

AP-014

Council to prepare a note on the provision of schools on the proposed significant sites and how if built whether there would be any impact on the distribution of existing school provision and travel patterns within the district.

Education Provision

Delivering the right level and type of education infrastructure is essential to supporting new homes, economic growth and the creation of sustainable communities. The delivery of the full range of infrastructure needs is dependent on partnership working. MSDC seeks to achieve delivery of infrastructure through its [Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#) and facilitate a partnership approach with WSCC.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) has a statutory duty to secure sufficient suitable school places to meet the requirements for early years, primary, secondary and post-16 provision of children and young people in the county, including up to 25 for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (see page 1 of the Planning School Places 2024 below).

[Planning school places - West Sussex County Council](#)

WSCC reviews the demand for educational places every six months, and annually commissions pupil place forecasts from an independent firm of demographers, Edganalytics, which supplies data to many Local Authorities across the country. Requirements for Local Plan provision is in accordance with these projections and guidance is published on the County Council website.

[Section 106: Planning obligations - West Sussex County Council](#)

Modelling includes the latest housing trajectories from the WSCC Strategic Planning team that monitors housing in all eight District and Boroughs including the South Downs National Park and is reviewed annually.

Land and contributions are sought to build out new facilities in full forms of entry. Generally new facilities are two to three forms of entry for primary, and six to eight forms of entry at secondary, with specialist units for SEND and Early Years as appropriate. This model is generally the approach taken by the Department for Education when they deliver schools and is considered to be effective organisationally and financially viable into the future. It is also supported by the [West Sussex Education and Skills Strategy 2023 – 2025](#).

NPPG paragraph 004 [Planning obligations - GOV.UK](#) sets out that standardised or formulaic approaches can be used in Local Plan planning obligation policies in order to assess viability. Further guidance is set out by the Department for Education on [‘Securing developer contributions for education’](#) para 62.

62. As far as possible...new settlements and urban extensions large enough to require a new school should be expected to meet their full education requirement. Where an onsite school is required, it should be large enough to meet the need generated by the development, based on standard class sizes and forms of entry. For example, a development that generates 400 primary school places would require a standard two forms of entry (2FE) school.

The guidance further explains that phasing of schools and their expansion on new developments to meet demand is key to managing the system in such a way as not to detriment existing schools in the locality.

64. When a new onsite school is proposed to be built early in the development of an urban extension or new settlement, you will naturally consider the effect this might have on parental demand and the viability of existing schools. To minimise detrimental impacts on existing schools while supporting local planning authorities to plan new communities, you should work with school providers and the relevant Regional Director to promote opening strategies that will maintain equilibrium in school populations across your area. This can include phased delivery, with the initial phase future-proofed for future expansion (such as an oversized assembly hall and dining area) and land safeguarded for the school's expansion when need builds up over a lengthy period, though it is important to secure commitment to the delivery of later phases. Any subsequent conversion of non-teaching space into teaching space capacity would be subject to the 'significant change' process, if the works create space for more than 30 pupils.

Future Travel Patterns

In the case of the significant sites in Mid Sussex, it is not considered that the new primary schools will make a big impact on travel patterns as the schools will predominantly serve the new community. Very broadly, 1000 homes generates the need for a one form entry school, and 2000 homes generates the need for a two form entry school, and so on.

As the significant sites vary in size from 1350 homes (DPSC1: Land to the West of Burgess Hill/ north of Hurstpierpoint) to 2000 homes (DPSC2: Land at Crabbet Park and DPSC3: Land to the south of Reeds Lane, Sayers Common) new facilities are likely to be required to 'self-serve' and mitigate the developments themselves. This is reflected in Mid Sussex's Transport modelling work which applies an 80% reduction in overall trip rates as the majority of primary school aged children will attend the new onsite school.

Where the new secondary schools to be provided on DPSC2 and DPSC3 serve a wider geographical area, the neighbouring schools in South Mid Sussex, Crawley and East Grinstead are currently oversubscribed so any potential change in travel pattern should not detrimentally impact on their numbers.

The County Council's position is that a school planning area is full when capacity in use exceeds 95%. This is to create a minimum 5% buffer, as per the National Audit Office report on Capital Funding for new school places published in 2013, to

allow for parental preference and any sudden changes in demography. Secondary schools in Crawley Borough are at 96% capacity (page 89 of Planning School Places document 2024) and 96% and 103% in East Grinstead and South Mid Sussex (Hassocks) respectively (see [Planning School Places document 2024](#) page 133). The new schools will likely start at a smaller size than eventually anticipated and expand in a phased approach as and when needed. WSCC continue to monitor school places, taking into account population forecasts, housing development and the impact of migration.

The Mid Sussex District Plan policies set out the strategic requirements for education based on the quantum of housing for each site in order to mitigate the development and give a clear framework for developers. This is detailed in the [Mid Sussex Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#).

At the planning application stage, consideration of infrastructure need and expected requirements for each site is assessed based on the detailed housing mix, the proposal and the current methodologies for education places. This could also take into account factors that may have changed such as: the birth rate and other demographic factors, existing patterns of parental preference, travel, pupil projections and any new housing development.

Land and financial contributions will be compliant with Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and adjustments would be made if there is any overage in land or financial contributions.