



School Place Planning

For decision For discussion For information

SUMMARY

This report outlines place planning processes, forecasting of pupil numbers and capacity for mainstream and special primary and secondary schools to ensure sufficiency of places

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1. School Place Planning - Introduction

School Place Planning is a complex process and involves the following teams / personnel:

- Director of Education
- Pupil Place Planning Lead
- School Admissions
- Asset Management Team
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)
- Performance Management & Data / Forecasting
- Under 5s Service Manager

The Place Planning 'Team' meets formally three times per year: September; February and June.

The purpose of these meetings is:

- To inform of future demand for pupil places in a timely manner ensuring that the statutory duty to provide sufficiency of places is met;
- To look at emerging trends using opinions and projections from SEND, Performance & Data, School Admissions, Pupil Place Planning and Asset Management Teams;
- To provide information to support Businesses cases for capital bids.

2. Forecasts and capacity – mainstream schools

2.1 Forecast figures for next 3-5 year period

- **Early Years** data show declining numbers. See Appendix 1.

The low birth rate since 2014 is predicted to decline further over the next five years and from 2019 to 2027 by around 500 children. This is derived from live birth data and migration in and out of Reading.

BFFC is considering commissioning a housing yield figure survey given the amount of new build homes including social housing because, although housing yield data is taken into account, the formula is based on national pupil yield which may not be representative of Reading. The School Admissions Manager will analyse the 2019 Primary Admissions Round and In-Year applications from the Conway Close development to compare the actual numbers with Housing Yield data from that development once the round is complete in August in order to gain accurate figures.

The Early Years population is levelling out following a growth. The demographics of cities is changing resulting in more over 50 aged people and fewer children below 5 years of age. With regard to Early Years provision, it is difficult to predict take up of places as some parents working in Reading may choose provision nearer to their work than their home in another authority and vice versa.

- **Primary:** See Appendix 2.

Office of National Statistics figures and Reading predictions show that from 2019 the numbers are declining from nearly 14,000 children to 13,000 in 2027. At the end of July 2019 primary bulge classes in five schools will move through into year seven. There are a further two schools with bulge classes moving through to secondary schools in 2020.

BFFC need to communicate low birth rates and the impact on reception and primary classes in order to help schools manage their budgets. The Ridgeway is seeking to reduce its Pupil Admission Number by 30 from 2020 (total places 180). This will occur when the Green Park Village Primary School opens, admitting reception class initially.

- **Secondary:** See Appendix 1.

Appendix 1 shows that the secondary-age (11-16) population is predicted to increase from just below 9,500 in 2019 to just over 10,500 in 2027. In the Secondary Routine Round, 209 more applications were made for Reading schools when in the past these parents would have applied to neighbouring authority schools. This shows an increased parental confidence in Reading Schools and is good news for Reading.

For September 2019, BFFC have negotiated bulge classes with the head teachers of Blessed Hugh Faringdon (30), Highdown (30) and the Wren (28). Maiden Erlegh School (Reading) is taking an additional 12 pupils by adding two in each form entry. Neighbouring authorities offered additional places in order to cover the remaining places.

2.2 Admissions data compared with forecasts: summary statements

- **Early Years:** there will be a surplus of places.
- **Primary:** Appendix 2 shows the predicted number-on-roll figures for all year groups with housing yield included against capacity. This shows a surplus of places in all years and the increased capacity at 2020 with the opening of Green Park Village School.
- **Secondary:** Appendix 3 shows the Year 7 allocated places and the deficit in capacity in September 2019. This is due to the additional 209 requested places resulting in the three bulge classes in September 2019 (c.f. Section 2.1 Secondary). Note that the spike in capacity in 2022 accounts for the new places at the new secondary free school. It was envisaged that the new secondary school (Rivermead site) would open in September 2021; this is now unlikely to open until September 2022 at the earliest.

If the pattern of increased applications to Reading Schools continues there is a risk that BFFC will need bulge classes in 2020 and 2021. These will be in addition to the classes required to cope with the deficit caused by the delayed school places at the Rivermead site. These bulge classes need to be negotiated.

The Place Planning Team has analysed the data from the neighbouring authority planning areas closest to Reading and it is evident that BFFC will not be able to rely on Wokingham and West Berkshire to provide additional places as their data is showing the same capacity issues as Reading. Appendix 4 shows the total number of pupils enrolled in Reading Secondary schools compared with capacity.

3. Forecasts and capacity – special school and resource units

3.1 Special Educational Need and Disabilities (SEND) - forecast figures and summary statement:

- Appendix 5 shows the SEND Projections table for Early Years, Primary, Secondary and post-16. The capacity for special school and specialist resource places is insufficient to meet need.
- Negotiations are underway to increase the number of resource places for children with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). There are currently 21 pupils at Christ the King primary ASC Resource; this will reduce to 12. A further two new resource units are planned which will provide a maximum of 15 pupils in each of the three resources. The Blessed Hugh Faringdon secondary ASC resource has capacity for 20 pupils and this will increase to 30 from September 2019.
- The Avenue School (Profound and Multiple Disabilities) is admitting an additional 25 pupils from September 2019.
- BFFC has secured agreement to open a new special school catering for pupils with ASC and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties which will take pupils through from primary to secondary; the official opening date remains September 2021 but is likely to be delayed to 2022.
- Phoenix College is due to relocate in September 2021. The College will then begin the process of admitting female student.

4. Asset Management and Planning

The RBC Asset Management Team need a two year lead-in for any new build including planning permission and actual build and a nine month lead-in for temporary modular buildings. It is, therefore, crucial that any building needs related to school place planning are clearly communicated to allow for any funding bids or to ensure it is built into the capital budget and programme.

To enable efficient information-sharing all raw data and strategies are stored on a shared drive to which the whole School Place Planning Team has access.

5. Summary and conclusions

5.1 Early Years and Primary Schools:

- The low birth rate and decrease in early years pupil numbers will impact on early years and primary provision; there will be more empty places and this will affect school budget as there will be fewer children. Across Reading there are currently 304 empty spaces although this may decrease over the summer as children move into Reading seeking in-year places.
- There will continue to be a surplus of places through the five year forecast period until 2023. BFFC needs to work with early years providers and primary schools to manage this in terms of space and budgets. BFFC must also work within a 5% leeway to ensure sufficiency of places rather than working to capacity.

5.2 Secondary Schools:

- Due to increased demand for places in Reading schools, three bulge classes plus an additional 12 places have been negotiated for September 2019.
- If the pattern of more applications to Reading schools continues there is a risk that BFFC will need further bulge classes in 2020 and 2021 as highlighted in section 2.2 Secondary. BFFC will need to negotiate these classes but there is a risk that we will only be able to approach two schools that do not already have bulge classes. Furthermore, our neighbours are not likely to be able to take more Reading pupils. BFFC is reviewing the situation.
- There will be added costs in providing bulge classes. Creating additional accommodation on some sites may involve moving or adding modular temporary buildings. Growth Funding can be provided to schools for taking on bulge classes, to be agreed at Schools' Forum.
- The new secondary school is unlikely to open until September 2022 at the earliest; as highlighted above, bulge classes are required to cope with the deficit caused by the delayed school places. As few schools remain that can accept a bulge class there is a risk of shortfall in places.
- BFFC need to monitor capacity for 2024 when there may be a shortfall in places as the increased population moves through the secondary phase. This will also affect post 16 and sixth-form provision.

5.3 Special Schools and Resource Unit:

- There is insufficient special provision in Reading particularly in the areas of ASC and SEMH. The Special Educational Needs and Disability strategy planned for a 70 place special school to increase capacity but this will be delayed until 2022 at the earliest. Pupils will continue to be placed outside Reading - potentially in expensive provision; this will clearly have an impact on the budget and delay any saving that the new school places would provide. With the number of SEND pupils increasing there is likely to be a shortfall of SEND places projecting forward.
- The SEND strategy includes working with neighbouring authorities strategically, enabling pupils to attend schools nearer their home and community. This will reduce expenditure on school transport and potentially on placements.
- The additional primary and secondary ASC resource provision is intended to reduce the need for out-borough provision creating a budget saving and enabling pupils to be educated in their communities.

Appendices:

1. Reading Population figures – Early Years to 25
2. Total Primary School pupils – forecast and capacity
3. Secondary Year 7 allocations - forecast and capacity
4. Total Secondary School - pupils – forecast and capacity
5. SEND projections

CLASSIFICATION: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Appendix 1 - Reading Population figures – Early Years to 25

Forecast figures for next 3-5 year period

- Early Years
- Primary
- Secondary

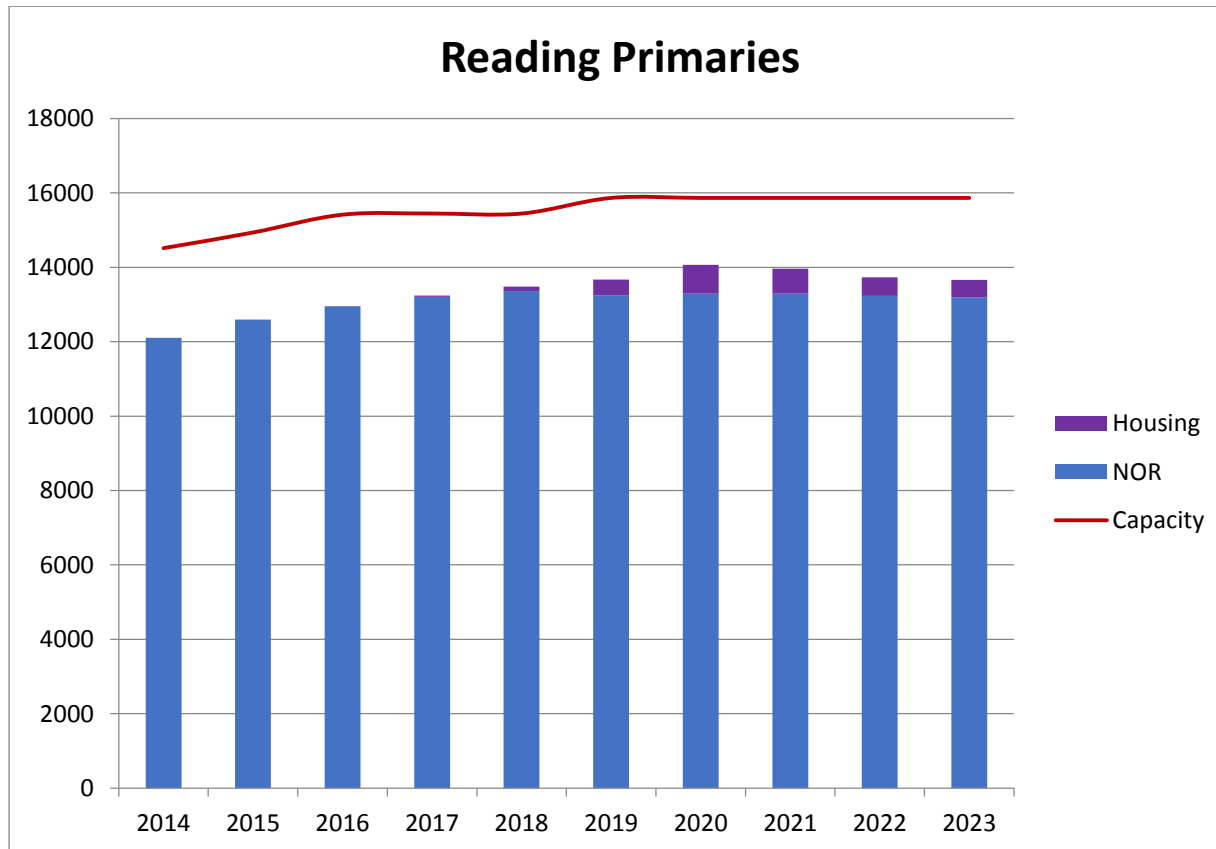
The table below shows the population historical numbers and future projected numbers for young people in Reading up to 2027. Source Office of National Statistics

Reading Population under 25																	
Actual and projected number of children and young people in Reading by age group																	
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Under 5	11,937	12,284	12,400	12,571	12,485	12,381	12,242	12,044	11,979	11,936	11,871	11,805	11,723	11,646	11,580	11,515	11,455
Aged 5-10	10,118	10,686	11,470	12,084	12,613	13,068	13,401	13,692	13,640	13,581	13,490	13,377	13,263	13,081	13,022	12,988	12,941
Aged 11-15	8,061	7,946	7,900	7,969	8,057	8,198	8,461	8,935	9,439	9,850	10,222	10,502	10,688	10,775	10,762	10,679	10,580
Aged 16-19	8,154	7,655	7,969	7,859	8,031	7,971	7,957	7,859	7,826	7,846	7,960	8,308	8,667	9,100	9,466	9,743	9,945
Aged 20-25	17,528	17,391	17,306	17,368	17,752	17,667	17,443	17,331	17,390	17,297	17,134	16,846	16,732	16,785	16,890	17,181	17,630
Total	55,798	55,962	57,045	57,851	58,938	59,285	59,504	59,861	60,274	60,510	60,677	60,838	61,073	61,387	61,720	62,106	62,551

Source: Population Projections (2011) ONS 2011 Census - QS103EW Age by single year. (2012 & 2013) ONS Population Estimates - local authority by single year of age. (2014 to 2027) ONS Population Projections (released January 2017) - local authority by single year of age.

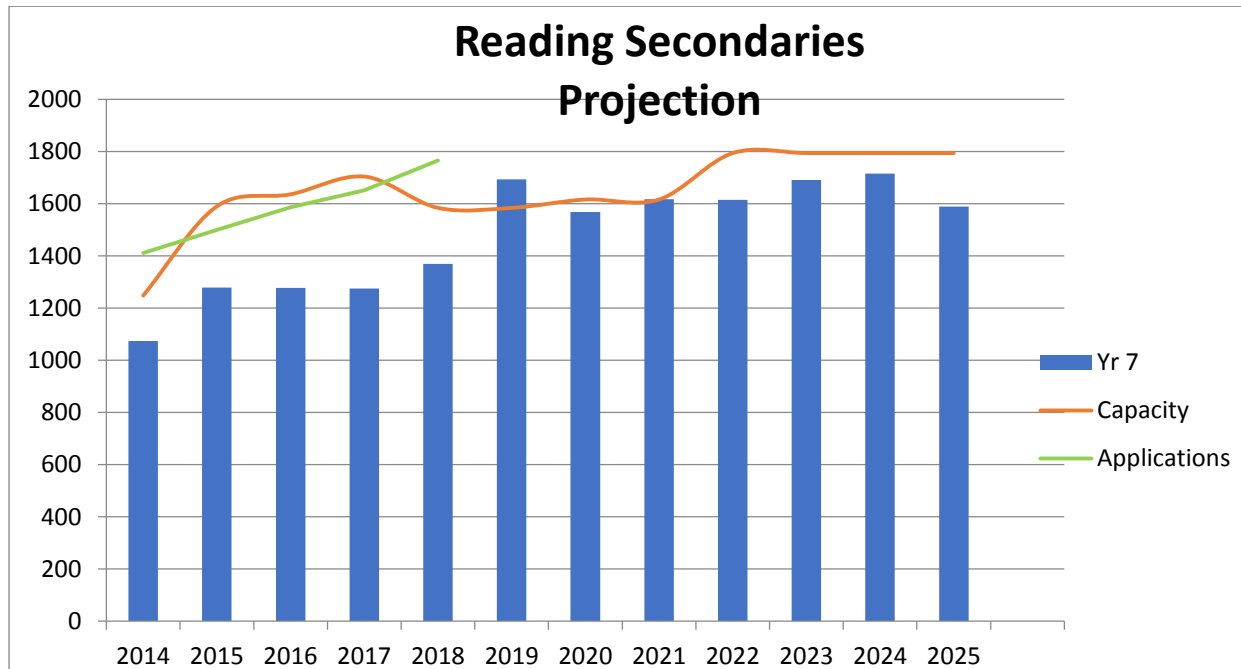
Appendix 2 - Total Primary School pupils – forecast and capacity

The table below shows the total number of pupils enrolled in Reading primary schools.



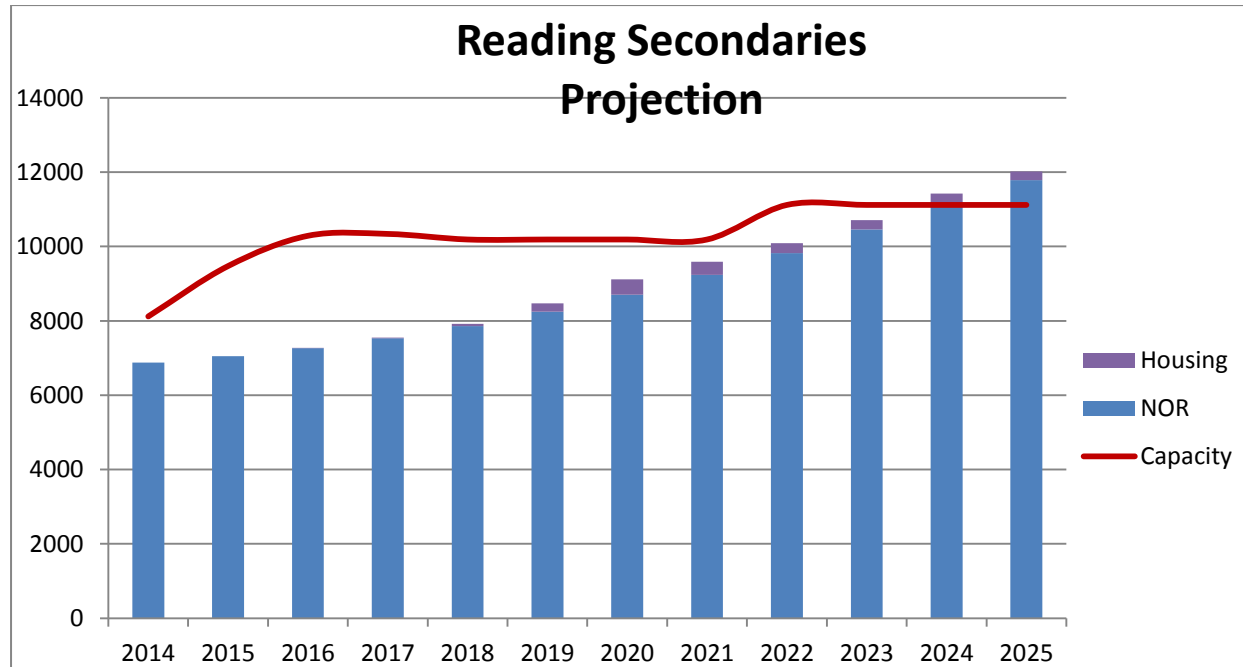
Appendix 3 - Secondary Year 7 allocations - forecast and capacity

The table below shows the number of pupils allocated year 7 places in Reading secondary schools



Appendix 4 - Total Secondary School - pupils – forecast and capacity

The table below shows the total number of pupils enrolled in Reading secondary schools.



Appendix 5 - SEND projections for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

RBC SEND Projections												
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
EYFS	9	8	10	6	5	9	9	10	11	11	12	13
Primary	110	111	112	115	122	125	134	143	153	163	174	185
Secondary	79	83	98	118	123	147	157	168	180	192	204	217
Post 16	6	18	17	14	21	22	24	26	27	29	31	33
Total	205	220	236	253	271	290	311	332	355	378	403	429
Capacity	218	218	218	218	221	246	276	276	276	346	346	346
Surplus	13	-2	-18	-35	-50	-44	-35	-56	-79	-32	-57	-83

Historical totals are derived from the DfE Cross Border Movement (CBM) tables

Predictions are based on nine years of historical trends and projected forward.