using the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) produced and supplied forecasting tables and methodology.

### **Pupil numbers in primary schools**

Pupil numbers entering Reception have continued to fall in recent years in line with national lower birth rates and the number of surplus places in some schools across the six planning areas has increased. This is something we are monitoring as it is predicted to continue for the next couple of years. Overall surplus across the borough has risen slightly to 13% and expected to rise.

### **Pupil numbers in secondary schools**

A significant number of our secondary schools are oversubscribed reflecting parental choice. In recent years the LA has invested in increasing capacity in several schools to provide a little surplus in each of the three planning areas. This was to accommodate the forecasted growth in the demand for places as previously higher births entered Primary and transitioned into Secondary – at present this represents a surplus of 9% for Sept 2021. However due to parental preference this is geographically focussed, in only a handful of schools.

We have seen steady growth entering secondary since 2016/17 which led to the LA commencing its Capital Strategy to meet predicted demand. This included an additional 300 places at Northfield School (Billingham & Wolviston) for 2018/19, 210 places at Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy (Stockton North & Central) for 2019/20. A further 200 places at All Saints CE Academy (Stockton South) planned for completion in late 2021 / early 2022, but we can offer increased places – supported by temporary classrooms (that will be removed once building work is complete). In addition, we are working with Outwood Grange to increase capacity by 300 places at its Bishopsgarth Academy (Stockton North & Central) to meet demand from current primary numbers over the next few years whilst providing some capacity for predicted demand from local planned / approved housing. This is expected to be in place for 2023/24.

The secondary Capital strategy is also mindful that across Stockton this growth will peak 2023/24 and follow National trends as lower births across the borough have seen a yearly reduction entering Reception since 2016/17. This lower cohort will increase our surplus position in Secondary in future years, this can be evidenced as for Sept 2021 entry we have placed 2460 Year 7 children whilst the equivalent Sept 2021 Reception cohort was only 2270 – an 8% reduction. With continuing lower birth rates equating to lower primary pupils for at least for the next 3 /4 years will see the gap increasing.

It is also expected that this falling trend of lower pupil numbers could remain, this despite early indications Nationally that lockdown has contributed to an increase in births during 2020/21, however this hasn't been reflected in birth figures across Stockton-on-Tees.

## Academies

In Stockton, since the last publication of the SOP we have seen a steady increase in the number of primary and secondary schools which have converted to Academy status (see *Tables 1-4* for more details).

*Table 1. Primary*

Planning area	School	Sponsor	Date converted
<b>Billingham &amp; Wolviston</b>			
	Bewley	1590 Trust	01/09/2019
	Our Lady Most Holy Rosary	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/01/2019
	Pentland	1Excellence MAT	01/07/2017
	St John's RC	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/04/2016
	St Joseph's RC		
	St Paul's RC		
	Wolviston	Prince Regent Street Trust	01/10/2018
<b>North Stockton</b>	Crooksbarrow	AdAstra Academy Trust	01/04/2018
	Frederick Natrass	Northern Education Trust	01/09/2013
	Hardwick Green	Enquire Trust	01/06/2013
	Harrow Gate	Enquire Trust	01/09/2014
	Norton	Northern Education Trust	01/01/2014
	Rosebrook	AdAstra Academy Trust	01/11/2016
	St Gregory's RC	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/04/2013
	St Joseph's RC (Norton)	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/02/2019
	St Marks CE	1Excellence	01/07/2017
<b>Central Stockton</b>	Hartburn	Prince Regent Street Trust	01/10/2018
	St Bede RC	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/12/2013
	St Cuthbert's RC	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/04/2021
	St Patrick's RC	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/04/2021
	The Oak Tree	Northern Education Trust	01/09/2013
<b>Thornaby</b>	Bader	1590 Trust	01/09/2017
	Christ The King RC	Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust	01/09/2015
	St Patrick's RC		
	Thornaby CE	Dales Academy Trust	01/07/2019
	Village	Prince Regent Street Trust	01/10/2018
<b>Ingleby Barwick</b>	St Francis of Assisi CE	Dales Academy Trust	01/08/2019
	St Therese of Lisieux RC	Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust	01/09/2015
	Whinstone	Vision Academy Learning Trust	01/12/2017
<b>Eaglescliffe &amp; Yarm</b>	Egglecliffe CE	CE Diocese of Durham MAT	01/11/2017

	Junction Farm	Vision Academy Learning Trust	01/02/2014
	Kirklevington	1590 Trust	01/06/2018
	Layfield	1590 Trust	01/09/2018
	Levendale	1590 Trust	01/04/2019
	Preston	Lingfield Trust	01/04/2021
	St Mary's CE	CE Diocese of Durham MAT	01/11/2018
	The Links	Vision Academy Learning Trust	01/08/2016
	Yarm	Enquire Trust	01/09/2015

Table 2. Secondary

Planning area	School	Sponsor	Date converted
<b>Billingham &amp; Wolviston</b>	St Michael's RC	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/09/2013
<b>Stockton North &amp; Central</b>	Bishopsgarth	Outwood Grange Academy Trust	01/11/2016
	Grangefield	Northern Education Trust	01/01/2014
	Ian Ramsey CE	The Venerable Bede CE Academy	01/12/2014
	North Shore	Northern Education Trust	01/09/2010
	Our Lady & St Bede RC	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust	01/02/2015
<b>Stockton South</b>	All Saints CE	Dales Academy Trust	01/05/2013
	Conyers	1590 Trust	01/02/2013
	Egglescliffe	Vision Academy Learning Trust	01/08/2016
	St Patrick's Catholic College	Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust	01/09/2015
	Thornaby	Teesside Learning Trust	01/09/2010

Table 3. Free Schools

Planning area	School	Sponsor	Date opening
<b>Billingham &amp; Wolviston</b>	Wynyard CE Primary	CE Diocese of Durham MAT	01/09/2015
<b>Stockton South</b>	Ingleby Manor Free School & Sixth Form	Delta Academies Trust	01/09/2014

Table 4. Special Schools &amp; others

School	Sponsor	Date opening
Abbey Hill School Technology College	Horizons Specialist Academy Trust	01/08/2013
Ash Trees	Ascent Trust	01/11/2014
Greengates	Horizons Specialist Academy Trust	01/08/2013
Westlands	Horizons Specialist Academy Trust	01/08/2013
Bishopton Centre	Tees Valley Collaborative Trust	01/05/2021

Academies are independent schools however for completeness this plan contains information about the number of places in Academies and projections of future student numbers. The number of Academy conversions is up to date as at the time of this report being produced.

## Schools in Stockton-on-Tees

### Early years education

Education is not compulsory for children under the age of five, but local authorities must ensure that a nursery place is available for every three and four-year-old whose parents want one and for every eligible 2-year-old that meets Government criteria. Every primary school in the borough contains a nursery unit. In many schools this operates as a Foundation Stage Unit so that children can move between nursery and reception class in a flexible way to meet their individual needs. Additional nursery education places are offered by providers in the private, voluntary, and independent sectors including child minders. For further Government advice please visit the DfE website here: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/early-years>

Children in Stockton-on-Tees normally start full-time school in the September following their fourth birthday, but this can be deferred until the age of five at the request of parents.

### Primary schools

From 1 September 2021 there were:

- sixty primary schools for children aged 4 to 11 of which 39 are Academies including one Free School.
- one special school Academy for children aged up to 11 with a range of special educational needs (Ash Trees).
- one special school Academy for children aged 5 to 16 with a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties (Westlands).
- one pupil referral unit for primary-age pupils temporarily excluded from school (Bishopton Centre), which also converted 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

### Secondary schools

From 1 September 2019 there were:

- ten schools for pupils aged 11 to 16 of which 9 are Academies.
- three schools for pupils aged 11 to 18 of which all are Academies including one Free School (yet to admit post 16 pupils).
- one special school Academy for pupils aged 11 to 18 with a range of complex special educational needs (Abbey Hill School Technology College).
- one special school Academy for children aged 5 to 16 with behavioural, social, and emotional difficulties (Westlands).
- one pupil referral unit for pupils temporarily excluded from school (Bishopton Centre) which also converted 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

### Post 16 Education and Training in Schools

The 11 to 18 schools in the above have a capacity for 796 children in their school sixth forms, available at the academies of Egglecliffe (400), Conyers (276) and Ingleby Manor Free School (150). Although the Free School yet has not admitted any pupils. In addition to School Sixth Form provision, learning and skills needs in Stockton are supported by one General FE College, one Sixth Form College and several Work Based Learning (WBL) providers offering Apprenticeships and WBL provider offering Foundation Learning.

The two colleges located within the borough are Stockton Sixth Form College and Stockton Riverside College (SRC). SRC which operates on Teesdale with Bede College and the Skills Academy at Billingham sites.

## A diverse range of maintained schools

“Maintained” means that the Council provides the governing bodies of those schools with an annual budget for their running costs. The schools maintained by the Council fall into one of three categories below:

- Community schools are owned by the Council. The Authority employs their staff and controls the admission of pupils.
- Voluntary Controlled schools are also owned by the Authority and operate largely in the same way as community schools. The Council employs their staff and controls the admission of pupils. The main difference is that the school governing body has some members appointed by a voluntary body. All the voluntary controlled schools in Stockton-on-Tees are primary schools associated with the Church of England.
- Voluntary Aided schools belong to a voluntary body (usually one of the Churches) although the Council normally owns their playing fields. The governing bodies of Voluntary Aided schools employ all their staff and control the admission of pupils. The governing body of a Voluntary Aided school normally contributes 10% towards the cost of any capital work on the school buildings, with the remainder funded by Government. The running costs of aided schools are funded by the Council in the same way as other schools.

In some parts of the country there are Foundation Schools. Like voluntary aided schools they own their land and buildings, they employ staff and control admissions, and the Foundation may appoint the majority of the school’s governors. New Foundation Schools may be called “Trust Schools.” There are no Foundation schools or Trust schools in Stockton-on-Tees.

Academies are not maintained by the Council but are independent schools funded by the government and may be supported by a private sponsor. The sponsor may appoint most governors and has influence over the curriculum of the school. Academies do not have to follow the national curriculum. They may have a longer school day and may employ staff on different conditions of service. Academies do not charge fees to students.

Free Schools are also independent schools funded directly by government and not maintained by Council. Any group (for example parents, a business or community group) may apply to the Secretary of State for permission to establish a Free School if they can demonstrate a demand for new school places.

At present we have two Free Schools – a 750 place secondary school in Stockton South (Ingleby Manor Free School & Sixth Form - opened in Sept 2014) and a 420 place primary schools in Billingham & Wolviston (Wynyard CE Primary - opened in Sept 2015).

The LA are aware that a further 2FE primary Free School has received recent ‘approval in principle’ (in Wave 14) in a neighbouring authority (Hartlepool). This despite both LA’s views and in particular our concerns on School Place Planning due to increasing surplus places. We expect this proposed Free School will directly impact on primary schools in the Billingham & Wolviston area. Surplus currently stands at 11% and is predicted to increase further with some schools operating at over 15% surplus and higher.

Both LA’s accept that there is always potential for future demand due to the approved / planned housing across sites in both Stockton and Hartlepool LA areas. However, there isn’t any clear evidence of sufficient

demand at present and for many years to come due to the lower birth rates as alluded to above. The decision to 'approve in principle' of another primary Free School raises concerns as this is not in line with School Place Planning projections and future National & local lower birth rate data.

Having a total capacity of 2785 reception places and only around 2000 live births in future years will only increase surplus places further.

The LA are also monitoring interest from local developers and sponsors for a potential 900 place secondary Free School in Wynyard which will impact school places in the Billingham & Wolviston planning area. This despite a previous application being refused in Wave 13 due to 'sufficient capacity' in the planning area and the LA as a whole and lower pupil numbers from the Wynyard area. The LA is concerned that not only will this 'free school' displace pupils from current schools (if approved) but is **not** sustainable longer term, as per the previously mentioned lower primary cohorts and those expected in the future due to the lower birth rates.

The LA will be able to meet the expected demand for secondary places across the borough once our Capital Investment programme is complete, providing 2550 Year 7 places. This capacity will enable the LA to have sufficient surplus to meet the peak in two years. Thereafter secondary surplus will continue to grow year on year as the lower primary cohorts leave and enter Y7 whilst the predicted lower births enter the system in the future. Our secondary capacity across our three planning areas will therefore be able to meet any growth from housing in the Wynyard area.

Table 5 below shows the number of each type of school operating in Stockton-on-Tees from September 2019.

Table 5 – School types

Category	Primary	Secondary
Community	17	1
Church of England Voluntary Controlled	2	0
Church of England Voluntary Aided	2	0
Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided	0	0
Academy	38	11
Free School	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>13</b>

#### Federation

A federation is a group of two or more schools that have agreed to come together, often under a single governing body. The Council cannot create a federation of schools. This must be done by the governing bodies of the schools themselves after consulting parents, staff, other schools, and the Council.

The Stockton Borough First Federation was set up on 1 April 2006. This is made up of Abbey Hill School Technology College and Westlands School, two schools that jointly provide for pupils with many kinds of special educational needs. The federation has a single governing body and one executive head teacher. The two schools remain separate schools, each with its own budget, but the single governing body can share resources (including staff) across the two schools. Both schools converted to Academy status 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.



## Demand across the Borough

### Early-years places

A free part-time nursery education place is available for every three and four-year-old whose parents want to take it up and for every eligible 2-year-old that meets Government criteria. Information about this can be found at [Childcare - Stockton Council](#). This may be in one of the nursery units attached to every primary school in the borough, in a nursery operated by providers in the private, voluntary, and independent sectors or with a child minder. Information about private nursery and childcare providers is available from the Families Information Service at [Stockton Information Directory](#)

### Primary school places

The spring schools census collected in January 2021 recorded a total of 19,618 children on roll in the 60 schools across the borough. This included 17,228 children attending the year groups Reception through to Y6 (primary cohort) against a capacity of 19,813 pupil places (as reported in SCAP 2021) providing a surplus of 13%. *Table 6* shows the number of children in each year group as at the January 2021 census:

*Table 6. Primary pupil numbers January 2021*

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2327	2345	2427	2489	2527	2582	2531

A rising trend of pupil numbers peaked in September 2015 entry and has declined since.

Every school has a Published Admission Number (PAN), this is also referred to as the ‘capacity’ of children normally admitted into Reception (four-year-olds starting school for the first time). The total Reception capacity for entry in September 2020 (as recorded in SCAP 2021) across all primary schools was 2785. Overall, in January we had a boroughwide surplus of 13% - though some planning areas have a higher percentage of surplus than others.

### Secondary school places

The spring schools census collected in January 2021 recorded a total school population of 11,844 on roll in the 13 schools across the borough. This included 11,271 children attending (Y7 to Y11) against a capacity of 12,667 pupil places. (excluding School Sixth Form places of 796 which there were 573 recorded on roll) reported in SCAP 2021. Overall, in January we had a boroughwide surplus of 11%. *Table 7* shows the number of children in each year group as at the January 2021 census:

*Table 7. Secondary pupil numbers January 2021*

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
2315	2385	2262	2186	2123	318	255

There is a continuing trend of more pupil numbers entering Y7 than there are leaving Y11. In *Table 7* it represents a 9% increase in the number of pupils entering secondary between Sept 2016 (Y11) and Sept 2020 (Y7). This steady increase was a result of a higher primary pupil population in *Table 6* that move into secondary and will continue over the next 7 years. This increasing demand and the projected cohorts led to the Council having discussions with all schools and academies with a view to increasing the capacity of secondary school places.

The total Y7 capacity for entry in September 2020 across all secondary schools was **2497 places** providing the Council with a surplus of 7.3%. However, the actual number of surplus places was a little higher due to

additional places provided by some academies admitting pupils above their admission number to meet parental demand.

### **Strategy for school investment in Stockton-on-Tees**

The key aims of the Strategy for Stockton are:

- Provide sufficient school places across the Borough and have between 5-10% surplus places to:
  - Provide every primary pupil a place within 2 miles.
  - Provide every secondary pupil a school place within 3 miles.
- Ensure that schools are maintained in a good condition, with maintenance work undertaken.
- Identify opportunities to improve the school stock.

## Section 3: Pupil projections

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## Methodology

### Data sources

The following data sources have been used to formulate the pupil forecasts:

- The latest (anonymised) **spring (Jan 2021) school census data**, providing information on the pupils attending mainstream schools in each planning area.
- The **number of pupils on roll** recorded in the spring (Jan 2021) school census data for the previous academic year.
- The number of Reception and Year 7 allocated places for Sept 2021
- Details on each mainstream **school**.
- A trajectory of **planned housing growth**.
- **Actual births** sourced from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) live births data series.
- **Projected births** sourced from the latest official sub-national population projection (SNPP) from the ONS.

### Data processing

The first stage of the projection process calculates aggregate 'target' figures for each primary and secondary year group. These target totals are derived by rolling forward actual roll numbers using cohort ratios based on historical school census data.

A cohort ratio is calculated by dividing the Spring 2021 Year 9 total by the 2020 Year 8 figure, for example, with change in the cohort size from one academic year to the next associated with migration effects. For Reception year, the cohort ratio is calculated using birth totals from five-years earlier. For use in the model, this calculation is averaged over three years of data.

The targets form the overall controlling totals for the individual school and planning area projections that are presented in the final set of primary and secondary projection results.

Birth statistics are a key input to the projection process, a trajectory of future births has been derived from the ONS 2018-based SNPP, released in March 2020. In the 2021 model update, birth totals for 2019-20 have been scaled to the 2018-based SNPP birth trajectory; fixed beyond 2023-24.

The calculation of the cohort ratios takes account of children that live in Stockton that is different to the location of their school. The balance is for a small net outflow for primary schools but for a net inflow for secondary schools.

### Live Births

From its low point in 2000/01 the birth total for Stockton-on-Tees rose substantially to reach a peak of 2,474 in 2011/12. Since then, birth numbers have gradually reduced, with just under 2,000 births in 2019/20 for entry in Sept 2024. This is the lowest births number recorded over the historical period. As a result of these trends, secondary school intake is expected to peak in Spring 2022 through to 2024, gradually reducing thereafter. The peak number on roll is likely to be achieved in Spring 2026.

The LA's secondary Capital strategy is mindful that this growth will peak 2023/24 and follow National trends and reduce year on year. This drop will increase our surplus position in Secondary in future years, this can be evidenced, as for Sept 2021 entry we have placed 2460 Y7 children whilst the equivalent Sept 2021 Reception cohort was only 2270 – an 8% reduction. With continuing lower birth rates, this downward trend will continue at least for the next 3 /4 years.

Beyond Spring 2032, the numbers on roll at secondary schools will be driven by future birth numbers (from 2020/21 onwards – COVID effect), although despite early indications Nationally that lockdown has contributed to an increase in births during 2020/21, this hasn't been reflected in birth figures across Stockton), determined by fertility trends and the size of the resident female population aged 15-49. Rebasng the most recent ONS birth projections to Stockton-on-Tees' latest birth registration count suggests a further decline in birth numbers. Erring on the side of caution given the uncertainty associated with demographic trends, the 2021 pupil projections assume that the annual estimate of new births remains constant after 2023, at 1,865 per year.

### **Primary pupil projections**

The base data for the primary pupil projections is sourced from the latest January school census (January 2021). Capacities and admission limits are also provided.

Reception intake numbers for the next academic year (Spring 2022 in the case of the 2021 model update) are estimated using the latest information on allocations and appeals available at the time of the pupil projection model being updated. These allocations totals are used as a proxy for the admission rolls in the following Spring. A check is made to ensure that the allocation and appeals (in total) is in line with the target for that year.

Reception intake numbers for subsequent projection years are estimated as an average of previous year's Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 totals, with an annual adjustment for any planned new housing or clearances in each school's admission zone.

Year 1 totals are derived from previous year's Reception totals, with adjustments applied to account for planned housing and migration factors. Totals for Years 2–6 is each calculated in a similar way.

Totals for children aged three and four are back calculated from the Reception figures for each school and are provided in the projection output to indicate the likely cohort size.

Manual adjustments to pupil projections are made under certain circumstances. These adjustments may be made to keep schools within their admission limit, with residual totals re-distributed to neighbouring primary schools.

The resulting total for the sum of pupil projections for all schools is compared to the overall target. A 'scaling factor' is calculated and is subsequently applied (in each projection year).

### **Secondary pupil projections**

The base data for the secondary pupil projections is sourced from the latest January school census (January 2021). School capacity and admission limits are also provided.

Primary school pupil census data by year-group, is used to estimate the number of Year 7 pupils expected in each secondary school's admission zone for the next seven years. This estimate is compared to the numbers of pupils on roll and a 'propensity to attend' ratio is calculated using a weighted history of data to model the Year 6 to Year 7 transition.

The first year of the projection, totals for Year 7 were provided by the admissions team and include the latest information on allocations and appeals available at the time of the projections being updated. These allocation totals are used as a proxy for the admission rolls in Spring of the same school year. A check is made to ensure that the allocation and appeals data is in line with the target for that year.

For subsequent years, the numbers in the school admission zone are estimated and the derived 'propensity to attend' ratio is applied. So, for the Year 7 projection for Spring 2023, the model uses the Year 5 pupil cohort in Spring 2021 and applies the 'propensity to attend' ratio for each school.

Secondary academies are projected using the same methodology as other secondary community schools.

Year 8 totals are derived from previous year's Year 7 totals, with adjustments for housing and migration. Year 9 to Year 11 totals is each calculated in a similar way.

Where 6th forms exist at secondary schools, projections for these year groups (Years 12 and 13) are calculated using previous 'staying-on rates' at that school.

Manual adjustments to the pupil projections are made under certain circumstances. These adjustments may be made to keep schools within their admission limit, with residual totals re-distributed to neighbouring secondary schools. These adjustments are made on request from each local authority and are based upon the school-specific intelligence of the respective place-planning teams.

The resulting total for the sum of pupil projections for all schools in Stockton is compared to the overall target. A scaling factor is calculated and is subsequently applied (in each projection year).

### **Migration & housing developments**

Sites for new housing development are split into those with and those without planning permission.

Stockton planners provide a 'family homes' percentage for each new housing site. A family home is assumed to be all homes and flats with two or more bedrooms, and not housing specifically designed for older people.

The housing data is provided in an annual, April-to-April format, with a site location (site centroid) provided for each new development. The housing totals represent the position as of April/May/June for the year that pupil projections are being formulated.

With the aid of geographical information system (GIS) technology, each housing site centroid is plotted and assigned to its relevant school admission zone where possible. Aggregate housing growth totals are calculated for each year of the projection period for each primary school (community-academy-free school and Roman Catholic (RC)-academy school) and each secondary school (community-academy-free school and RC-academy school).

Due to there being some admission zones that overlap, adjustments are made to prevent the projected number of pupils moving into new housing from being included at more than one school.

For primary schools, the Council has reverted to the Tees Valley ratios where, 100 new family homes are expected, on average, to house 21 primary school aged pupils (3.0 pupils per year group). Current school roll totals have been used to identify a likely yield for both Catholic pupils (3.5 per 100 homes or 0.5 pupils per year group) and non-Catholic pupils (17.5 per 100 homes or 2.5 pupil per year-group).

Similarly, for secondary schools, we have used the ratio that 100 new family homes are expected, on average, to house approximately 13 secondary school aged pupils (2.6 pupils per year group, Years 7–11). Current school roll totals have been used to identify a likely yield for both Catholic pupils (2.5 per 100 homes or 0.5 pupils per year group) and Non-Catholic pupils (10.5 per 100 homes or 2.1 pupil per year-group).

Stockton-on-Tees has a growing population, with a growing demand for housing. To ensure Stockton-on-Tees remains a great place to live, and that the housing needs of the Borough are met the Council will maintain a rolling 5-year supply of deliverable housing land. To achieve this the Council are preparing a new Local Plan; sites identified within the emerging Local Plan can be viewed at:

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/local-plan/>

In the 'Local Plan' includes a housing requirement of 10,150 homes to be delivered between 2017/18 and 2031/32. The housing requirement will be achieved through the delivery of homes on sites with planning applications and allocations within the emerging Local Plan. The housing strategy within the emerging Local Plan seeks to promote development in the most sustainable way through:

- Supporting the aspiration of delivering housing in the Regenerated River Tees Corridor (between A66 and Newport Bridge) near Stockton Town Centre
- Supporting development on suitable sites within the conurbation
- Creating a Sustainable Urban Extension to West Stockton
- Proposing major new residential development at Wynyard leading to the area becoming a sustainable settlement

There are several housing developments of greater than 250 homes that are either approved / planned or detailed in the 'Local Plan' across the borough that will affect most of our planning areas namely: Billingham & Wolviston – the Wynyard area (1,100 rising to 3,000+), North and Central Stockton - along Harrowgate / Yarm Back Lane (for 2,150 homes), Eaglescliffe & Yarm – (2,000+) and Ingleby Barwick – continues to expand (1,100).

### **Cross border movement**

Small adjustments have been factored into for cross border movement from pupils migrating into the Billingham & Wolviston planning area from Hartlepool BC and similarly from Stockton South planning area (Thornaby) into Middlesbrough.

### Planning area & borough level pupil projections

The following projection tables are taken from the 2021 SCAP return and incorporate the change in methodology and indicate the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for both Primary and Secondary Schools in each planning area, the allocated Reception and Y7 only cohorts and the number of children expected in each of the subsequent years of entry.

#### Billingham & Wolviston – Primary and Secondary

This area includes thirteen primary schools with **eight** being academies including the free school Wynyard CE Primary.

*Table 8 - Primary school places*

8080001 Billingham & Wolviston	Capacity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Total</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>395</b>

Recently some schools are experiencing lower than expected Reception intakes across this planning area, increasing surplus capacity so the LA will be monitoring this regarding any financial impacts on those schools involved. This trend is expected to continue based on projections due to lower birth rates. There are no planned expansions in this planning area given the capacity available.

Since its opening (Sept 2015) the free school has continued to displace children from surrounding schools namely from within this planning area but also from 8080002 as well as from neighbouring LA areas particularly those in County Durham.

In addition, a Free School application was approved in principle under Wave 14 albeit within a neighbouring LA area (Hartlepool) but in an area that will impact on Stockton – Wynyard. With 12% surplus in this planning area and only two schools full then the opening of another school would not be helpful and cause more issues for the 13 schools in this area.

It is expected that future housing growth in the Wynyard area albeit within a neighbouring Council area (Hartlepool) could see an increase in the demand for school places in the future in this planning area. The Council already works closely with HBC School Place Planning colleagues as part of the Strategic Master Plan to ensure 'jointly' that there will be sufficient school places available in the future.

*Table 9 - Secondary school places*

8080007 Billingham & Wolviston	Capacity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<b>Total</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>534</b>

There are two secondary schools - Northfield School and St Michael's Catholic Academy. The Bishop Hogarth Trust have raised concerns of the lack of available space across their school (St Michael's RC) since they approved a small increase in its Admission Number to 210 from 196. This is more than its previously PSBP funded expansion to increase the school capacity to 980. This is something the LA will look to work with the Trust to resolve. The Lower primary numbers recently entering this phase and predicted to continue, will mean that this current pressure on places will not be a long-term concern.



Traditionally the two schools accept pupils from 8080008 - Stockton North & Central due to parental preference and a RC primary feeder school into St Michael's Catholic Academy instead of a local Stockton RC secondary. There are also small numbers of residents whose children secure places in another cross-border school e.g., Sedgefield in County Durham.

The above projections do not significantly exceed the current Capacity in most years, but the level of surplus places does fall below 5% in some years. The above figures reflect some movement of pupils from Stockton North & Central (8080008) into the St Michael's from a RC feeder primary school located in Norton. There is also some consideration for SBC children who are successful in gaining a place at a Sedgefield school in County Durham each year. However, the above figures do not consider those that successfully gain a place in independent schools.

### North Stockton - Primary

This area includes fourteen primary schools (including nine academies). The table below reflects projected Reception intake numbers only.

Table 10 - Primary school places

8080002 North Stockton	Capacity		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Total</b>	<b>669</b>		<b>538</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>484</b>

Recently some schools are experiencing lower than expected Reception intakes across this planning area, increasing surplus capacity so the LA will be monitoring this regarding any financial impacts on those schools involved. This trend is expected to continue based on projections due to lower birth rates. There are no planned expansions in this planning area given the capacity available. It's worth noting that one Academy (Crooksbarrow Primary) has since increased its Admission Number (AN) to reflect parental preference by 5 places which exceeds overall Capacity in this area.

### Central Stockton - Primary

This area includes ten primary schools (including **five** academies).

Table 11 – Primary school places

8080003 Central Stockton	Capacity		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>		<b>390</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>332</b>

Recently some schools are experiencing lower than expected Reception intakes across this planning area, increasing surplus capacity so the LA will be monitoring this regarding any financial impacts on those schools involved. This trend is expected to continue based on projections due to lower birth rates. There are no planned expansions in this planning area given the capacity available.

This area sometimes experiences a 'parental preference' effect as children travel further to access Reception places outside of this planning area and many parents can access school places at other schools. One RC Academy (St Patrick's) operates a lower Admission Number than its actual capacity but if demand dictates it will admit up to its capacity of 40 places rather than AN of 30.

The LA as part of a Strategic Infrastructure Plan with several developers and landowners related to the Harrowgate / Yarm Back Lane development, has secured a commitment of a site and potential new primary school should demand dictate it in the future. At present there is sufficient capacity in surrounding schools to meet demand.

### Stockton North & Central Secondary

This area includes five schools all of which are academies.

Table 12 - Secondary school places

8080008 Stockton North & Central	Capacity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<b>Total</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>816</b>

\*The Capacity above includes a reduction of 50 places at North Shore Academy that offers an admission of 160 since Sept 2016.

As part of the LA's Capital expansion programme due to demand exceeding supply, the LA has completed the first phase of expansion at one of the academies - Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy which has been increased by 300 places from 750 to 1050.

The LA and another trust Outwood have begun initial feasibility to expand Bishopsgarth by 300 places from a 600-place school to 900 hopefully by Sept 2023, to meet current demand over the next couple of years as higher primary leavers indicate. This will increase the Capacity in this area to 1047 places

This expansion will also provide additional capacity expected from housing associated with the strategic site Harrowgate Lane / Yarm Back Lane developments. If future demand exceeds supply, then this will be revisited to take the school up to 1050.

As stated above there has always been at least 40 pupils that access provision in 808007 due to the feeder link arrangement with the RC secondary academy.

### Primary - Thornaby

This area includes seven primary schools (including 5 academies)

Table 13 - Primary school places

8080004 Thornaby	Capacity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>250</b>

Recently some schools are experiencing lower than expected Reception intakes across this planning area, increasing surplus capacity so the LA will be monitoring this regarding any financial impacts on those schools involved. This trend is expected to continue based on projections due to lower birth rates. There are no planned expansions in this planning area given the capacity available.

This area however experiences a 'parental preference' effect as children will travel further to access Reception places outside of this planning area. In addition, some schools tend to admit above their admission number which also adds capacity. This will need to be reviewed to ensure supply meets demand.

### Primary - Ingleby Barwick

This area includes six primary schools (including 3 academies)

Table 14 - Primary school places

8080005 Ingleby Barwick	Capacity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>278</b>

Due to lower Reception intakes than expected across this planning area in recent years, has led to two schools to reduce their Reception offer by 30 places each. Firstly, Ingleby Mil Primary from 90 places down to 60 Sept 2020 and a further reduction of 30 places at Whinstone (an academy) will commence from Sept 2022 also from 90 to 60. This equates to a revised offer of places in this area of 330.

The LA will be monitoring this situation especially with increased housing applications that are expected. However, at present this falling trend is expected to continue based on projections due to lower birth rates. Although there are no planned expansions in this planning area, the LA are mindful this will need to be reviewed to ensure supply meets demand.

### Primary - Eaglescliffe & Yarm

This area includes ten primary schools **all**, but one is now an academy.

Table 15 - Primary school places

8080006 Eaglescliffe & Yarm	Capacity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Total</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>234</b>

Recently some schools are experiencing lower than expected Reception intakes across this planning area, increasing surplus capacity so the LA will be monitoring this regarding any financial impacts on those schools involved. This trend is expected to continue based on projections due to lower birth rates. Although there are no planned expansions in this planning area, the LA are mindful this will need to be reviewed especially with recent planning approval for additional homes, to ensure supply meets demand.

### Stockton South Secondary

There are 6 schools **all** academies including a Free School

Table 16 - Secondary school places

8080009 Stockton South	Capacity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<b>Total</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>816</b>

At present several pupils access school places at secondary schools outside of their immediate located admission zone school, namely from the Thornaby area, as a result it leads to surplus in their local school Thornaby Academy (circa 60+) but fills up the more popular ones elsewhere in the planning area. Children from Ingleby Barwick continue to gain places in both Conyers and Egglecliffe.

Due to the excessive number of applications received by some of the schools in this planning, means that there is also the likelihood that those academies will have to admit above their capacity due to successful appeals. This creates a problem in year as it reduces places for children moving into the area wanting a place at their local school.

As part of the LA’s Capital expansion programme an increase in the number of places are being provided at All Saints CE Academy. This will increase the offer by 200 across the school from 700 to 900 places. This permanent expansion of classrooms will provide the additional capacity the school have offered Y7 pupils since September 2019 by replacing the temporary classrooms presently on site. The expansion works should be completed by late 2021 / early 2022.

There is still some movement out of this area with approximately 40 pupils who gain a place at school/schools in another LA e.g., Middlesbrough due to one Academy operating an admission policy criterion that accepts pupils from the Thornaby area. There are early indications that some MBC residents, unable to secure a Middlesbrough school place for their children are applying for and in some cases securing places in SBC schools – adding to the pressures at this current time.

### Borough level

Table 17 – Primary

Primary	Capacity		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Total (Reception only)</b>	<b>2825</b>		<b>2253</b>	<b>2181</b>	<b>2176</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>1973</b>

The projected Reception totals from 2021 to 2025 reflect the expected lower Reception numbers due to falling birth rates. It is clear from the above that we will have a higher level of supply available than the expected Reception pupil demand - which equates to a higher rate of surplus – something the LA will monitor closely. The issues in primary are therefore more about the impact of lower numbers in some schools.

Table 18 – Secondary

Secondary	Capacity		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<b>Total (Y7 only)</b>	<b>*2547</b>		<b>2468</b>	<b>2468</b>	<b>2423</b>	<b>2387</b>	<b>2346</b>	<b>2272</b>	<b>2265</b>

\* This includes a 50-place reduction in available places due to North Shore Academy reducing overall places to 160 from 210

It is clear from the table above that the next few years of projected primary pupil numbers expected to enter secondary in Y7 above, should be catered for following the Councils capital expansion to increase places in some schools. However, this situation is expected to change from Sept 2024 onwards as lower primary numbers begin to move into secondary thus increasing surplus places year on year. It also worth noting that this drop in pupil numbers will continue due to the lower pupil birth numbers as indicated in *Table 17*. Any further expansion will be predicated on future housing schemes e.g., West Stockton to ensure we can meet demand whilst carrying a small surplus of between 5 to 10 %

Darren Coulton  
October 2021