



Report to Policy Committee

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Head of Commissioning Vulnerable Adults

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Report of: *Director of Integrated Commissioning*

Report to: *Education Children and Families Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: *31st January 2023*

Subject: All Phase Mainstream Commissioning Plan 2023-2026 – decision to consult with key stakeholders

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? People/TB/BK/280722				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i>				

<p>Purpose of Report:</p> <p>To share with members the Local Authority’s draft All Phase Mainstream Commissioning Plan 2023-2026, covering Early Education & Childcare, Primary, Secondary & Post 16 sectors. Please see Annex 1.</p> <p>To seek Committee agreement to share the draft plan with key stakeholders and other interested parties in the Spring 2023 via consultation.</p> <p>A briefing of the ‘Headlines’ of the All Phase Mainstream Commissioning Plan was provided to members at the December Committee.</p> <p>Should members take the decision to agree to proceed with the consultation, feedback from the consultation will then be taken into account prior to a proposed formal publication of the Commissioning Plan in late summer 2023.</p>

Recommendations:

We recommend that the Committee:

- 1) Notes the content of the Mainstream Commissioning Plan 2023-2026 and associated Action Plans, including the Vision, Values, Principles and our approach to sufficiency planning.
- 2) Notes the intention to share the draft plan with key stakeholders and other interested parties via a consultation in the Spring 2023 and endorses the plan for this purpose.
- 3) Advise how Committee members wish to be engaged in the Spring Consultation process e.g. workshop/focus group etc.

Background Papers:

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Mark Sheikh & Damien Watkinson
		Legal: Nadine Wynter
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate: Jessica Rick
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Joe Horrobin</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Mick Rooney</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Sam Martin</i>	Job Title: <i>Head of Commissioning Vulnerable Adults</i>
	Date: <i>24/1/2022</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Sheffield City Council has statutory duties under several pieces of legislation including the Education Act 1996, the Childcare Act 2006 and the Children and Families Act 2014 to ensure sufficient childcare and school places, promote parental choice, diversity, and fair access.
- 1.2 In order to ensure the Local Authority continues to meet its statutory duties, a mainstream Commissioning Plan covering the period September 2023 –August 2026 has been developed (**see Annex 1**). This Commissioning Plan 2023-2026 is a three-year rolling plan that will be reviewed annually. It sets out how the Local Authority, in accordance with its statutory duty, seeks to ensure there are sufficient learning places in the right locations to meet demand, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards.

Specifically this means:

- Ensuring sufficient good quality Early Education and Childcare provision for working parents and those in education or training, and access to Funded Early Learning places.
 - Providing a good quality primary and secondary school places for every child when pupil populations are high and managing surplus places when pupil populations fall.
 - Ensuring sufficient good quality post 16 places for young people to transition into adulthood.
- 1.3 Sheffield experienced a 25% increase in births between 2002 and 2012, after which births reduced. Office for National Statistics forecasts suggest that the birth rate will continue to remain low with gradual year on year increases to the end of the decade. This increase or ‘bulge’ in population initially put pressure on the primary sector, but now the sector is experiencing a surplus of places.
- 1.4 Over the planning period 2023-2026, our forecasts show that, in line with reducing births, there will continue to be areas of falling demand for early education and childcare and primary places, but the level of surplus places varies across the planning areas. This larger birth cohort has moved its way through the early years and primary sector and is now in the secondary sector. Throughout this period of growth, places have been added through the primary and secondary sector to manage the larger birth cohort.
- 1.6 Secondary school places have been at or near full capacity since 2018/19. The current city-wide picture for secondary school places forecasts a potential deficit of places across the city from 2020-2024, reaching a high point in 2023/24 after which a surplus is forecast to develop in some parts of the city.

Growing demand for Secondary School places is not evenly distributed across the city

- 1.7 Over the planning period 2023-2026 our forecasts show that there will continue to be areas of growing demand for secondary school places, but demand is not evenly distributed across the city. We have particular pressure for secondary school places in Planning Area 1 in the southwest of the city in addition to other

planning areas, e.g., Planning Area 5 which is in the northeast of the city. However, beyond this planning period, forecasts show that there will be areas across the city with declining demand for secondary places.

- 1.8 For Post 16, Year 12 learner numbers are forecast to increase in 2023/24 and will continue to rise each year, reaching a 'peak' beyond this planning period in 2028/29 where we predict a Year 12 population of over 7,300 pupils.
- 1.9 Demand is rising for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities places and is forecast to continue to rise, driven primarily by pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder and those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. Sufficiency covers provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities across all settings including mainstream and specialist school places.

Many factors & variables affect the demand for places, some of which cannot be planned for

- 1.10 Place planning is a complex process, influenced by demographics, mobility, and housing yield, as well as parental preference, geography, travel, and transport. Twice yearly reviews of population data and the tracking of live school applications, as well as dialogue with neighbouring authorities, help to manage the risks associated with these variables. With rapid shifts in economic conditions for families and changing patterns of migration, planning for 'Basic Need' requires a proactive approach to best respond to both short and medium-term demand as the primary, secondary and special school pupil populations fluctuate.
- 1.11 Examples of unplanned variables include inward and outward migration, including migration into and out of the UK; cross border movement (children moving to schools in other local authority areas); changes in the housing market and housing developments; parental preference; changes in private education provision etc.

Creating additional school places is challenging

- 1.12 The context for planning for future early education, childcare, school and post 16 places includes the limited availability of capital funding. This poses the challenge of finding creative, cost effective and value for money solutions that provide the sufficient numbers of high-quality places required, where they are needed and when they are needed, so that children and young people can access provision locally. The scale of the development and associated upfront costs of establishing a new school building present a challenge when funding is limited, and different funding sources are required to align for a single purpose.
- 1.13 The creation of new provision is complex and cannot always be achieved by incremental expansion and growth of existing provision. The introduction of new places in the wrong location or at the wrong time can create sustainability challenges for existing schools, which are already under increasing financial pressures. With this in mind, when planning school places it is important that we do not create an over-supply of places.

Local Authority's plans for new homes in the city, potential pupil yield and impact on demand for school places

- 1.14 Sheffield City Council aims to deliver 2,100 new homes per year by 2039 with 50% of these being in the central area. The council has also embarked on an ambitious programme to deliver additional new council homes by 2029 – a combination of new builds and purchased properties. As housing development plans progress in the medium to longer term, future projections for school planning areas may change as housing development plans progress in the medium to longer term. Future versions of the Commissioning plan will provide more clarity on these issues.

We have already worked to meet our statutory duties – progress to date

- 1.15 **Early Years:** Produced annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessments; monitored the impact of Covid on the childcare market; completed a Parental Childcare Survey; completed a Childcare Provider survey; stimulated demand; promoted Tax Free Childcare; encouraged providers to take a sustainable business approach; provided Quality Improvement Support to providers; provided advice/guidance to parents/carers; maintained a Directory of all Sheffield Childcare Providers.
- 1.16 **Primary:** Negotiated additional school places in areas of deficit; agreed temporary reduction in Pupil Admission Numbers at schools; consulted with schools and Trusts; introduced falling rolls fund for 2021/22.
- 1.17 **Secondary:** Negotiated additional school places; commissioned new schools; agreed permanent expansions at schools; consulted with schools and Trusts; moved to a city-wide allocations system.
- 1.18 **Post 16:** Opened a new free school sixth form academy; introduced new sixth form places at secondary schools from 2023/24; proportionate sixth form increases linked to school expansions; increased sixth form provision for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- 1.19 **SEND within mainstream schools:** Several interventions have already been put in place, including additional support for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators and growth of Integrated Resources, where children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities split their time between mainstream classes and receiving support in the Integrated Resource.

Next steps: Action Plans for each sector to ensure we continue to meet our statutory duties and own ambitions

- 1.20 **Early Years:** Reduce inequalities through provision of sufficient, high quality, accessible, and inclusive early education and childcare places; promote inclusion by offering support and information to parents and professionals; consider the impact of planned housing on the likely demand for early education and childcare places across the city; raise standards by prioritising recruitment and retention of the workforce and professional development opportunities; promote early education and childcare.
- 1.21 **Primary:** Temporarily reduce Pupil Admission Numbers where appropriate; work with identified schools where pupil numbers are not expected to recover in the long term to explore suitable options; temporary / permanent expansions of schools in

areas of high local demand; consider the impact of new housing developments and changing migration patterns on primary school demand; effective use of the school estate.

1.22 **Secondary:** Increase Pupil Admission Numbers with existing schools; permanent expansions in the southwest of the city; consider the impact of planned housing on the likely demand for secondary places across the city; explore options for temporary and potential permanent expansions in Planning Area 5; create a falling rolls plan post 2024; effective use of the school estate.

1.23 **Post 16:** Ensure sufficiency of post 16 places; consultation with post 16 sector; consider the impact of planned housing on the likely demand for post 16 places across the city; ensure sufficient post 16 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities places.

1.24 **SEND within mainstream schools:** . From a mainstream perspective, in order to meet this rising demand, our intention is to support and enable more mainstream inclusion. Delivering this requires us to be innovative, recognising the challenges, and working in partnership with our localities, schools, and academy trusts. A separate SEND strategic sufficiency plan covers this area in more detail.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 As part of laying the foundations for our future, we want pupils in Sheffield to have access to a wide range of educational opportunities to achieve their full potential as set out in the 'Our Sheffield: One Year Plan'. Working alongside city partners such as schools and Trusts, with ambition, openness and purpose, towards a bright future for our city and its pupils.

2.2 The Commissioning Plan will ensure that the Local Authority meets its statutory duties under the Education Act to provide sufficient school places, promote parental choice, diversity and fair access. Ensuring that there are enough school places for every school-age child is a fundamental responsibility of local government and is essential to the Sheffield City Council's focus on enabling children to have a great start in life, achieve their full potential, and contribute to the success of the city. At the heart of the vision for increasing school places in Sheffield is the Council's role in guaranteeing excellent education outcomes and equitable access for all.

2.3 The vision is for all Sheffield families to have access to great, inclusive schools in every area of the city. This means schools ensuring each child reaches their potential, equal access for the most vulnerable children, schools at the heart of their communities, and getting the best value from all funding opportunities.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 Consultation on our Commissioning Plan for 2023-2026 is an important stage in the policymaking process. In the first instance it allows the evidence base to be built, secondly, it ensures transparency in the process, and thirdly it gives our stakeholders understanding and ownership of the ultimate outcomes.

3.2

Should a decision be taken by Members that this Commissioning Plan 2023-2026 can be published, we will undertake an informal consultation on this draft in the spring 2023, seeking the views of our key stakeholders and partners within the early education, childcare, primary, secondary and post-16 sectors including: parents and carers, parents' forums, Learn Sheffield, early education and childcare providers, school leaders (via the Primary and Secondary Heads Partnership Group), governors, academy trusts, dioceses, colleges, training providers, local planning authorities, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, developers and other interested parties. All consultation responses will be analysed and fed back into the policy making process which includes future drafts of the Commissioning Plan.

3.3

Individual Statutory Consultations will be undertaken as appropriate, as part of any statutory process of carrying out any interventions within the sectors e.g. in order to address a deficit of pupil places in 2023/24, a Statutory Consultation will be undertaken by the specific school(s) which the Local Authority will be working with to expand provision.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 Decisions need to take into account the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

4.1.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

4.1.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and highlights that the Commissioning Plan primarily impacts the children and young people in the 0-18 age group for pupils within the Early Years and school age cohorts which will include BME pupils and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The impact will also be felt by different communities and localities. Expansions at schools also impact on other factors such as Climate, Transport, Ecology etc within a specific Planning Area. Individual project proposals will be assessed for cumulative impact and have their own Equality Impact Assessment as part of the project.

4.2 Finance Implications

4.2.1 The council has now received details of its Basic Need Funding Allocation (Central Government Capital Funds for the creation of School Places) up to 2024/25, these

total £9.8m. Existing commitments from this and balance brought forward from previous years leaves £5.5m available for investment.

4.2.2 The capital costs associated with any proposed expansions mentioned within this Commissioning Plan (not including Early Years places for which no specific capital funding is received) will initially be met from this remaining balance, but each project will be subject to its own Capital and Revenue clearance and approval process. Indications from discussions with DfE are that additional Basic Need funding may be available from 2025/26 to meet the cost of any future expansions.

4.2.3 Schools will be allocated any funding for growth in line with the relevant financial year's Growth Funding Policy, subject to any changes in national guidance and legislation surrounding The Schools and Early Years Funding Regulations.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The proposed All Phase Mainstream Commissioning Plan outlined in this report will support the Council to meet its statutory duties under the Education Act 1996, the Childcare Act 2006 and the Children and Families Act 2014. These duties are referenced in paragraph 1.1 of the report.

4.3.2 As mentioned in section 3 of the report, the Commissioning Plan will be subject to various forms of consultation. Once all the consultation responses have been received and analysed any legal implications will be considered at that time.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 As part of this overarching strategic plan for education and childcare commissioning, we need to consider the climate impact. Due to the high-level nature of the plan, we are unable to complete a full Climate Impact Assessment, however we have used the Climate Impact Assessment Team's guidance to ensure we consider the relevant climate factors and how we can work to reduce our climate impact. When specific projects are developed, we will complete a full Climate Impact Assessment using the Climate Impact Assessment Tool, so we can clearly report on the climate impact and ensure we are reducing the impact wherever possible. In producing the Climate Impact Assessment, we have consulted the Sustainability & Climate Change team.

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 No further implications have been identified.

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 No alternative options have been considered.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 The Commissioning Plan will ensure that the Local Authority meets its statutory duties under the Education Act to provide sufficient school places, promote

parental choice, diversity and fair access. Consultation on our Commissioning Plan for 2023-2026 is an important stage in the policymaking process. In the first instance it allows the evidence base to be built, secondly, it ensures transparency in the process, and thirdly it gives our stakeholders understanding and ownership of the ultimate outcomes.

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Sheffield City Council

**Commissioning Plan
2023-2026:**

**Early Education &
Childcare, Primary,
Secondary & Post 16 Sectors**

**Securing sufficient high-quality
learning places**

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1. Executive Summary

Sheffield City Council has statutory duties under several pieces of legislation including the Education Act 1996, the Childcare Act 2006 and the Children and Families Act 2014 to ensure sufficient childcare and school places, promote parental choice, diversity, and fair access. This plan sets out how the Local Authority will meet its sufficiency duties through forecasting demand and ensuring sufficient early education, childcare, primary, secondary and post 16 places are in place to meet that demand.

For early education and childcare this means ensuring, where practicable, sufficient early education and childcare provision for working parents and those in education or training, and access to Funded Early Learning places. For the primary and secondary sector, this means providing a school place for every child when pupil populations are high and managing excess surplus places when they fall. Local Authorities are required to ensure there are enough primary and secondary school places for children in their local area; this is referred to as 'Basic Need.'

Demand is rising for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities places and is forecast to continue to rise, driven by primarily by pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder and those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. From a mainstream perspective, in order to meet this rising demand, the Local Authority's intention is to provide better mainstream inclusion. Delivering this requires innovation, recognising the challenges, and working in partnership with our localities, schools, academy trusts and other key stakeholders.

This Commissioning Plan, which covers the period September 2023 to August 2026, is a three-year rolling plan that will be reviewed annually. It sets out how the Local Authority, in accordance with its statutory duty, seeks to ensure there are sufficient learning places in the right locations to meet demand, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards.

Place planning is a complex process, influenced by demographics, mobility, and housing yield, as well as parental preference, geography, travel, and transport. Twice yearly reviews of population data and the tracking of live school applications, as well as dialogue with neighbouring authorities, help to manage the risks associated with these variables. With rapid shifts in economic conditions for families and changing patterns of migration, planning for 'Basic Need' requires a proactive approach to best respond to both short and medium-term demand as the primary, secondary and special school pupil populations fluctuate.

At the heart of the vision for securing sufficient and inclusive learning places in Sheffield is the Local Authority's role in providing excellent education outcomes and equitable access for all. The introduction of new places in the wrong location or at the wrong time can create sustainability challenges for existing schools, which are already under increasing financial pressures.

For early education and childcare, the Local Authority's role is one of 'facilitating' sufficiency of places, rather than 'delivering' places. In order to do this, we work alongside the sector and monitor sufficiency, utilising take up patterns to provide us with indicators of the number of places that may be required in different Planning Areas of the city. Take up of places is not compulsory, parents can choose between a vast number of early education and childcare providers, from childminders to private and school nursery settings. Parents also seek places outside their local area, nearer to other family members or nearer/on-route to work.

Families have varying requirements for the number of hours and the number of children eligible for some elements of Funded Early Learning. Funded Early Learning is Government funded childcare for all 3-and-4-year-olds, and eligible 2-year-olds. All 3-and-4-year-olds get 15 hours per week of free childcare and some can get up to 30 hours a week. These additional funded hours are known as the Extended Funded Entitlement. The Local Authority undertakes an annual childcare sufficiency assessment which is an in-depth city-wide and area analysis of the numbers of eligible children and take up of the various Funded Early Learning entitlements across the city to identify any areas where we may see low uptake or fewer available places.

Sheffield experienced a 25% increase in births between 2002 and 2012, after which births reduced. Office for National Statistics forecasts suggest that the birth rate will continue to remain low with gradual year on year increases to the end of the decade. Reduced births and other recent factors such as the Covid Pandemic have also led to a challenging market for early education and childcare providers, both in schools and in the private, voluntary and community sector.

This increase or 'bulge' in population mentioned above initially put pressure on the primary sector, but now the sector is experiencing a surplus of places. Over the planning period 2023-2026, our forecasts show that, in line with reducing births, there will continue to be areas of falling demand for early education and childcare and primary places, but the level of surplus places varies across the planning areas.

The secondary sector is now under pressure as the increase or 'bulge' in population has moved into this sector, and secondary school places have been at

or near full capacity since 2018/19. Over the planning period 2023-2026 our forecasts show that there will continue to be areas of growing demand for secondary school places, but demand is not evenly distributed across the city. We have particular pressure for secondary school places in the southwest of the city (Planning Area 1), in addition to other planning areas, such as in the northeast of the city (Planning Area 5). However, beyond this planning period, forecasts show that there will be areas across the city with declining demand for secondary places.

This plan explains how we will work with primary and secondary schools that face these current and future challenges associated with falling rolls. The Department for Education have specified that both academy trusts and Local Authorities should manage the school estate efficiently and should reduce or find alternative uses for high levels of spare capacity, in order to avoid detriment to schools' educational offer or financial position.

As part of this, the Department for Education expect academy trusts and Local Authorities to consider all options for the reutilisation of space, including, for example, increasing the provision of early education and childcare, and reconfiguration, including via remodelling, amalgamations, and closure where this is the best course of action. With this in mind, when planning school places it is important that we do not create an over-supply of places.

When planning future places, using our forecasts the Local Authority works closely with a range of key stakeholders including: parents and carers, parents' forums, Learn Sheffield, early education and childcare providers, school leaders (via the Primary and Secondary Heads Partnership Group), governors, academy trusts, dioceses, colleges, training providers, local planning authorities, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, developers and other interested parties. This is done with the aim of delivering a high quality and inclusive education for all pupils in Sheffield. Our challenge, like other local authorities, is to find creative, cost effective and value for money solutions that provide the sufficient numbers of high-quality places required.

In terms of schools, alongside our statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places to meet demand, we are also responsible for promoting a good supply of places at strong schools. This is achieved through planning, organising, and commissioning places in a way that raises attainment, increases diversity, encourages collaboration between schools and promotes community cohesion. Increases in demand can lead to the establishment of new provision or the expansion of existing provision. Decreases in demand can lead to a reduction in

places through changes to admission arrangements or the rationalisation of provision.

The transition from the secondary to the post 16 sector is the fundamental step in young people's journey to adulthood. Post 16 should provide the skills and experience which enable them to become more independent. There should be the opportunity to learn skills which will enable them to gain employment where appropriate, to play a role in their communities and to learn how to access support from these same communities. It is therefore important that the Local Authority continues to work with the post 16 sector to ensure there are sufficient post 16 places to meet demand.

This plan provides an overview of the national, local, and legal context in relation to early education, childcare, school and post 16 place planning. It explains our planning areas across the city, how we calculate projected demand, and how we ensure there is a sufficient supply of places in the right areas at the right time. It outlines the resources and the process required to ensure these places are available, including the need to commission additional places or re-organise existing provision. It also sets out our approach to address the current and future over-supply of primary and secondary places in areas where it is forecast that schools are likely to experience falling rolls.

Any reviews of childcare and education provision we undertake and any recommendations for provider or school re-organisation (for example opening, closing, amalgamating, enlarging, or contracting of schools) will, in part, be based on information contained in this plan.

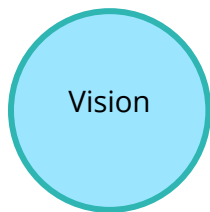
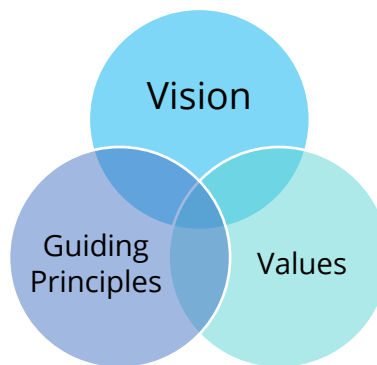
It highlights the work that we have already done across each sector, but it also contains a series of action plans which set out our strategic priorities for early education, childcare, primary, secondary and post 16 sectors for the period 2023-2026.

Finally, we would like to hear your views on our sufficiency plan and in particular our strategic priorities set out within the individual action plans. Please see Section 13 of this document on how to feed in your views.

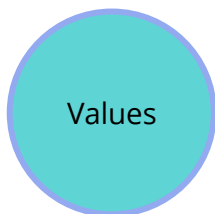
Thank you.

2. Vision, Values & Guiding Principles

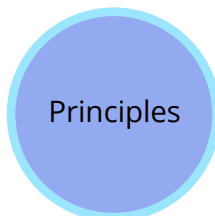
Place Planning



- Ensuring that every child and young person in Sheffield has access to a great local place, at each phase from early education and childcare, right through to the post 16 sector by providing a responsive, agile, and flexible place planning system that meets current and future demand in a timely and collaborative way.



- Children, Young People, and Families are at the heart of what we do
- Openness and honesty are important to us
- Together we get things done - working in partnership across all sectors



We will:

- **develop and sustain high trust relationships**, building on previous successes to strengthen the quality of our policy making practice and make changes in partnership and in consultation with our key stakeholders
- use local knowledge and intelligence (e.g. data and feedback) to ensure that schools and providers are of the **right size and in the right location to meet demand** for places.
- ensure that provision is **sustainable and well placed** to deliver a **high-quality education** that meets the needs of the local community and makes **best use of public funding**.
- **promote educational inclusion** and focus on preparing children for transitions and independence.
- **exploit opportunities for innovative practice when developing proposals** in order to support sustainability and value for money by linking different services together.
- **assess wider impact** where any new schools are being developed by considering the impact on other schools and providers and the impact of early education, childcare and post 16 provision. This also extends to assessment of equalities and climate impact of any proposals.

3. National & Local Context including Population and Pupil Cohorts

Following the national picture, births in Sheffield rose by 25% between 2002 and 2012 which initially put pressure on the primary sector. Since the 2012 peak, births have been falling and Office for National Statistics forecasts suggest that the birth rate will continue to remain low with gradual year on year increases to the end of the decade.

Early Education & Childcare

In terms of the early education and childcare sector, the current 0–4-year-old cohort has continued to fall year on year with 6,012 births in 2018/19, reducing to a low point of 5,733 births in 2020/21. Reduced births and other recent factors such as the Covid Pandemic have led to a challenging market for early education and childcare providers, both in schools and in the private, voluntary and community sectors. In addition, since Brexit, some areas of the city have seen further reduced demand as some families from Europe have returned to their home countries and fewer have come to settle in the UK.

The pandemic was a challenging time for early education and childcare providers, particularly those delivering paid-for childcare, with changes to the economy and an increase in the number of parents working from home contributing to a decline in demand for those services. Feedback from the recently undertaken provider survey suggests that that trend is now being reversed, with 34% of 88 respondents indicating that demand for paid-for childcare has been increasing since the start of 2022.

However, remaining sustainable whilst offering good quality provision continues to be a challenge for the early education and childcare sectors. Increases in the living wage, pension contributions, utility and fuel costs and other basic overheads rising has meant that more early education and childcare providers are now charging for consumables and other permitted items in order to break even. The Local Authority is monitoring this closely and working with providers to limit the impact on the most vulnerable children and families whilst at the same time ensuring providers remain sustainable.

Primary

Over the planning period 2023-2026, our forecasts show that, in line with the falling birth rate, there will continue to be falling demand for primary places. Almost all areas of Sheffield will experience increasing surplus places issues in

primary, with concentration in some sub-planning areas and some schools seeing a greater impact than others.

Secondary

The increase in population or 'bulge' which led to increased demand for pupil places in the primary sector is now being experienced by the secondary sector. Secondary school places have been at or near full capacity since 2018/19. Mainstream secondary demand is not evenly distributed across the city and pressure for places is greatest in the southwest of the city and in the northeast of the city. Within these planning areas this pressure is forecast to continue until the end of the decade.

Over the planning period 2023-2026 there will continue to be areas of growing demand for secondary school places, primarily linked to new housing development and inward migration. However, beyond this planning period forecasts show that, following the pattern being experienced in the primary sector, there will be areas of secondary with declining demand. We will work with secondary schools that face these future challenges associated with falling secondary rolls, which can create budget pressures and impact on decisions of school leadership and organisation.

Post 16

We know that the increase in population or 'bulge' mentioned above which is currently in the secondary sector, will move through to the post 16 sector over the planning period 2023-2026, as Year 12 learner numbers are forecast to increase in 2023/24 and will continue to rise each year, reaching a 'peak' beyond this planning period in 2028/29 where we predict a Year 12 population of over 7,300 Sheffield resident pupils.

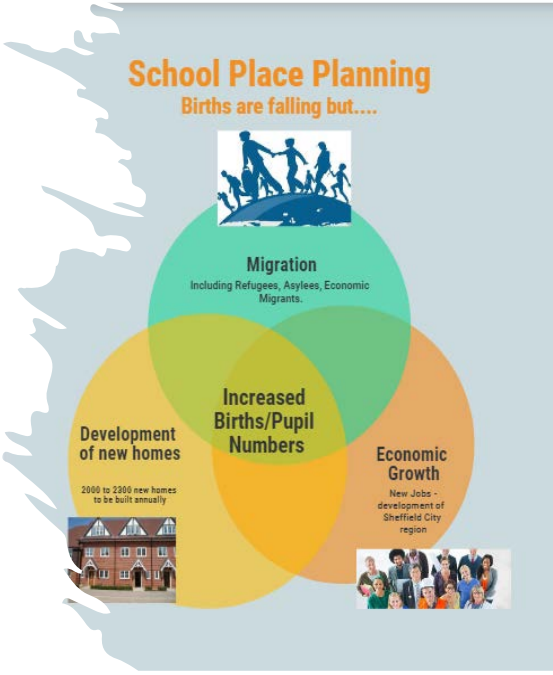
It is therefore important that the Local Authority continues to work with the post 16 sector to obtain 16-25 forecast data to ensure there are sufficient post 16 places to meet demand. In terms of transition, in most cases young people move to a new educational setting at age 16 and will need to become more independent. This will need careful preparation and support.

Economic Development and New Homes in the city - Influences on demand

Sheffield is a fantastic city with world leading economic assets, global companies, and a transforming city centre within reach of the stunning Peak District National Park.

The Local Authority’s Strategic Vision for the City Centre published in January 2022 sets out that, although births are falling, the Sheffield population is set to increase from 584,853 people (2019) to 648,410 people by 2043. As outlined in the Local Authority’s ‘One Year Plan’ 2021/22, we want to raise the profile of the city nationally and internationally, capitalising on the city’s assets to attract new business and investment to the city. We want Sheffield to be a flourishing, sustainable and inclusive city economy which creates opportunity, good jobs and better jobs for people of Sheffield.

As mentioned earlier, Sheffield is facing a changing economy. It is also clear that post covid, some things have changed forever in the way we work and the way we live our lives, and this opens opportunities to shape and innovate in ways that can help create a better future for the city. As a strong partner alongside businesses, we want a city with a dynamic environment for enterprise with a culture of businesses able to start-up, scale up and innovate. We have an ambition to be a net zero carbon city by 2030.



To help meet this growing population and economy, there is an aspiration and Government target to deliver new homes in the city. The Local Authority agreed its preferred spatial option for the Local Plan in February 2022 and we are expecting to deliver 2,100 homes a year.

Our city, like many across the country, has a growing demand for affordable housing. The Local Authority has embarked on an ambitious programme to deliver new council homes by 2029 – a combination of new builds and purchased properties. Please [click here](#) for more information. Therefore, future projections for school planning areas may change, as housing development plans progress in the medium to longer term. Future versions of this plan will provide more clarity on these issues.

The context for planning for future early education, childcare, school and post 16 places includes the limited availability of capital funding. This poses the challenge of finding creative, cost effective and value for money solutions that provide the sufficient numbers of high-quality places required, where they are needed and when they are needed, so that children and young people can access provision locally.

The forecasts and our emerging strategies are based on known data and intelligence, however there are some unknowns that may impact what is set out in the plan. Covid-19 has created much uncertainty over the past 2 years, and it may be some time before the impact, direct or indirect, of the virus on future demand for learning places is truly known. We endeavour to communicate clearly with schools and local communities about current and predicted place planning pressures in their area. In general, we will only name particular schools in the plan when there is certainty that a proposal will be implemented or where this is already underway.

Population

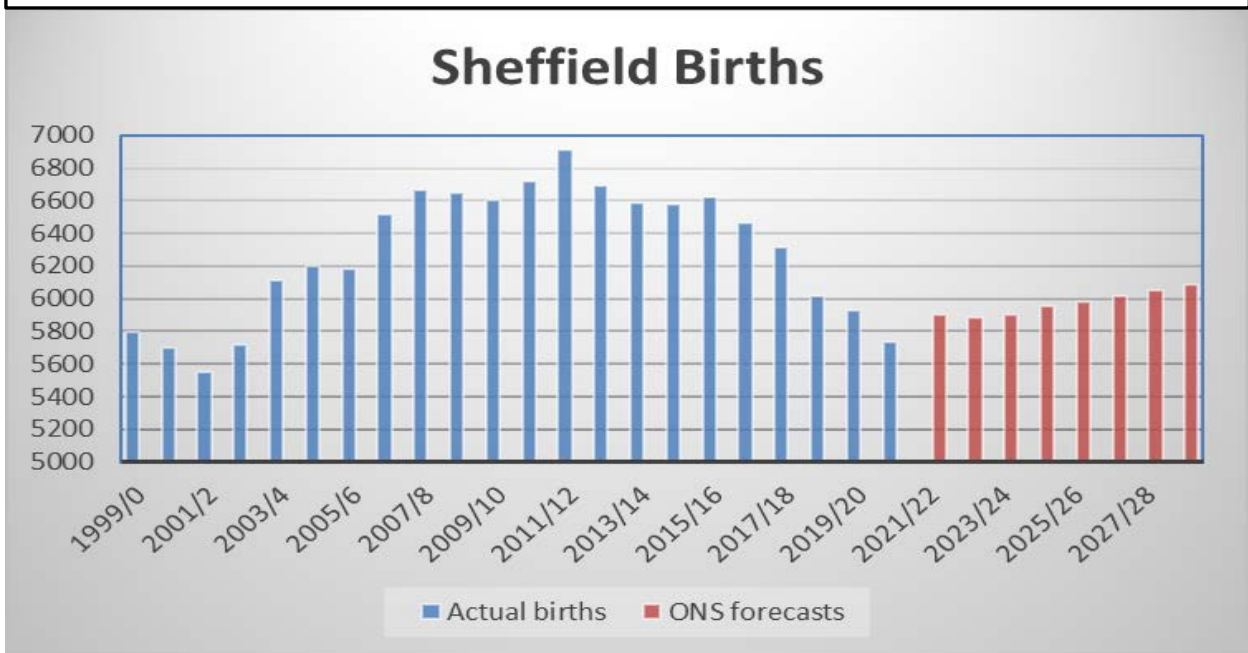
The overall population in Sheffield has grown steadily, rising from 531,000 in 2001 to 589,000 in 2020 (Source: Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates). Sheffield's population is projected to rise by 62,000 people between now and 2034, although this may be higher if economic growth continues. Sheffield is an ethnically diverse city, with around 19% of its population from black or minority ethnic groups (source 2011 census, awaiting 2021 census data).

The largest of those groups is the Pakistani community, but Sheffield also has large Caribbean, Indian, Bangladeshi, Somali, Yemeni and Chinese communities. More recently, Sheffield has seen an increase in the number of overseas students coming to the city and in the number of economic migrants from European Union ascension states (countries which joined the European Union in or after 2004).

Births in Sheffield peaked at 6,908 in academic year 2011/12 and since then, births have fallen to 5,733 in 2020/21. Office for National Statistics birth forecasts suggest these are likely to remain low with gradual increases from 2021/22 (births at 5,902), potentially increasing by 2.4% by 2027/28 (potential births 6,047).

However birth forecasts nationally have been revised downward and this has been the trend over the last few years, therefore birth forecasts should always be treated with caution. The following **chart 1.0** shows the number of actual and forecast births from 1999 – 2028.

Chart 1.0 Sheffield Births 1999 - 2028



Pupil Cohorts – Early Education & Childcare

Whilst the size of each cohort of eligible children is known, it is not possible to predict the exact number of children within each cohort who will require a place or for how many hours each child will attend.

Although places are measured using the ratio of 15 hours = 1 part time equivalent place, not all children will access their full entitlement. This is because it is not a statutory requirement for children to attend an early years setting and is therefore based on parental choice.

The Local Authority applies the National benchmark as an indicator when measuring sufficiency. **Table 1.0** below shows the take up rates for Funded Early Learning Entitlements in Sheffield, its regional neighbouring Authorities and nationally in Spring 2022.

In Spring 2022, 78.4% of eligible 2-year-olds accessed a part time equivalent place and 94.3% of 3-and-4-year-olds accessed a place. In total 12,576 places were taken up by families accessing 2, 3 and 4-year-old Funded Early Learning and the Extended Funded Entitlement for working families.

Table 1.0: Take up rates for Funded Early Learning entitlements Spring 2022		
Local Authority	2-year-old	3- & 4-year-old
Sheffield	79% *	93% *
Rotherham	85%	95%
Barnsley	94%	94%
Doncaster	92%	92%
Derbyshire	78%	93%
National Average	72%	92%

**Source: Department for Education Scorecard*

Sheffield's take up rate for 3-and-4-year-old Funded Early Learning is roughly in line with that of its other regional neighbouring Authorities, with Sheffield performing slightly better than Doncaster, with 93% take up and 92% take up respectively. Sheffield's take up (93%) by this cohort is slightly better than the national average (92%). Concerning 2-year-olds, Sheffield's take up is in one instance 15% lower than that of one of its regional neighbours (Barnsley). It does however perform slightly better than Derbyshire for take up by this cohort, with 79% take up and 78% take up respectively. At 79%, Sheffield performs 7% better than the national average (72%) for take up by this cohort.

Take up of Extended Free Entitlement is, as expected, highest in areas where there are more families in work who meet the Extended Free Entitlement criteria. There is a higher eligible population in the more affluent areas of the City accessing the additional 15 hours Extended Entitlement. The eligible population in the less affluent districts are not taking up the offer, which needs examining further.

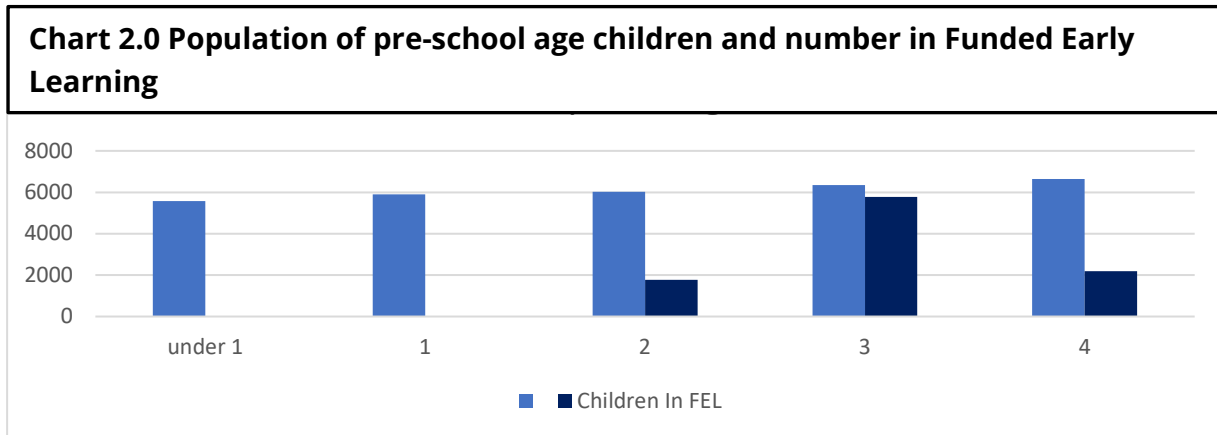
We will continue to raise awareness of the Entitlement to encourage working families into taking up the Extended Free Entitlement in those areas. We are aware of those levels of deprivation, particularly in the Northeast and East of the City are reflected in the low numbers of children accessing Extended Free Entitlement, but it is also acknowledged that there are some cultural barriers to families accessing Funded Early Learning.

Table 2.0 below gives the number of children in Funded Early Learning or Extended Free Entitlement in Sheffield in Spring 2019 compared to Spring 2021. In Spring 2021 Sheffield percentage uptake of the Extended Free Entitlement was above the national average.

Comparison	Children in 3- & 4-year Funded Early Learning	Children in Extended Free Entitlement	Take up of Extended Free Entitlement
Sheffield 2019	8,405	3,007	36%
Sheffield 2021	8,440	3,130	37%
England	1,212,234	348,126	29%

NB: The Department for Education no longer produce statistics showing uptake from Extended Free Entitlement codes, therefore post-2021 data is unavailable.

In total, there are 30,509 children under the age of 5 living within the local authority area in 2022. These children are most likely to require early education and childcare (data source NHS – pupils registered with GPs). The 0–1-year cohort has steadily decreased, and whilst current Office for National Statistics projections suggest that births will begin to increase slightly and gradually from 2022/23 to the end of the decade, these projections should be viewed with caution. **Chart 2.0** below shows the number of pre-school children by age and the number taking up a Funded Early Learning Place.

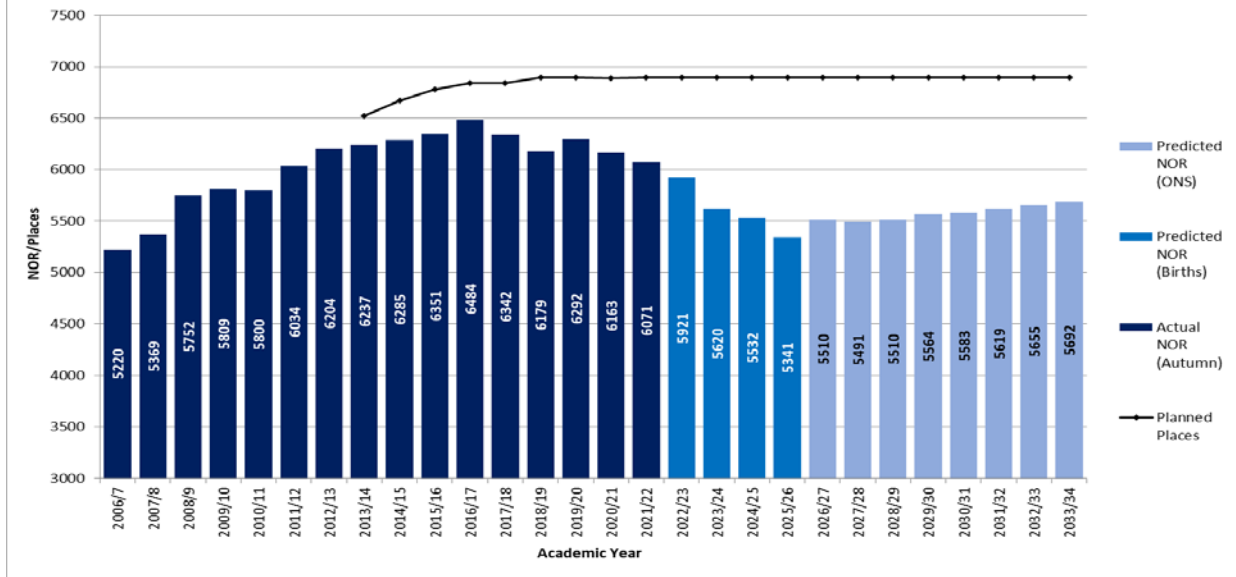


** NB: some four-year-olds will have started reception*

Pupil Cohorts – Primary

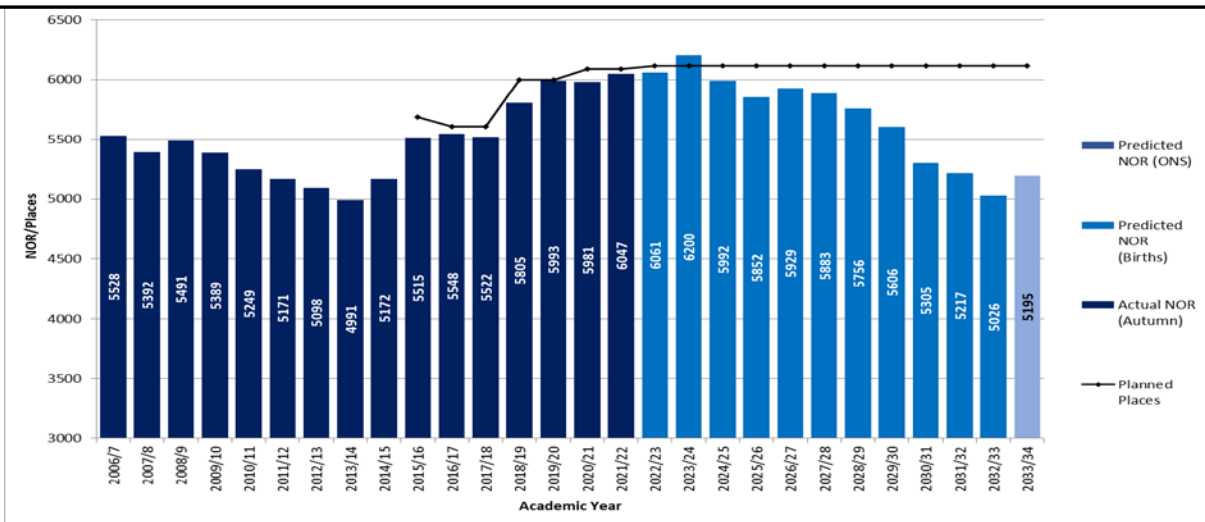
Reception year primary school intakes have fallen and continue to fall. **Chart 3.0** below shows the current city-wide picture for primary school places. It forecasts a surplus of reception places across the city between 2020-2024. Numbers on Roll are forecast to hit the lowest point in 2025/25, after which numbers begin to increase and the surplus places are forecast to reduce slightly.

Chart 3.0 Comparison of Reception Number on Roll to Planned Places



wide picture for Year 7 secondary school places. It forecasts a potential deficit of places across the city between 2020-2024, reaching a high point in 2023/24, after which a surplus is forecast to develop.

Chart 4.0 Comparison of Year 7 Number on Roll to Planned Places



Pupil Cohorts – Post 16

Year 12 learner numbers are forecast to increase in 2023/24 and then continue to rise each year until it reaches a peak in 2028/29 where we predict a Year 12 population of over 7,300 pupils. The majority of young people are able to attend further education or employment without extra help but there are some, such as those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, who are more likely to need additional support.

Cross-border movement

According to the Summer 2022 Term cross-border details supplied to the Council by neighbouring authorities, at early education and childcare level Sheffield imports approximately 351 children from the neighbouring authorities of Barnsley, Derbyshire, Doncaster, Rotherham, and exports approximately 55 children to these same authorities. Please note that the exportation figure is currently lower than expected, as some local authorities are yet to supply the Council with their Summer 2022 Term details. At primary school level (across all year groups) Sheffield imports approximately 532* children from the neighbouring authorities of Barnsley, Derbyshire, Doncaster, Rotherham, and exports approximately 688* children to these same authorities.

At secondary school level (across all year groups) Sheffield imports approximately 530* children from the neighbouring authorities of Barnsley, Derbyshire, Doncaster, Rotherham, and exports approximately 1320* children to these same authorities. (* 2020/21 data -Gov.UK Schools, Pupils, and their Characteristics)

There is a wide variety of choice at post 16 and at this stage of their education pupils are more likely to travel to attend the education or vocational provision that meets their needs. Sheffield is a 16-18 net exporter overall but is a net importer to school sixth forms. In 2019/20, 14% of Sheffield residents accessed provision in other Local Authorities, with most accessing Rotherham (5.14%), Barnsley (4.55%) and Derbyshire (2.33%). In 2019/20, 10% of students attending Sheffield providers were residents in other Local Authorities, with most resident in Rotherham (4.56%), Derbyshire (3.51%) and Barnsley (0.79%).

Admissions and Transport

All schools must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school. Admission authorities determine admission arrangements. Sheffield City Council is the admissions authority for community schools and voluntary controlled church schools. The governing boards of voluntary aided church schools, trust schools and free schools, set the admissions criteria for their individual school(s). For academies, the arrangements are set by the Academy Trust.

For Early Years, all settings must have admission criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the setting. Admission arrangements are determined by the individual settings with priority given to Looked After Children and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Unlike schools, there are no catchment areas for childcare providers, so they are free to accept children resident anywhere in or outside of the city.

Parents and carers in Sheffield have the right to express a preference for a school (deadline 15th January for Primary and 31st October for Secondary) and are invited to indicate up to three preferences when applying for a school place for their child. There are challenges when popular schools fill on national offer day, meaning late applicants and families moving into an area are unable to secure a place. This can lead to families having to attend a school further away from where they live or even having to place siblings at different schools. This can be a greater challenge in semi-rural areas where the distance between schools is greater and transport links can be more limited.

The Local Authority will continue to work flexibly with schools, where required, in the best interests of children and their families. Parents also have a statutory right to appeal where they do not secure the place or places they want. The availability of places for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in specialist provision of all kinds is not included within the scope of this document. This remains an important area of work and there are clear connections between this and ensuring there is sufficient mainstream places.

For September 2022, the Local Authority was able to offer a place at a preferred school to 98.47% of primary year reception (Year R) applicants, 98.68% of junior (Year 3) applicants and 95.76% of secondary (Year 7) applicants. This is above the national average. There is more information about applying for a place on the Council's website.

Number of Early Education & Childcare settings in Sheffield

The early education and childcare sector supply is currently delivered by a mix of 137 Private, Voluntary and Independent nurseries; 193 Childminders and 82 schools.

Table 3.0 below shows the provider type by Planning Area. It shows that there are very few childminders in Planning Area 5, which may reflect the lack of demand for such services. 48 Private, Voluntary and Independent nurseries in Planning Area 1 is more than twice the number in any other Planning Area and is partly attributed to its relative prosperity and location along major commuter routes into Sheffield.

Table 3.0 Provider type by Planning Area				
Planning Area	Sector			
	Childminders	Private, Voluntary & Independent	School Based	Total
1	26	48	9	83
2	32	19	10	61
3	29	10	7	46
4	25	15	18	58
5	4	9	13	26
6	46	19	16	81
7	31	17	9	57
Sheffield	193	137	82	412

In terms of wraparound early education and childcare, **Table 4.0** below shows Out of School Clubs by Planning Area, as at August 2022. It shows that the Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector offer the largest proportion of Out of School Clubs, but that schools themselves only offer a fraction less.

Table 4.0 Out of School Clubs by Planning Area - August 2022				
Planning Area	Type			
	Childminders	Private, Voluntary & Independent	Schools	Total
1		4	5	9
2		3		3
3		2	1	3
4		1		1
5		3	2	5
6		5	4	9
7		1	3	4
Total	0	19	15	34

Source: All providers and Ofsted inspections 05/08/22. NB: Out of School Clubs delivered directly by Schools, Private, Voluntary and Independent Nurseries and Childminders will not necessarily show up separately in an Ofsted report but will be part of the overarching inspection report. Only standalone Clubs will be listed in Ofsted.

The distribution of Out of School Clubs across the city is fairly even but Planning Areas 1 and 6 offer the highest number, and this is true of the Clubs offered by both the Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector and by Schools.

The Sheffield Directory is an information portal available on the Sheffield City Council website that families can use to access information on early education and childcare places in their area and that the Council utilises to undertake data analysis. Once a provider registers with Ofsted they are invited to register their details on the portal, including their type of setting, its hours of operation, eligible age range, charges, any specialism with regards to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and any current vacancies it has.

The Directory offers families the facility to search for a particular type of setting in a particular area of the city, in order to access childcare. As the Directory is a self-service facility it relies upon providers maintaining their details and the Council is therefore unable to testify to the completeness or accuracy of the information available, as some providers may have opted not to register with the Directory, whilst those who have may not keep their information up to date.

Number of Primary & Secondary Schools in Sheffield

Table 5.0 below shows that on 1 September 2021 there were a range of different types of schools in Sheffield, from mainstream local authority-maintained* (or Community) schools to academies and free schools. Also included below are numbers of special and Alternative Provision schools. *Please note that maintained schools also include voluntary aided and voluntary controlled, foundation and trust schools.

Table 5.0 Types of School in Sheffield as at 1/9/2021					
Type	Academies	Free Schools	LA Community Schools	Voluntary aided	Voluntary Controlled
Nursery			2		
Primary, Infant and Junior schools	68	0	62	4	1
Secondary	23	3	1		
All Through	2	1			
Special Schools	1	3	7		
Alternative Provision			2		

Number of post 16 settings break down in schools, colleges & training providers

Table 6.0 below highlights the type and number of post 16 providers in the city. It also specifies the number of 16-19 pupils in attendance (source: Education & Skills Funding Agency attendance data 2021/22). Over the 4 years to 2021/22 there had been an increase in take up at school sixth forms (12%) and Further Education Colleges (4%) whilst take up of training provision fell by 33%.

Table 6.0 Types of Post 16 provision in Sheffield as at 1/9/2021		
Type of provider	Number of providers	16-19 Pupils in attendance 2021/22 (ESFA data)
School Sixth Form	12	4141
Sixth Form College	1	245
Further Education College	2	6341
Training providers	2	486
Total	17	11213

4. The Legal Context

Sheffield City Council has statutory duties under several pieces of legislation including the Education Act 1996, the Childcare Act 2006 and the Children and Families Act 2014 to ensure sufficient childcare and school places, promote parental choice, diversity, and fair access. For early education and childcare this means securing sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children), and access to Funded Early Learning places.

Funded Early Learning is Government funded childcare for all 3-and-4-year-olds, and eligible 2-year-olds. The eligibility criteria are based on a number of factors which include parents/carers receiving certain benefits to qualify. All 3-and-4-year-olds are eligible to access 15 hours per week of free childcare. In addition, some can access up to 30 hours a week, in families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), and each parent earns a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or living wage, and less than £100,000 per year. These additional funded hours are known as the Extended Funded Entitlement.

Through play activities children benefit by:

- learning language
- developing physical and social skills
- preparing them for the routine of going to school

Early years are critical for a child's development and children who use a Funded Early Learning place show greater levels of achievement in their school years. In addition, early education and childcare is a fundamental building block of our economy. A key objective of early education and childcare policy is to improve productivity by helping the parents and carers of younger children access employment and training. Therefore, early education and childcare policy plays a key role not just in reducing poverty for today's children, but also in improving outcomes and preventing poverty for the next generation. Early education and childcare touches on many aspects of social policy, from education to the labour market to the benefits system.

It is well documented that children from low income or disadvantaged families are behind their more advantaged peers and there remains a gap in school readiness by the time they start school. The role of early education and childcare policies in reducing these inequalities, promoting social mobility and contributing to the Government's Levelling Up ([Levelling Up the United Kingdom: Executive Summary \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) agenda, particularly in regards to the target areas of Education, Skills, Health and Well-being, is clear. Information on the other types of support available for childcare can be found on the Childcare Planning Team's page of the Council website at [Funded early learning and childcare | Sheffield City Council](#).

For early education and childcare, the Council's role is one of 'facilitating' sufficiency of places, rather than 'delivering' places. In order to do this, we work alongside the sector and monitor sufficiency. This is because the system for educating, developing and supporting the under-fives is delivered via a mix of provision in the private, voluntary and public sectors.

We work in partnership with providers in all sectors and actively support partnership working between providers to ensure that free places are high quality, flexible and accessible to give parents choice about how and where they take-up their child's free hours. We also work with providers and parents to ensure all parents, including disadvantaged families and those with children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, have fair access to a free place and that parents understand which hours / sessions can be taken as free provision.

Early education and childcare workers can be self-employed, such as childminders, or work in a formal nursery. Nurseries may be part of a school or children's centre or be independent of either. The majority are run by organisations in the Private, Voluntary and Independent sectors. The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework is mandatory for all early education and childcare providers in England. The Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards that all early education and childcare providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. Ofsted and Independent Schools Inspectorate have regard to the Early Years Foundation Stage in carrying out inspections and report on the quality and standards of provision.

For the primary and secondary sector, Local Authorities must ensure that sufficient school places are available within their area for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one. In order to fulfil these statutory duties, Councils need to conduct strategic place planning and forecasting. In terms of the primary and secondary sectors, according to the Local Government Association "Local Authorities have the unique responsibility for securing sufficient school places, although they increasingly have to collaborate with schools and other partners to deliver the places needed." Planning for changes in demand for school places is an important function which can only be fulfilled locally.

The statutory framework for schools and academies has undergone much change in recent years and, with increasing school autonomy, a planning mechanism with strong local knowledge is needed to ensure that funding to secure sufficient school places is allocated effectively and efficiently.

From a post 16 perspective, in September 2016, the Department for Education released Statutory Guidance for all local authorities in England relating to the participation of young people in education, employment, or training.

The role of local authorities is outlined in their broader participation duties, as well as in their Raising the Participation Age related duties. The guidance sets out a range of statutory duties aimed to help local authorities to encourage, enable and assist young people up to the age of 18 (25 for individuals with learning difficulties) to participate in education or training, following on from the Raising Participation Age policy being introduced.

5. Planning Areas

For the purpose of planning school places, Sheffield is divided into seven planning areas. These are closely aligned to the City's seven service localities, with some minor differences. For early education and childcare and primary school planning purposes, these are broken down further into 17 sub-planning areas.

This planning process identifies the requirement for school places arising from new housing developments. It is anticipated that, through the Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), new housing developments will contribute a percentage of the funding required to provide additional school places. See **Appendix A** for nursery schools and nursery/reception classes, **Appendix B** for Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Years Providers, **Appendix C** for school locations, **Appendix D** for Post 16 provision, and **Appendix E** for special schools and integrated resources.

6. Demand for Places

Early Education & Childcare

We do not forecast future pupil numbers for the early education and childcare sector in the same way as we do for the primary and secondary sectors. Instead, the Council undertakes an annual childcare sufficiency assessment, an in-depth city-wide and area analysis of numbers of eligible children and take up of the various Free Early Learning entitlements to identify any areas where we may see low uptake or fewer available places.

Paid for Childcare

Paid for childcare is difficult to forecast as the Local Authority does not commission and fund paid for childcare as it does with Funded Early Learning, so there is no obligation for providers to provide information to local authorities in respect of paid for childcare. This means that baseline data for the Local Authority to analyse is not consistent. The Local Authority continues to work with childcare providers to improve data quality. The Local Authority collects further information through regular communication with providers and through an annual provider and parental survey, to help us better understand the whole market, including paid for childcare demand.

Primary and Secondary

In producing forecasts of future demand for both the primary and secondary sectors we consider factors such as births, trend data, parental preference, housing growth, and existing and planned capacity as well as patterns of inward

and outward migration. Our forecasts provide a comprehensive account of predicted future trends in numbers and the areas of the city where pressures on places are most likely to occur.

However, pupil forecasting is complex and, as a result, is not an exact science. For example, it is not always possible to predict changes in local demand for school places exactly owing to swings in parental preference, changing migration patterns or revisions to planned local housing targets. Pupil forecasts are updated twice annually, and exceptions identified in order to manage the risk of under/over-supply of school places.

It is important to note that while the Local Authority seeks to meet parental preference, our projections are primarily concerned with ensuring we have sufficient places in a given area. It may be the case that some schools in an area that are consistently oversubscribed give the impression that there is a shortage of places when this is not the case overall as other schools in that area have capacity. The principal factor for place planning is the number of places in an area compared to the number of children requiring a place and it is this that the Local Authority seeks to predict and respond to.

Post 16

The commissioning arrangements, roles and responsibilities set out in the Department for Education's September 2016 statutory guidance provides only a marginal role for local authorities in relation to post 16, i.e. to ensure that there is sufficient post 16 provision in the city and maintain a strategic overview. Therefore, the Local Authority strives to maintain an overview of A Level provision, Further Education and training and the trends that might affect this with a view to informing and influencing the strategic decisions about A Level, Further Education, and training provision that individual Academy Trusts and Governing Boards might choose to make.

As a Local Authority, we have very limited control over the post 16 sector as all but one of Sheffield's secondary schools are now academies which means, for example, that the Local Authority cannot determine or control their age ranges, and it cannot impose requirements on the Further Education sector with regards to A Level provision. Year 12 learner numbers are forecast to increase in 2023/24 and then continue to rise each year until it reaches a peak in 2028/29 where we predict a Year 12 population of over 7,300 pupils.

When we are planning for future school places, we do consider the size of the cohorts going through the system, including planning for bulge years, and we have been aware for some time that the bulge currently in the secondary sector will move into the post 16 sector, but A Levels are not the only progression route,

and a relatively large proportion of young people choose Further Education, Apprenticeships and Technical routes. Demand for post 16 provision is patchy across the city. The Local Authority does acknowledge that we need to do more work to understand sufficiency issues regarding post 16 provision as we move towards that 2028/29 peak. This will involve working closely with stakeholders to understand the trends and patterns of the type of provision our year 12-13 pupils require going forward to enable effective planning.

7. Supply of Places

When the Local Authority identifies a shortfall of capacity it will consider providing additional places, either through the expansion of existing provision, or through commissioning new provision. When there are proposals for a new primary school the Local Authority will always consider including a nursery class unless there are reasons why this would not be reasonable.

In relation to the sufficiency of early education and childcare places, 'The Childcare Act' sets out a clear role for the Local Authority when intervening in the market to ensure sufficient places are available.

The Local Authority will make decisions on whether to intervene in the market based on evidence of unmet demand. The Local Authority works to a principle of not commissioning new provision which is in direct competition with other childcare providers unless there is an identified gap in the childcare market.

The Local Authority aims to stimulate a diverse childcare market which offers variety and flexibility within the system to meet parents' individual needs. However conversely, the Local Authority cannot stop a childcare provider setting up provision anywhere in the city as childcare is an open market. In relation to schools, Sheffield City Council welcomes proposals from existing schools to expand and from interested parties to establish new provision in areas of pressure.

From a post 16 perspective, currently there is sufficient good quality sixth form, further education and training available to students across the city. Looking ahead we know that Year 12/13 cohorts will continue to grow and will peak in 2028/29 and that approximately 40% of the Year 12/13 cohorts attend a school sixth form. The available places in current sixth forms, colleges and traineeships continue to outstrip demand leading to a very competitive post 16 market. In recent years, some existing sixth forms have struggled to recruit sufficient students. In addition, post 16 providers can operate flexibly and increase their numbers to meet demand and school sixth forms also it is acknowledged that they take pupil numbers well in excess of their funding agreement with some providers having vacancies currently.

In addition to the vision, values & guiding principles set out in Section 2 of this plan, when creating new school places, the Local Authority also considers a range of other factors including (but not limited to):

- prioritising the expansion of good and outstanding schools
- considering the pattern of parental/pupil preference and local demand for places
- considering the diversity of provision
- considering transport patterns to reduce travel times to provision wherever possible
- supporting new schools (academies and free schools) where their location will help relieve pressure on places and / or increase parental/pupil preference and raise outcomes
- ensuring value for money.

We will ensure all key stakeholders are consulted when developing proposals to provide new places and that statutory processes are followed by Academies or maintained schools as outlined in the associated Department for Education guidance:

Academy = [Making significant changes to an open academy](#) or

Maintained School = [Making significant changes to Maintained Schools](#)

Temporary Provision

Whilst it would be desirable for every child to be educated in permanent school buildings, the Council must be certain there is a long term need before providing additional permanent school places. This is to ensure that surplus capacity is not added to the system which may then create viability issues in times of low pupil numbers. If the need is considered short term, the Council will use temporary classrooms which provide a valuable and flexible resource and are an appropriate way of providing school places for a short period of time.

8. Planning Sufficient Places in Sheffield

Sheffield Local Authority is a commissioning council. This means that we have committed to using the commissioning cycle to make evidence-based decisions about the services we provide. We are also committed to involving local people, providers, and partners early in this process and in a manner that fosters collaboration. Commissioning is making things happen by working with and through others, by developing an overall picture of children's needs within an area and developing provision to respond to those needs.

The Commissioning Cycle

Stage 1 of the commissioning cycle shown below is 'Analyse'. A key part of this stage is for the Local Authority to analyse the data, understand what it is telling us and to use that data to forecast the number of places we need in the future.



Commissioning involves measuring and agreeing need, understanding our statutory role and expectations, agreeing priorities and plans, planning and commissioning activity, monitoring and reviewing performance, ensuring value for money, and holding providers to account in order to improve outcomes.

Forecasting: getting the balance right

We need to ensure there are sufficient places for pupils, whilst at the same time considering what happens after the peak has ended, where data forecasts show that the demand for places will fall and schools are likely to experience a surplus of places.

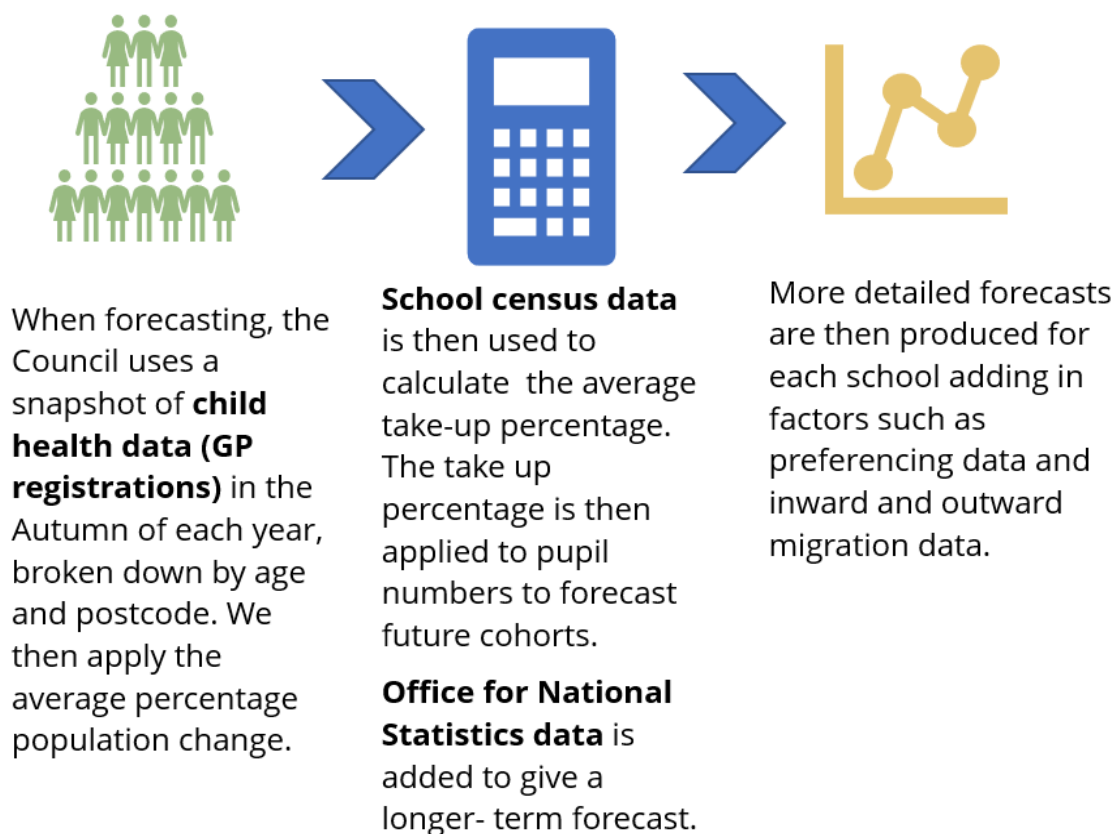
To help address this, the Local Authority will firstly ensure that it does not increase the number of pupil places on a permanent basis unless there is sustained demand for places e.g. up until and beyond the end of the decade. Secondly, the Local Authority will work with the sector to develop a plan to manage falling rolls.

How do we forecast future pupil numbers?

The Local Authority plans to use the actual allocations data from 2023/24 alongside the suite of other forecasting tools to project future demand across the city and within the planning areas.

More detailed forecasts are then produced for each school, adding in factors such as preferencing data and inward and outward migration data. Office for

National Statistics population forecasts are used to extend the range of years forecasted, but these longer-term projections are viewed with caution and serve only as an indicator. The following graphic summarises how we forecast pupil numbers.



Sufficient number of surplus places

Schools operate most efficiently and effectively when full or nearly full. To this end the Local Authority seeks to keep the number of surplus places (the number of places in schools that are unfilled) to a minimum.

However, it is generally accepted that not all unfilled places in a school are surplus places, but that a small margin of surplus capacity is often allowed to facilitate parental preference, to take account of the fact that schools with available places may not always be in the part of a planning area where the demand is, and to allow for a degree of error in the forecasts.

A school is generally considered to be full when it has less than 5% of its places unfilled. This is in line with the National Audit Office report on Capital Funding for new school places published in 2013, where it states: "It is considered that on average 5 per cent was the bare minimum needed for authorities to meet their

statutory duty with operational flexibility, while enabling parents to have some choice of schools”.

In Sheffield, rather than use an arbitrary percentage figure to create flexibility within the system, from 2023/24 we plan to slightly adjust our school place planning forecasting methodology which will factor in the number of allocations on allocations day, rather than using the Number On Roll to project future demand. Using allocations alongside Number On Roll means we will build in a slightly higher degree of flexibility into the forecasting system.

The Local Authority has a duty to consider the organisation of school provision to create a sustainable network of schools, and in some circumstances rationalisation of provision can benefit other schools by reducing surplus places in an area so that the remaining schools can operate more efficiently with more certainty over their pupil numbers.

To support this, the Local Authority regularly reviews every school's context, drawing on a range of information including pupil numbers, finance, pupil performance, leadership arrangements and succession planning.

The Local Authority also conducts regular reviews of specific geographical areas drawing on the same information. The reviews will reach a view about the effectiveness of arrangements for the organisation and management of schools across Sheffield.

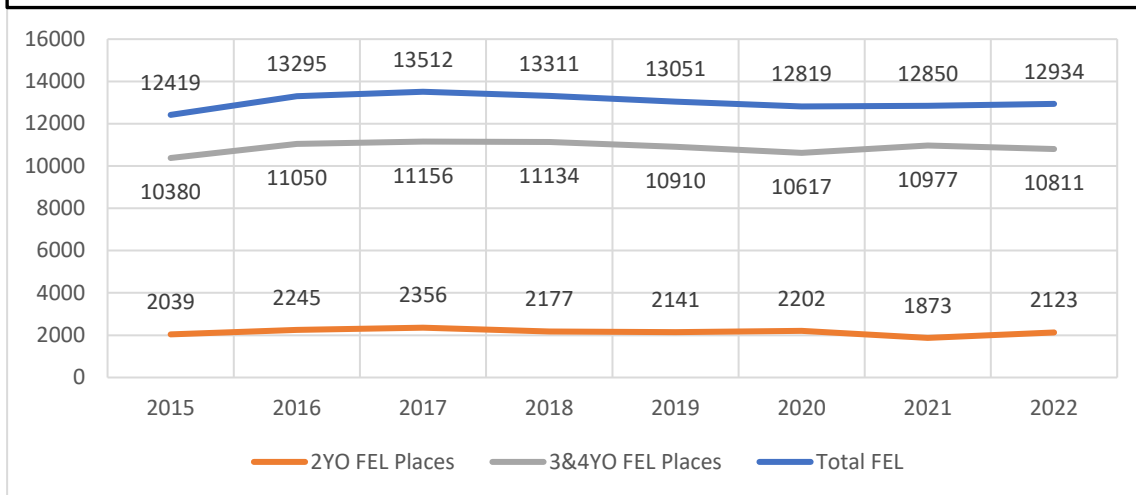
The outcome of the review could lead to the identification of schools where support should be provided for governors to explore issues specific to the organisation and leadership challenges in their school.

9. What is our data telling us?

Early Education and Childcare

Chart 5.0 below shows that the number of Funded Early Learning places delivered which peaked in 2017 at 13,512 and has since shown a steady decline to 12,850 in 2021, which is in line with the falling birth rates and has in turn resulted in a small number of Private, Voluntary and Independent nurseries struggling to fill Funded Early Learning places.

Chart 5.0 Funded Early Learning (FEL) places delivered over time



Latest information suggests that this trend is unlikely to change for some time and the market may need to make considerable adjustments to capacity in some areas. There was a dip in 3-and-4-year-old places in 2020, but this appears to have largely recovered however, still showing a downward trajectory, and the recent fall off in 2-year Funded Early Learning places in 2021 also seems to have recovered.

Take up of Extended Free Entitlement is, as expected, highest in areas where there are more families in work who meet the Extended Free Entitlement criteria. There is a higher eligible population in the more affluent areas of the City accessing the additional 15 hours Extended Entitlement. The eligible population in the less affluent districts are not taking up the offer, which needs examining further.

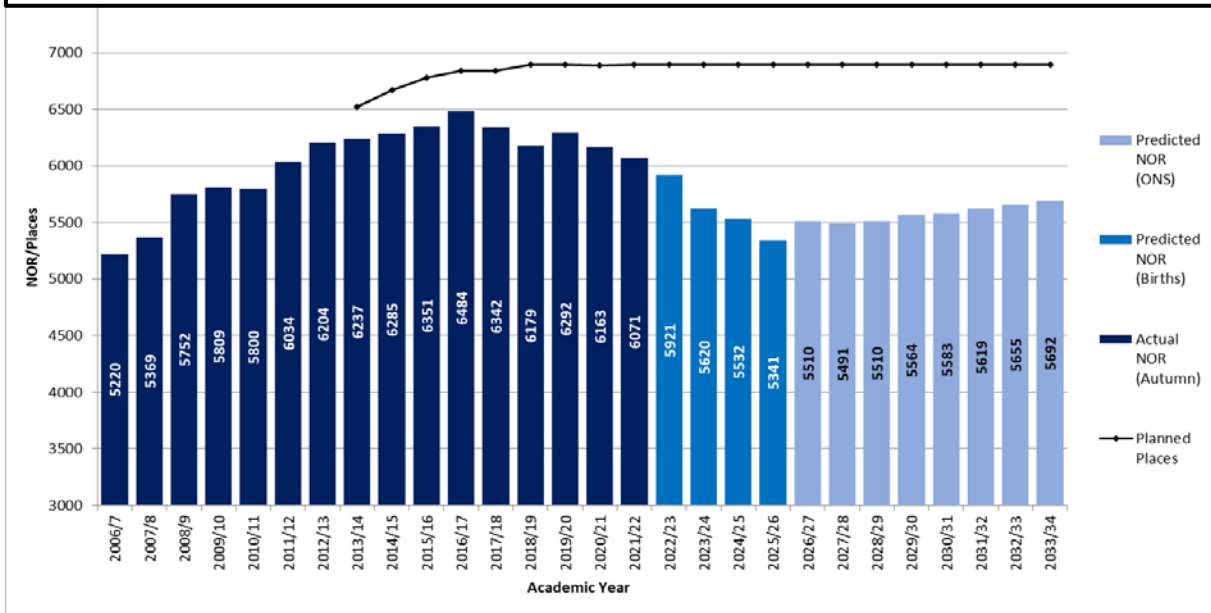
We will continue to raise awareness of the Entitlement to encourage working families into taking up the Extended Free Entitlement in those areas.

Reception places

There are currently around 6,900 reception places available across Sheffield. As births in Sheffield rose by 25% between 2002 and 2012 there was a period of expansion and school places were added in the areas of pressure to meet demand as 1,000 more children per year came into reception.

Subsequently as births have fallen there has been a growing number of surplus places across the city. **Chart 6.0** below shows Number On Roll forecasts for reception compared to the number of reception places available.

Chart 6.0 Comparison of Reception Number on Roll to Planned Places



Figures to 2020/21 show actual Number On Roll. 2022-2025 predictions are based on known births. From 2025 predicted Number On Roll are based on birth forecasts provided by the Office of National Statistics and should be treated with caution.

They suggest that births will remain low to the end of the decade. 2025/26 is expected to be the lowest reception cohort before numbers increase slightly, but recovery from the pandemic and other National and Global factors make forecasting of births more difficult.

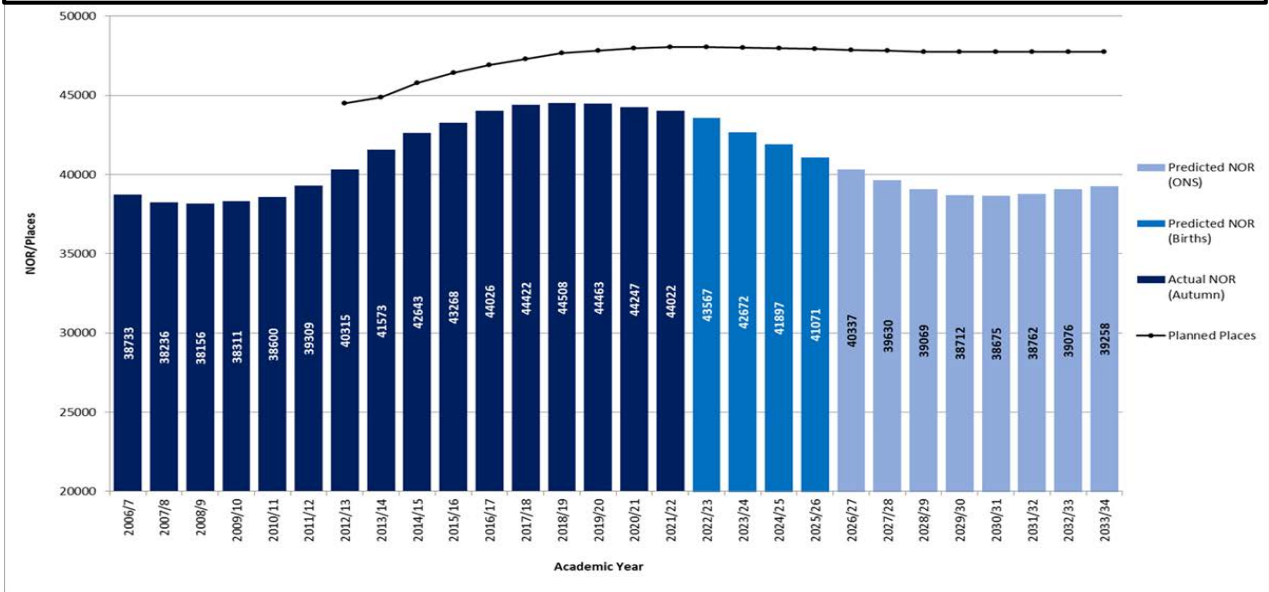
Primary Places Reception to Year 6

The cumulative impact of lower reception cohorts entering our primary schools year on year can lead to significant surplus across the whole school having a severe impact on school budgets.

Chart 7.0 below shows the city-wide forecast for primary school pupils across all year groups reception to Year 6, compared to number of places shown by the black line.

If, as Office for National Statistics forecasts suggest, 2025/26 is the low point for reception intake and numbers grow only slightly to the end of the decade, 2030/31 will see the highest level of surplus places across the primary population.

Chart 7.0 Comparison of Primary Number On Roll to Planned Places

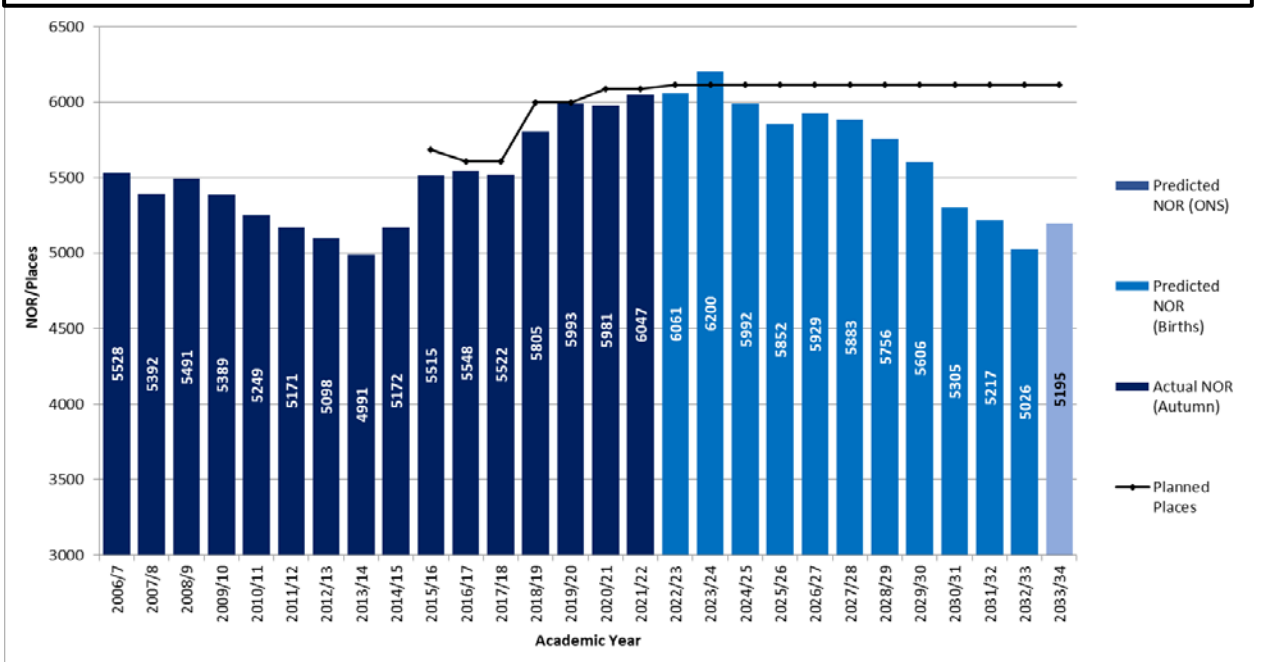


Secondary

Chart 8.0. Below compares the demand (number of actual Year 7 pupils needing a place) against the supply (the number of planned Year 7 places available). Previous high numbers of pupils in primary schools are now being reflected in rising Year 7 secondary school intakes.

The current city-wide picture for secondary school places forecasts a city-wide deficit of places city between 2020-2024, reaching a high point in 2023/24 after which a surplus is forecast to develop. Pressure is highest in Planning Area 1 (southwest) & Planning Area 5 (northeast) of the city.

Chart 8.0 Comparison of Year 7 Number on Roll to Planned Places



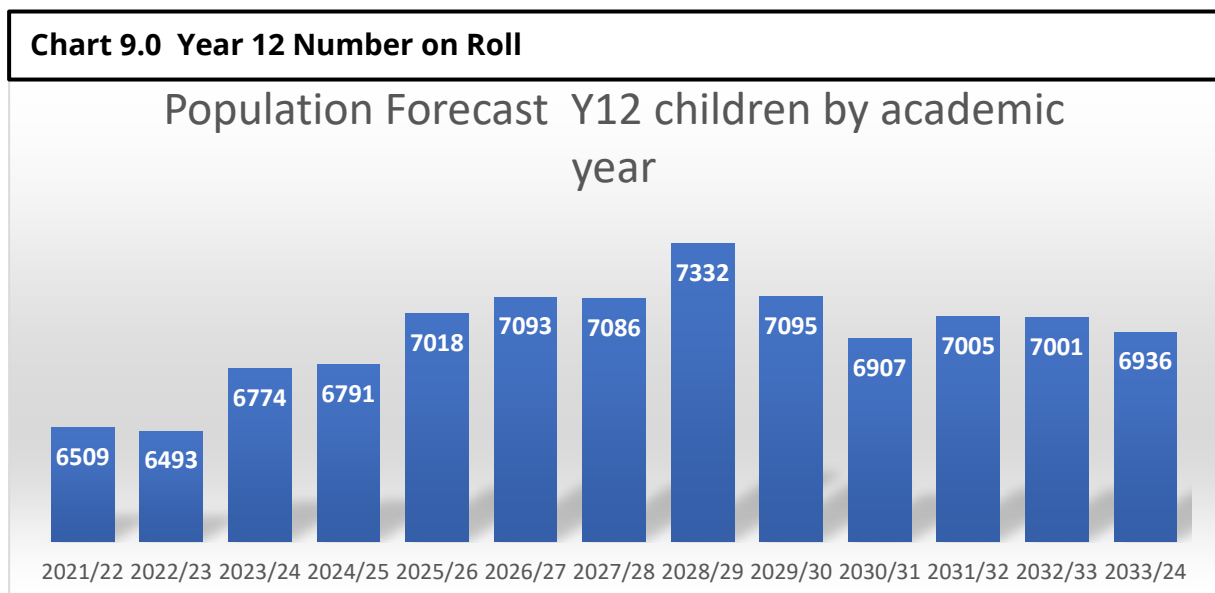
Many areas of the city are currently experiencing growth in 11-16 pupil numbers, and the demand is not evenly distributed across the city. For example, within the southwest (Planning Area 1) and northeast (Planning Area 5) of the city, they are experiencing the most growth - there is a pressure on secondary school places by local children who live within these catchment areas, and this is forecast to continue until the end of the decade.

The schools in the southwest of the city are already operating at, or above, their capacities and forecast suggest that some schools in the southwest are unable to meet the demand from their school's catchment.

Post 16

Chart 9.0 below shows that Year 12 learner numbers are forecast to increase in 2023/24 and then continue to rise each year until it reaches a peak in 2028/29 where we predict a Year 12 population of over 7,300 pupils.

The available places in current sixth forms, colleges and traineeships continue to outstrip demand leading to a very competitive post 16 market. Currently there is sufficient good quality sixth form, further education and training available to students across the city. Approximately 40% of the Year 12/13 cohorts attend a school sixth form. Looking ahead, Year 12/13 cohorts will continue to grow and will peak in 2028/29.



What are the challenges?

When we are planning for future places, we consider the size of the cohorts going through the system, including planning for bulge years. There are many factors affecting the demand for places, some of which we can plan for, e.g. the number of pupil admissions, and some of which are unplanned variables. Examples of unplanned variables include inward and outward migration, including migration into and out of the UK; cross border movement - children moving to schools in other local authority areas; changes in the housing market and housing developments; parental preference; changes in private education provision; rural sustainability and, impact of welfare reforms.

Our main challenge is to meet to conflicting needs across the city in terms of sufficiency and sustainability whilst being clear on the equalities and climate impact of any decision. It is important that we consider all of the following areas as part of our strategy going forward.

- Sufficiency: demand for school places from local/catchment families, particularly in the southwest is expected to remain above capacity until the end of the decade.
- Sustainability: managing the increasing surplus in the school system to ensure the sustainability of schools moving forward
- Equalities impact: we use an Equalities Impact Assessment that is designed to help us ensure that our policies, practices, events, and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation.
- Climate Impact: we use this decision support tool which shows the main climate costs and benefits of any given decision.

Early Education & Childcare - what have we done already?

a) Produced Childcare Sufficiency Assessments: published annually, these in-depth city-wide and area analyses contain information about the early education and childcare market in Sheffield, including supply and demand and any potential gaps. These gaps are subject to secondary analysis to fully understand uptake and demand and consider whether intervention through stimulation of the market is appropriate.

b) Monitored the impact of Covid on the early education and childcare market: throughout the pandemic the council continued to meet its' statutory duty by working with early education and childcare settings to ensure there were sufficient childcare places for children and families who required them.

c) Completed a Parental Childcare Survey: in addition to undertaking an annual childcare sufficiency assessment the council collects further information through an annual parental survey, to help it better understand the whole early education and childcare market, including demand for specific types of providers in a particular planning area and the amount and type of supply that currently exists.

d) Completed a Provider Childcare Survey: an annual provider survey is undertaken alongside the parental survey to provide similar market intelligence, but from a provider perspective.

e) Stimulated demand: by continuing to issue the Golden Ticket 7 times a year to families who the Department for Work and Pensions think may be eligible for 2-year Funded Early Learning. Not all families we write to will be eligible, as the list includes families currently being assessed for Universal Credit, but the Golden Ticket acts as a prompt urging families to make an application to check their eligibility.

f) Promoted Tax Free Childcare: to encourage both early education and childcare providers and parents to register. Families earning at least the National Minimum Wage for 16 hours per week can get up to £2,000 per year Government funding to help with the costs of childcare at any Ofsted registered or equivalent provision. Parents can also use this contribution to offset any fees and charges.

g) Encouraged providers to take a sustainable business approach: by encouraging them to consider sustainability in their planning and signposting them to resources available to support them, for example, the Department for Education's Business Sustainability Tool Kit, and the National Day Nurseries Association Early Years Business Zone tools.

h) Provider Quality Improvement Support through:

- Offering support and advice to all new registrations and providers opening additional provisions
- Offering providers a full Continuous Professional Development programme of Early Years Foundation Stage training, both free and paid for, delivered by Early Years Quality Improvement Officers and Managers, Community Early Years Practitioners, Quality and Access Officers and external Early Years Professionals
- Informing providers of any revisions to the Department for Education's Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and Ofsted's Inspection Framework
- Providing moderation across registered providers

- Monitoring Ofsted judgements of all Early Years providers (including Family Centres). A Differentiated Support Programme offers targeted and universal support to these providers
- Supporting providers' involvement in being recognised as models of Best Practice in Department for Education case studies

i) Provided email and telephone advice/guidance to parents: particularly to those wishing to access Funded Early Learning.

j) Maintained a Directory of all Sheffield Early Education and Childcare Providers: to ensure all provision is mapped, giving families access to a comprehensive Directory when searching for a particular type of early education or childcare to meet their and their child(ren)'s needs.

Primary – what have we done already?

a) Negotiated additional school places in areas of deficit:

Whilst lower birth rates have led to reduced demand there have been pockets of deficit requiring action.

- Additional school places have been added to the primary sector where required.
- A mobile classroom was commissioned in the southwest of the city to accommodate a bulge year of 30 pupils for September 2020/21.
- increased reception capacities by working with schools to increase their Pupil Admission Number within existing accommodation.

b) Temporary published admission numbers at schools:

We have:

- supported the temporary Pupil Admission Number reductions for 2021/22 and 2022/23 which has enabled some schools to amend their operational model and improve financial stability during years of low pupil numbers. These temporary reductions will remain in place until demand increases. This has taken 3.5 Forms of Entry or 105 surplus places out of the system.
- worked with other schools who are considering reducing their Pupil Admission Number for 2024/25
- issued guidance on the steps schools must make to reduce Pupil Admission Number
- provided annual forecast data on the school point system
- asked Governors to consider their school's forecast data when setting their Pupil Admission Number

c) Consultation with Schools and Trusts:

We have also taken the initiative the last few years to engage in discussions and consulted with school and Multi Academy Trusts impacted by falling rolls. A falling rolls RAG rating exercise has been undertaken each year from 2020/21 and schools rated Red as most impacted by falling rolls have been working with the Local Authority to consider options.

d) Introduction of falling rolls fund for 2021/22:

A new fund was introduced for schools most impacted by falling rolls, which schools who met the criteria could apply for.

Secondary – what have we done already?

The following interventions have already been put in place to help address the deficit issue:

a) Negotiated additional school places:

To meet growth in demand, additional school places have been added to the secondary sector to manage the larger birth cohort by proactively working with headteachers, particularly in the southwest and the northeast of the city, to increase admission numbers.

b) Commissioned new schools:

The Local Authority commissioned three new schools in the city over recent years – Astrea Academy in the north of the city, Oasis Academy Don Valley in the centre of the city and Mercia School specifically within the southwest of the city to meet demand in that area.

c) Permanent expansions at schools:

Expansions at both Silverdale School and King Ecgbert School are now under way which will create further additional capacity in the southwest of the city. Adding additional capacity into the southwest, through small permanent expansions, ensures that pupils in the inner-city catchment areas do not miss out on admission as places are available within the southwest area.

d) Consultations with Schools & Trusts:

We have also taken the initiative over the past few years to engage in discussions and consulted with schools and Multi Academy Trusts on ways to address the increasing demand from catchment.

e) Moved to a city-wide allocations system:

Due to the uneven distribution of demand for places across the city, some areas are under significant pressure than others. It was therefore agreed to move to a

city-wide allocations system for the foreseeable future and to see us through the peak in demand for places.

Post 16 – what have we done already?

Giving every young person the best start in life, whatever their background and wherever they come from, is vitally important and we believe that the whole of the education sector has a role to play from, early education, right through to post 16 to promote social mobility. The Department for Education's guidance sets out a range of statutory duties aimed to help local authorities to encourage, enable and assist young people up to the age of 18 (25 for individuals with learning difficulties) to participate in education or training, following on from the Raising Participation Age policy being introduced.

Specifically for post 16 we have:

- a) Opened a new free school sixth form academy:** offering 300 A level places in the North of the City.

- b) Introduced new sixth form places at secondary schools from 2023/24:** two new Secondary schools opened in 2018 and will deliver 500 new sixth form places in the Southwest and Burngreave areas from 2023/24.

The Local Authority seeks to use its analysis of post 16 provision to inform a dialogue with the Department for Education and the provider community. The aim is to identify any gaps in existing provision or over-supply of places and to seeking mutually acceptable solutions to these challenges. For school sixth forms, Admissions perform the allocations and they have the numbers of places offered by schools. The Education and Skills Funding Agency also provide data on provision in the city, and we also take into account the employment figures for the 16-19 cohort. Where the analysis has identified the likelihood of over-supply, the Local Authority has alerted the provider community to the emerging pressures and the likely consequences of these.

Looking ahead, the Local Authority acknowledges that we need to do more work to understand sufficiency issues regarding post 16 provision as we head towards that 2028/29 peak mentioned earlier in this Commissioning Plan. Please see the Post 16 Action Plan at the end of this document for details of future actions we plan to undertake in partnership with the post 16 sector.

Despite all the above interventions which have been put in place, there is still more work which needs to be done to help meet the challenges faced by the early education, childcare, primary, secondary and post 16 sectors going

forward. We have therefore produced Action Plans for each sector which can be found at the end of this plan. These set out our strategic priorities for each sector for the next three years from September 2023- August 2026.

Inclusive provision within Mainstream schools

Demand is rising for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities places and is forecast to continue to rise, driven by primarily by pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder and those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. Sufficiency covers provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities across all settings. From a mainstream perspective, in order to meet this rising demand, our intention is to support and enable more mainstream inclusion. Delivering this requires us to be innovative, recognising the challenges, and working in partnership with our localities, schools, and academy trusts. A separate SEND strategic sufficiency plan covers this area in more detail.

To support Special Educational Needs and Disabilities sufficiency, a number of interventions have already been put in place, including additional support for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators and growth of Integrated Resources. Integrated Resources are dedicated spaces in mainstream schools for complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities learners – they split their time between mainstream classes and receiving support in the Integrated Resource.

Demand for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities places is forecast to continue rise, so we will therefore need to further develop inclusive provision in schools, develop more Integrated Resources, and support more children and young people to be supported and achieve in their mainstream school. A focus area in this will be improving transition between different phases of school, particularly primary to secondary.

10. Detailed Reviews

In addition to the ongoing review process as outlined in our Commissioning Cycle, there will be times when the Local Authority wishes to conduct more detailed reviews of specific school/s and/or specific geographical areas. These reviews could be conducted for any school in which there is significant change in circumstances at any time of the year that could impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the school. Examples of significant change in circumstances include:

- the position of a headteacher becomes unexpectedly vacant
- a school is placed in an Ofsted category of concern of serious weaknesses or special measures

- a school has remained in an Ofsted category of requires improvement for the last two inspections
- a school becomes eligible for intervention by the local authority
- a school has a pre-existing licensed budget deficit and is unable to create a viable recovery plan
- an organisation wishing to set up an academy or a free school indicates an interest in a specific Planning Area

The outcomes of the review of schools would be assessed and schools identified for further analysis and discussion with the governing board. Some schools in Sheffield are church schools, being voluntary controlled or voluntary aided, and therefore the Diocese would be fully involved in the whole review process. The options for consideration would be prepared and considered at a meeting with the governing board/s to explore the key issues and agree a course of further action; a personalised programme of support would be drawn up to take developments forward.

By placing the focus on discussion and planning in a pro-active manner there will be better opportunities to explore and develop a range of options, time to build the capacity required to work differently, time to consult, and time to implement change. Where the result of the review and discussions with a governing board necessitate a solution requiring a formal change of school organisation (for example, amalgamation, federation, or closure), the local community would be consulted together with other key stakeholders.

11. Resources available to create additional places and the challenges

Many factors need to be considered when planning to create additional places including:

- capital funding availability (Department for Education grants such as the basic need grant, Condition Improvement Fund, contributions from housing developers and where required the opportunity for council borrowing);
- the possibility of additional resources through the Department for Education-funded free school programme; the feasibility and opportunity of expanding existing schools;
- the availability of sites for new schools and the impact of the introduction of additional places on existing schools.

The creation of new provision is complex and cannot always be achieved by incremental expansion and growth of existing provision. The scale of the

development and associated upfront costs of establishing a new school building present a challenge when funding is limited, and different funding sources are required to align for a single purpose.

The availability of capital has become increasingly limited. The capital grant funding the government has provided to contribute towards meeting the “basic need” for school places i.e. to resource the provision of additional places, is much reduced. In addition, there are growing pressures on the availability of capital funding for building repair and maintenance programmes across the school system.

Capital contributions towards the impact of housing developments are requested wherever possible through a planning process known as ‘Section 106’ (based on that section of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). A set formula is applied to the available places in a school priority admission area and the impact of house building assumes that 100 new houses will on average result in the need for 3 extra places per year group. Further work is in development which may lead to use of variable pupil yields when forecasting pupil growth from housing on a planning area basis.

The results are multiplied by a fixed rate per place to calculate a required contribution. However, negotiations sometimes result in this amount being reduced. There are often a number of years between an agreement being signed and the receipt of any financial contribution as a result of these agreed triggers and other factors such as delayed starts and build rates. The process for allocating available developer contributions starts with the identification of a basic need for additional places.

Options to address this need are then explored with local schools. Only after this are decisions made about how a scheme will be funded. Developer contributions are not usually used for any other purpose than addressing the basic need for school places. The Section 106 education contribution process presents a number of challenges which can limit the flexibility of its use. Due to the difference in time between contributions being calculated to the time when the contribution becomes available (triggers are met and the contribution is collected) local dynamics may have changed.

Furthermore, funding often comes with restrictions to specified schools and some schools are either uneconomical to expand or the scale of expansion would leave them with unsustainable class sizes. Maximum flexibility is therefore sought at the earliest opportunity when negotiating with developers. The Department for Education provides additional funding for schools proposed by approved sponsors through its funded free schools programme, with an emphasis on areas where places are needed. However, there is an expectation

that Local Authorities should commission and fund new schools when they are created in response to a specific need identified by the authority through the Free School Presumption process (formerly the Academy Presumption process).

12. Next Steps and Action Plans

Having now set out the key issues and challenges that each sector is facing, the Action Plans at the end of this document set out our strategic priorities for each sector over the planning period 2023-2026. They also outline key actions the Council will undertake to address the issues and challenges together with target dates and the intended outcome for each action.

13. Consultation

When making decisions about our services and the city, we need to ensure we seek the views of the people of Sheffield and our stakeholders, especially those who may be directly affected. Carrying out effective consultation has a number of benefits, including helping us to plan and deliver services that make best use of our resources and ensuring decisions reflect the priorities of the city.

There are a number of reasons why we consult, and most of our consultations will usually focus on:

- making sure our services reflect people's needs
- setting our priorities
- improving our services
- choosing between options
- talking to people when we need to do something that may be unpopular or have a disproportionate impact and we want to find out how we can mitigate this, e.g. Equality Impact Assessment & Climate Impact Assessment

Consultation on our Commissioning Plan for September 2023- August 2026 is an important stage in the policymaking process. In the first instance it allows the evidence base to be built, secondly, it ensures transparency in the process, and thirdly it gives our stakeholders understanding and ownership of the ultimate outcomes.

We are seeking the views of our key stakeholders and partners including: parents and carers, parents' forums, Learn Sheffield, early education and childcare providers, school leaders (via the Primary and Secondary Heads Partnership Group), governors, academy trusts, dioceses, colleges, training providers, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, developers and other interested parties.

If you would like to contribute, we would welcome your views, so please do complete the survey.

Thank you.

Early Education and Childcare Action Plan 2023-2026

	Activity	Key Steps	Target Date	Outcome
1.	Reduce inequalities: through provision of sufficient, high- quality, accessible and inclusive early education and childcare places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Targeted area and city-wide actions to increase take-up of funded 2-year-old offer and 3-and-4-year-old offer. b) Enhance and expand communication of early learning entitlements through established and new network channels. c) Annual publication of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and analysis, with support for early education and childcare providers to expand in areas of need. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Take up of funded 2, 3-and-4-year-old early education and childcare is increased.</p> <p>Parents have access to an inclusive, high-quality early education and childcare offer which supports their needs.</p> <p>Adherence to Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance.</p>
2.	Promote inclusion: via provision of support and information for parents and professionals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue to work with parents, carers and children in the design, development and delivery of the Local Offer, utilising a co-production approach where possible. b) Both digital and actual Offers are accessible and reflect the needs of the city's diverse population and those of professionals. 	Ongoing	Children are supported with an inclusive and accessible service that meets their and their families' needs. Parents, carers, and children are included in the design of service delivery.
3.	Impact of planned housing on the likely demand for early education and childcare places across the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue to monitor the impact of actual and planned housing developments and feed projections into forecasts. 	Ongoing	Ensure sufficient places to accommodate additional demand as a result of housing developments.
4.	Promote early education and childcare sector: using a variety of routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Services are mapped, and access to information on early education and childcare places is accessible and updated, in a format that reflect the needs of the local population. b) Promote the Sheffield Directory by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Supporting the updating of the Council's web pages intended specifically for early education and childcare providers by signposting said providers to those pages 	Ongoing	<p>Number of early education and childcare providers represented on the Sheffield Directory is increased.</p> <p>Families have access to a more comprehensive Directory when accessing early education and childcare.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">II. Referencing it as the key point of information in all responses to enquiries from the public and in electronic bulletins to providersIII. Supporting it being kept up to date with advice and information, including records of registered providersIV. Targeting schools to update their listings to include their full offer e.g., provision of wrap around care available		
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School Place Planning: Primary Sector Action Plan 2023-2026

	Activity	Key Steps	Target Date	Outcome
1.	Temporarily Reduce Published Admissions Numbers where appropriate	Ongoing RAG rating of schools. Continue to provide information and work with Schools. Attendance at meetings to encourage and support individual and area-based plans to manage surplus.	September 2025/26 when pupil numbers are expected to be at their lowest point	Reduced surplus places helping support the sustainability of all Schools
2.	Work with identified schools where pupil numbers are not expected to recover in the long term to explore suitable options.	Ongoing monitoring. Joint planning and support across ILS (include Schools Finance/HR etc). Decision requested from Education, Children and Families Policy Committee. Consultation.	September 2025/26 when pupil numbers are expected to be at their lowest point	Reduced surplus places helping support the sustainability of all Schools
3.	Temporary /Permanent expansions of schools in areas of high local demand	Work with schools who are forecast to see deficits if demand cannot be effectively met in other local schools to increase capacity.	Ongoing	Sufficient local places available
4.	Consider Impact of new housing developments and changing migration patterns on primary school demand. (Sheffield a designated city of refuge)	Continue to monitor the impact of actual and planned housing developments and feed projections into forecasts. Monitor impact of new pupils arriving from Hong Kong, Ukraine, Afghanistan & other countries.	Ongoing	Ensure sufficient local places to meet demand from new homes and those seeking asylum in Sheffield
5.	Effective use of the school estate	Consider how surplus can be best utilised to support other strategies e.g., SEND and Alternative Provision.	Ongoing	Utilises spare capacity effectively and supports SEND strategy

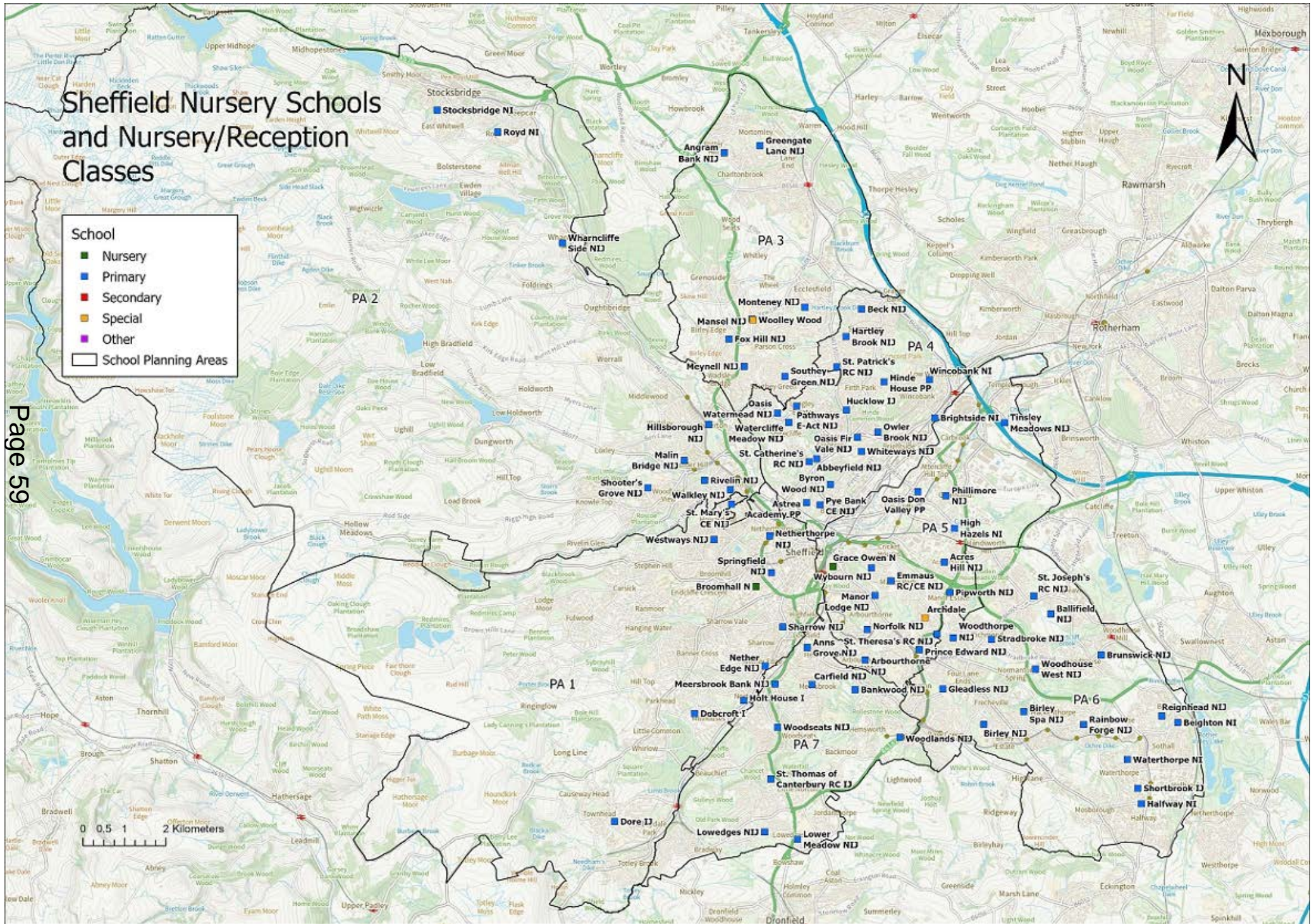
School Place Planning: Secondary Sector Action Plan 2023-2026

	Activity	Key Steps	Target Date	Outcome
1.	Increasing Pupil Admission Numbers (PAN) with existing schools	Continue to work with secondary schools in the city to introduce additional places for September 2023	September 2023	Secure sufficient places to accommodate all allocations of pupils for September 2023
2.	Permanent Expansions in the Southwest of the City	Continue to work with specific secondary schools to develop additional places through a permanent expansion programme.	September 2023	These proposals will support the development of an additional 535 Year 7 to 11 places in the Southwest of the city, contributing to meeting the local demand.
Page 57	Impact of planned housing on the likely demand for Secondary places across the city	Continue to monitor the impact of actual and planned housing developments and feed projections into forecasts	Ongoing	Ensure sufficient places to accommodate additional demand as a result of housing developments
	4. Explore options for temporary and potential permanent expansions in Planning Area 5	Continue to develop proposals to support significant shortfall of places in Planning Area 5 for the first 'peak' in pupil population in 2023 and the second 'peak' in pupil population in 2027/28.	September 2023 September 2027/28	Ensure sufficient places to accommodate increasing demand in Planning Area 5
5.	Falling rolls plan for Secondary sector post 2024	Develop a falling rolls plan for Secondary sector	Ongoing	Working with the secondary sector to ensure those schools most adversely impacted by surplus places are supported
6.	Effective use of the school estate	Consider how surplus places can be best utilised to support other strategies e.g. SEND and Alternative Provision	Ongoing	Ensure those schools affected by projected surplus places are provided with alternative options for utilising the school estate

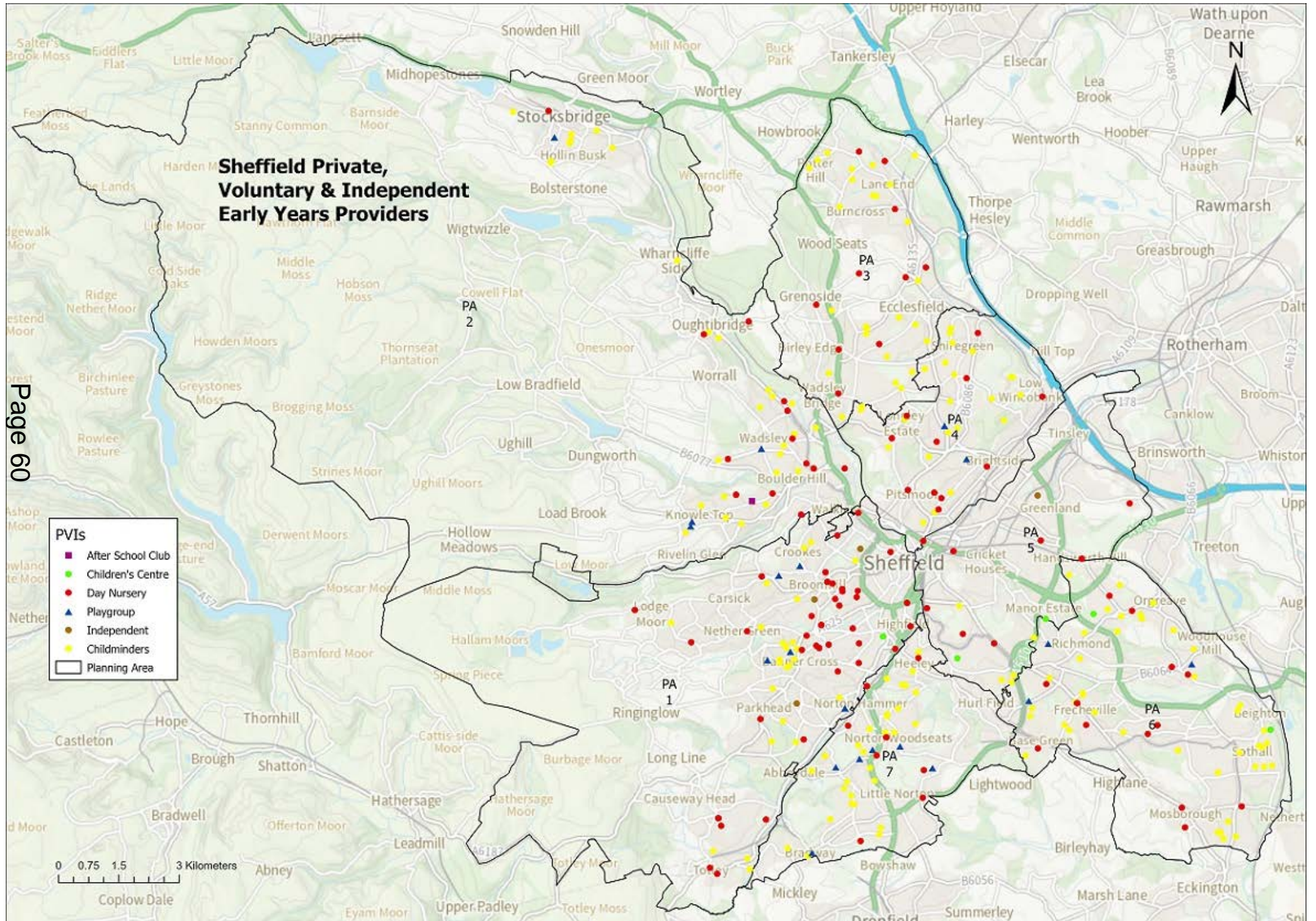
Place Planning: Post 16 Sector Action Plan 2023-2026

	Activity	Key Steps	Target Date	Outcome
Page 58	1. Sufficiency of Post 16 places	<p>Continue to work with the Post 16 sector to better understand sufficiency issues in the city.</p> <p>Review the sufficiency of sixth form provision.</p> <p>Post 16 Sufficiency Group to be established</p> <p>Comprehensive Data Set for 16-25</p>	September 2024	<p>Ensure sufficient places to accommodate demand between 2023-2026 and beyond as we move towards the September 2028/29 peak.</p> <p>Ensure we have data in place in order to understand demand (Assess), identify gaps (Plan), implement changes to ensure sufficiency (Do), and ensure high quality provision and attainment (Review) for its 16-25 population.</p>
	Consultation with Post 16 sector	As we further develop our post 16 sufficiency plans, we will consult with key partners and stakeholders about this important issue and consider any gaps and options to address.	September 2024	Draft a vision, Strategy & Action plan which seeks to ensure that there is a sustainable and responsive post 16 system which provides the skills and experience to enable young people to become independent, to play an active part in their community and to move into employment.
	3. Impact of planned housing on the likely demand for Post 16 places across the city	Continue to monitor the impact of actual and planned housing developments and feed projections into forecasts.	September 2024	Ensure sufficient places to accommodate additional demand as a result of housing developments
	4. Post 16 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	Continue to work with Post 16 providers to ensure sufficiency of SEND places across the city.	September 2024	Ensure sufficient and high-quality Post 16 provision to ensure there are opportunities for young people with SEND to achieve their Preparing for Adulthood outcomes.

Appendix A: Sheffield Nursery Schools and Nursery/Reception Classes 2022

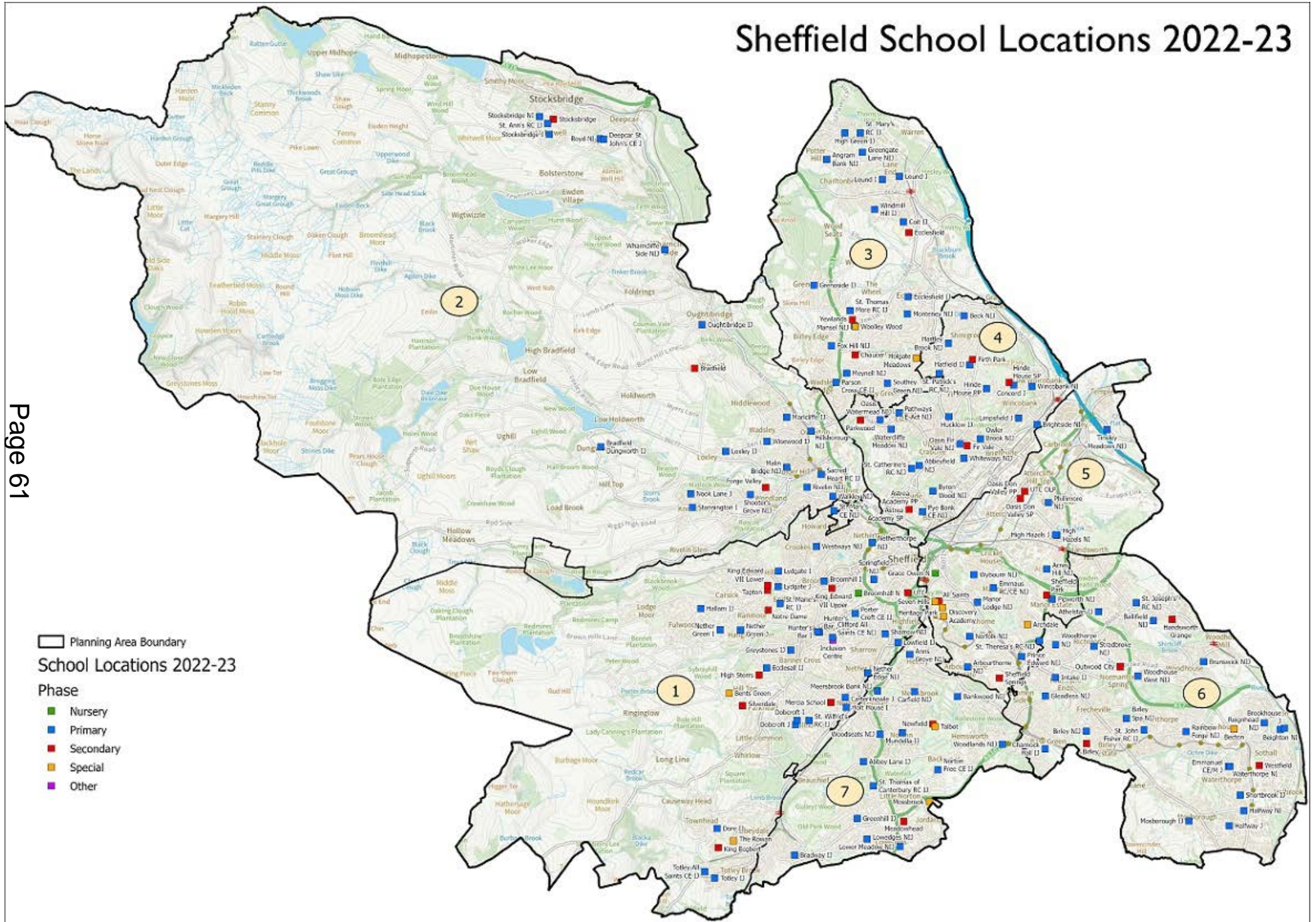


Appendix B: Sheffield PVI Early Years Providers 2022



Appendix C: Sheffield School Locations 2022

Sheffield School Locations 2022-23



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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Tim Armstrong,
Head of Access & Inclusion

Tel: 0114 2053100

Report of: *Andrew Jones*

Report to: *Education, Children & Families Committee*

Date of Decision: *31st January 2023*

Subject: *Alternative Provision Review*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (1421)				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

- To present the strategic direction being taken in developing Alternative Education Provision in Sheffield.
- To seek approval on the commissioning of an Alternative Provision framework agreement for delivery from September 2023 for a period of 3 years. This will replace the current framework that will end in July 2023. As part of this to outline steps being taken to explore how to develop greater sustainability of the framework.

Please note that this report sits alongside agenda item progressing the Alternative Provision free school bid.

Recommendations:

That the committee

1. Endorse the strategic intent to develop and implement appropriate changes to the citywide model of Alternative Provision in line with further consultation with schools, providers, parents, and young people.
2. Approve the commission of a new framework for providers to deliver alternative provision services for use by Sheffield schools and services within the children's services portfolio, as set out in this Report.
3. Endorses that, in developing the new framework, work is undertaken to develop models of greater sustainability for providers on the framework and costs that support the appropriate placement of children on the framework.

Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: <i>Kayleigh Inman and Ged Higgins</i>
	Legal: <i>Nadine Wynter and Tehrim Raza</i>
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>Bashir Khan</i>
	Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	SLB member who approved submission: <i>Andrew Jones</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted: <i>Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Tim Armstrong</i>
	Job Title: <i>Head of Service, Access & Inclusion</i>
Date: 31st January 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1.1 The vision of Sheffield's co-produced inclusion strategy, 2020-2025, is:

“Sheffield will be an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that all children and young people get the right support at the right time so that they can live a happy and fulfilled life”.

1.1.2 The strategy includes a commitment to develop a wide range of education, health and care services that delivers the right support at the right time. This includes development of sufficient high quality Alternative Provision (AP) places.

1.1.3 The Sheffield one year plan articulates an intent to reduce exclusions in all forms. As of September 2022, 24% of children met at least one criterion within this data set. The data set includes all children with attendance below 90% alongside indicators relating to illness, suspension, exclusion, reduced timetables, pupils not on roll and pupils who move to elective home education.

1.1.4 Within the SEND/AP green paper and recently published SEND local area framework, there is an expectation of a citywide approach to AP that is co-ordinated and is focused on three areas:

- Upstream interventions
- Short term interventions
- Long term transitional placements

1.1.5 Our strategic intent is to ensure that more children are accessing an appropriate education, reducing the reasons for exclusion from their education and leading to better life outcomes. We recognise that the breadth of needs across family support, emotional health and well-being, Special Educational Needs and barriers to attendance all need to be addressed to ensure impact.

1.1.6 This position is the backdrop for our developing Alternative Provision strategic approach and intent to use Alternative Provision as an appropriate planned intervention to reduce exclusions in all forms.

1.2 Sheffield's current offer:

Currently within Sheffield, Alternative Provision falls into the following areas:

- Sheffield Inclusion Centre – Commissioned for 250 places for children who have been permanently excluded from school.
- Becton School – Chapel House – Commissioned for 100 places for children who are medically too ill to attend school.
- Sheffield Alternative Provision framework – 22 Providers have applied to join the framework. All are classed as unregulated (ie

they are not a registered school) but have a series of checks to ensure they are appropriate. On an annual basis over 300 children are placed for a total of over 600 days delivery per week.

- Commissioned Alternative Provision interventions – Sheffield Inclusion Centre and Coit Primary school are funded by the LA to deliver short term AP interventions for a total of 52 places for either 1.5 or 2 days delivery per week.
- Schools also use unregulated provision that is not on the Sheffield framework.
- Schools have a range of internal AP to address challenging behaviour.

1.3 Developing our model:

Through our development work we have identified the following aims for our offer:

1. **Our AP offer needs to deliver the right evidence-based interventions to address presenting needs.** We know that there is no 'one size fits all' solution. It needs to be flexible and consider geographical location, the curriculum, the therapeutic offer, duration of the intervention and effective transition either back to school or into future long term placement. For some it needs to be a 'step out' of school, for others a specialist intervention and for others full time extended provision.
2. **AP needs to be an appropriately chosen intervention rather than a means of last resort.** It needs to focus on reducing exclusions in all forms and the number of missed learning days across the city, supporting better outcomes for some of our most vulnerable students.
3. **Our offer needs to be appropriately funded to ensure sustainability.** To ensure sustainability for all parts of the offer citywide, we are reviewing how Alternative Provision should be funded so that it is sustainable and equitable citywide.
4. **We need the right sufficiency of provision at all ages and across all areas of need.** This will need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is appropriate and fits within wider in school activity to address exclusions in all forms.
5. **Allocation of placement works best when it is co-ordinated and sits within a wider inclusion offer to ensure that packages of support are built around the child.** Alternative provision needs

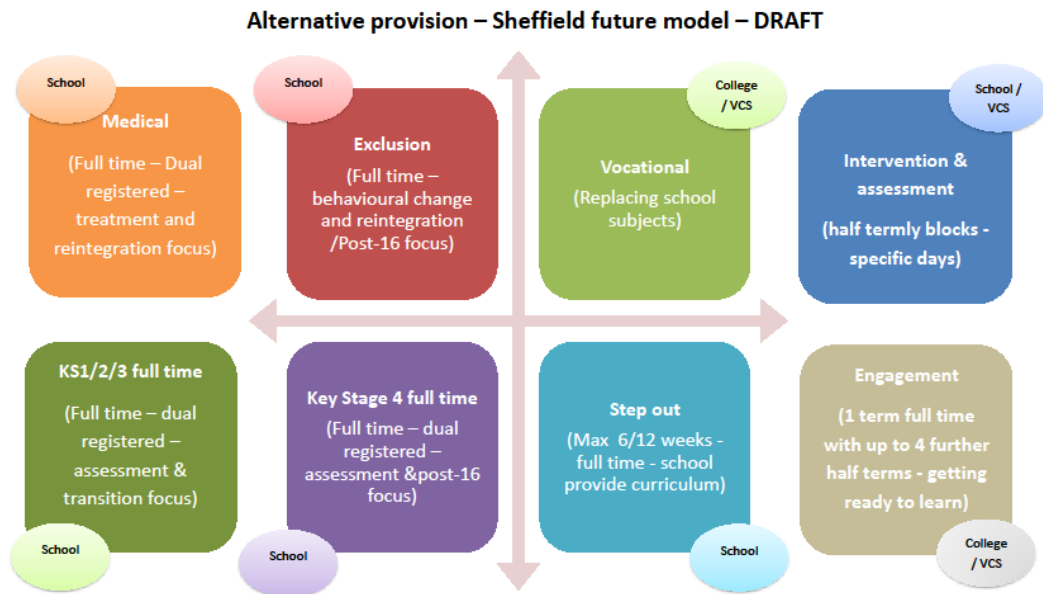
to be used as a targeted intervention and so allocation needs to sit within a wider plan around the child. Any allocation process needs to be flexible and delivered at pace. Allocation needs to consider both the needs of the individual child and the needs of the group they would be joining. The child and their family need to understand what is in place and why.

6. **We need to evidence the impact of all AP interventions.** This will be best done through our inclusion tracker to ensure that it is impacting individual children and reducing the level of exclusions in all forms.
7. **All provision must be appropriately quality assured to ensure consistent impact.** We are seeking to implement the IntegratEd framework across all Sheffield AP to ensure consistent practice.
8. **AP needs to enable effective planning and transition / reintegration.** Too many children remain in alternative provision with no clear plan of next steps. Whenever a child enters AP there must be a plan of what success looks like for that child and effective support for transition and reintegration. All children in AP must have a clear plan of what it is intending to achieve. This plan must be outcome focused.
9. **Citywide expertise needs to be targeted early.** We need to ensure that the expertise that develops in AP can be translated into schools early, working upstream to support children and build the expertise of the schools workforce. Where children are accessing AP there needs to be strong and positive relationships with their school to enable shared learning and practice that meets the need of the child.
10. **All children in AP must have support to access effective academic learning.** Whilst not all AP needs to offer and deliver academic qualifications or teaching, there must be the support to enable children to make progress to next level learning and the world of work. As part of an overall plan for the child, a focus on effective curriculum for their future must be in place.

1.4 **Proposed future model of delivery:**

- 1.4.1 To have a full and effective system of Alternative Provision, we need to be clear on the different parts of the offer and how we develop choice across the system. This means that we should aim to have 'types' of delivery that can be put in place by multiple providers. Some providers will have the capacity to deliver more than one 'type' of provision, but not all will. We anticipate that to have a full system we will need a range of school based, college based and 'unregulated' provision.

1.4.2 We are currently proposing that the following types of delivery are required. We intend to consult with pupils, parents, schools, and providers to confirm that this is the case.



- Medical - provision that delivers alongside a clear treatment plan for those who are medically unable to attend school
- Exclusion – Provision for children excluded from school focused on supporting behavioural change and re-integration to a future full-time placement or post-16 education
- Vocational – Creation of a vocational offer that sits alongside the school-based curriculum that is qualification led and supports transition to post-16 education
- Intervention & assessment – Short term, part time, targeted provision that assesses or addresses needs, enabling a reduction in risk of exclusion
- Key stage 1-3 full time provision – Provision focused on assessing and meeting needs that supports effective transition back to school with the skills in place to manage the curriculum. Provision is likely to be over an extended period. Pupils would remain dual registered ensuring a link to their home school for reintegration.
- Key stage 4 full time provision – Provision focused on assessing and meeting needs that supports effective transition into post-16 education with the skills in place to manage the curriculum. Provision is likely to be until the end of Year 11. Pupils would remain dual registered ensuring a link to their home school for

possible reintegration or access to elements of the curriculum.

- Step out – Short term, full time step out provision to address potential excludable issues, for example drug use, offensive weapons, violent behaviour. Ideally this should be up to 6 weeks. Within the provision there should be effective assessment of the risks of exclusion
- Engagement – Provision for learners who are at a point where they are unable to engage with a formal learning environment, focused on enabling them to get ready to learn

1.4.3 The offer would be underpinned by the inclusive offer available across all our schools to ensure effective practice starts in our schools and is supported through appropriate interventions at the right time.

1.5 **Next steps to delivering the model:**

1.5.1 The above proposals are presented for committee to agree the policy direction of Alternative Provision and agree progression to citywide consultation.

1.5.2 To implement them the following specific actions and changes will be needed:

- Re-procure the AP framework to deliver the **intervention & assessment, vocational** and **engagement** offer. This needs to be completed for September 2023 and so process needs to begin in February 2023.
- Secure AP Free schools (via DfE build or other means) to deliver **KS1/2/3** and **Key Stage 4 full time** provision plus additional **intervention & assessment** and **step out** provision. Bids need to be completed in February 2023. If these bids are not successful then different routes to procure these will be needed.
- Work with the Sheffield Inclusion Centre to consider delivering the **Step out** and **intervention & assessment** alongside the **Exclusion** offer. This would create potential for earlier intervention.
- Develop an option for the **Engagement** model that works within legal processes (ie not provided by a single unregulated provider).
- Partner with the Sheffield College to consider the development of the **vocational** offer alongside those on the AP framework.
- Maintain the current **medical** offer via Becton School – Chapel House but ensure that the commission reflects the need to act early.

- Review the funding model for Alternative Provision to ensure a clear citywide model to support the offer. This review has started, and school's forum have been updated on it.
- Implement a consistent quality assurance process across all Sheffield AP.
- Ensure a clear admissions, assessment, review, and reintegration process across the offer that links to the wider Sheffield Inclusion model and is financially sustainable. This would create a single entry point for AP.
- Consult on the proposals detailed above to ensure that it is appropriate in line with needs of schools, pupils and their families and is deliverable by providers. As part of this consultation we will seek to agree what success looks like.

1.5.3 To further develop the model beyond those changes, we will need to:

- Complete a gap analysis and data modelling to understand the current level of provision and the full level of needs across the city.
- To use the data modelling to assess the wider need and understand the future trajectory of demand in the city so that we can engage further with stakeholders on future citywide modelling.
- To link our model and modelling to any wider review of social emotional and mental health needs for children in the city to understand how support needs can be met earlier and through a wider offer of support.

1.6 **Re-procuring the Alternative Provision Framework**

1.6.1 We are proposing to procure an AP framework agreement with a term of 3 years and an estimated value of £1 million per year, to provide alternative provision services.

1.6.2 SCC currently procures, contract manages, and quality assures the network of off-site alternative provision providers for use by Sheffield schools and services. This includes opportunities into post-16 education via Sheaf training. This is currently achieved via a framework arrangement commercially procured and compliant with both Contract Standing Orders and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

1.6.3 The current framework arrangement (2022-2023) has been a single year framework to enable review and revised models to be developed as part of a citywide strategic approach. This proposal therefore seeks to establish a new AP framework (September 2023-July 2026), with a term of 3 years to deliver provision.

- 1.6.4 The new AP framework will be procured using an open tender process in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. It is difficult to estimate the number of providers that will be awarded entry onto the framework via the open tender process, however it is estimated that the combined value of any subsequent call-off contracts will not exceed £1 million per year.
- 1.6.5 A procurement strategy will be developed in liaison with Commercial Services which will ensure that the framework is procured in compliance with Public Contract Regulations 2015 and Contract Standing Orders. Financial colleagues will be consulted in the design of the funding model to ensure affordability within existing budgetary constraints.
- 1.6.6 The procurement process will establish a framework of suppliers who demonstrate the capacity and capability to deliver provision in line with the proposed wider model; to deliver against the **intervention & assessment, vocational and engagement** offers. It is anticipated that providers will deliver distinct offers within the model that includes provision at primary, secondary and addresses SEN.
- 1.6.7 Providers on the framework are subject to further competitions. This means that providers joining the framework have no guarantee of work as it is dependent on schools led demand. Therefore, providers may struggle to maintain viability if the provision represents a major source of their income. This has a negative impact on the overall sustainability of the programme. Several providers have had to close in the past 18 months, meaning that the offer in the city becomes limited. The nature of the framework also means that any provider can seek to develop provision without there being a clear rationale for their place in the market. We believe we need to create a clear strategic intent within the framework and ensure sustainability for providers.
- 1.6.8 As such we are also proposing to explore further how we can guarantee a level of provision within the framework. We will need to explore how risk is managed and underwritten and consult on any model for this. We do not believe that we will be able to guarantee placement in all providers but want to work with providers and schools to establish how we can create this level of sustainability. Any guaranteed provision must fit with the model of AP being proposed. As the overall citywide funding model develops, we will need to review this to ensure that the provision is sustainable and equitable alongside the rest of the offer.
- 1.6.9 Having a procured offer that offers guaranteed levels of work creates a financial risk for the Local Authority as all places may not be utilised, but overall, the sustainability of provision is expected to improve as providers will have greater stability and clarity of income. This should drive quality as it will enable staff retention.
- 1.6.10 Through the procurement process we will detail more specificity about expectations and the offer in line with the proposed citywide model. We will expect allocation to be supported through the local authority creating

a single point of entry that ensures that provision is targeted as part of a plan. As part of the cost to schools there will be an expectation that there is sufficient resource to fund the progressions team, ensuring effective oversight of provision and a single point of entry.

1.6.11 We will seek to enable further targeted procurement within the framework so that we can work with specific schools where needed to secure additional provision that delivers quality provision.

1.6.12 The committee are asked to approve the commissioning of the new framework and to agree for the LA to explore and develop a model of financial guarantee for some placements within the framework.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

2.1 The One year plan focuses on reducing exclusion in all forms. The development of a coherent citywide approach to Alternative Provision that fits with other activity to drive improvement is essential in supporting this aspiration. It will create greater choice and oversight of provision that is used in a targeted way to ensure that vulnerable children can successfully make progress.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 To develop our offer of Alternative Provision we have sought to engage with schools, providers, children, and parents. Most recently elected members have engaged in workshops to shape the future vision and practice of AP in the city.

3.2 Our children and families have told us that:

- AP provides a safe place for learning
- Students feel valued at AP
- Students feel that AP gave them a fresh opportunity to learn
- AP helps them to develop confidence and self-worth
- Many students want to remain in AP and not return to school

3.3 Our schools have told us that:

- They want AP to be a part of the curriculum offer
- Cost is not the primary issue as the key requirement is quality provision that can meet need
- They have concerns about quality of some provision
- They want to offer interventions to learning which support students to avoid exclusion
- They want better collaboration to support re-integration
- They want provision which focuses on behaviour and emotional regulation

- 3.4 Our providers via the framework have told us that:
- They have concerns over the funding and sustainability of their provision
 - They want to work more closely with schools to support students re-engagement
 - There is a need to acknowledge the development of personal and life skills before/alongside academic engagement
 - They want the LA to support with upskilling and staff training

3.5 There is further consultation that is required to agree whether our current proposals are the right ones for the city. Following decision from the committee we will consult on the proposed model.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

4.1.2 This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

4.1.3 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

4.1.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, it highlights that the establishment a new Alternative Provision framework covering September 2023-July 2026 supports the One year plan focus on reducing exclusion in all forms. A coherent citywide approach to Alternative Provision that fits with other activity to drive improvement will create greater choice and oversight of provision that is used in a targeted way to ensure that these vulnerable children can successfully make progress and that this mitigates against the longer term negative impacts of exclusion.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 Commercial considerations – a procurement strategy will be agreed in consultation with Commercial Services to ensure that the framework and subsequent further competitions are procured and awarded in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (and any subsequent procurement legislation which amends or replaces the relevant Statutory Instrument) and Contract Standing Orders.

4.2.2 The anticipated value of the framework has increased from £750k to £1m due to growing numbers and likely growth over the next 3 years. Alternative Provision is funded through the school system and schools will need to manage within their existing resources.

4.2.3 If guaranteed funding arrangements are proposed, there are likely to be further financial implications. A paper will be brought to the committee for approval at a future date once the options for this have been investigated.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The proposals outlined in this report will support the Council to meet its statutory duties under several pieces of education legislation. Under the legislation local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who, because of illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies to all children of compulsory school age resident in the local authority area, whether they are on the roll of a school, and whatever type of school they attend.

4.3.2 Statutory guidance also sets out the Government's expectations of local authorities and maintained schools who commission alternative provision and pupil referral units. The statutory guidance acknowledges that some local authorities or partnerships of schools have developed a local directory of 'approved' provision, which meets clearly defined standards (including registration where necessary, safeguarding, health and safety, quality of accommodation, quality of education etc.).

4.3.3 Schools and local authorities, working in consultation with management committees and the governing bodies of alternative provision Academies and AP Free Schools, are expected to set an overall policy for referrals or admission to alternative provision. There is also an expectation that there will be clear criteria for referring and admitting pupils, including those who are dual registered.

4.3.4 The current Alternative Provision Framework ends in July 2023 and the proposal is to enter a new framework agreement for 3 years. Regulation 33(3) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 limits the term of a framework agreement to 4 years.

4.3.5 The proposal to procure the new AP framework using an open tender process and awarding contracts following further competitions is in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (Regulations 74-76) and the Council's Contracts Standing Orders.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 As part of our net zero 2030 ambition, we will be looking to work with partners who have shared values. As part of the procurement process social value questions will be asked to consider the climate impact of any provider seeking to join the framework.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Consideration has been given to remain with the current fractured Alternative Provision model. This has been rejected as it lacks a clear plan and direction and does not fit with local and national ambitions.
- 5.2 Consideration has been given to removing the AP framework, allowing schools to individually develop any offer they wish to utilise directly with providers. This has been rejected as it creates greater risk of poor practice. The lack of regulated provision within the city means that we continue to need a framework of provision to reduce risk of exclusion and provide appropriate interventions.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 We are recommending that the Local Authority supports the further development of a citywide Alternative Provision model as this will create a clear strategy that delivers consistent and quality provision for which the LA has oversight.
- 6.2 The approach will enable the LA to develop the quality of provision and ensure that it is integrated to wider practice to support inclusion within the city. It will ensure that the LA is able to meet it's statutory duties to arrange alternative provision in school or elsewhere under section 19 of the Education Act 1996.
- 6.3 It is recommended that the framework is procured as part of our work to ensure sufficient suitable provision is developed within the city.

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Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report: Candi Lawson,
Strategic Commissioning Manager**

Tel: 07891 545952

Report of: *Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning*

Report to: *Education, Children and Families Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: *31st January 2023*

Subject: *Alternative Provision Free School Bid*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given?	1349			
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:- <i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i></p>				

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval for the Local Authority to support the submission of two bids to the Department For Education current round for Alternative Provision Free Schools. These bids will be submitted in partnership with Brigantia Learning Trust, and Minerva Learning Trust, respectively. Deadline 17th February 2023.

These bids are being submitted as part of wider developments to improve alternative provision in the city. Each bid is for a 100-place school.

This is being brought to Education, Children and Families Policy Committee, as it falls within the remit of matters reserved to the Committee under the Council's Constitution:

*Matters Reserved to the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee
Decision making in respect of the establishment, alteration or discontinuance of schools, other than those that must be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.*

Recommendations:

The Education Children and Families Committee is recommended to:

- Approve that the Local Authority will support the submission of two bids for an Alternative Provision Free School, by Brigantia and Minerva respectively.
- Endorse the principle of funding any abnormal site costs resulting from a successful bid from the High Needs Capital Allocation.

Background Papers:

Sheffield Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Kayleigh Inman</i>
		Legal: <i>Nadine Wynter</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Bashir Khan</i>
		Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>(Insert name of relevant Executive Director)</i> <i>Andrew Jones</i>
3	Relevant Policy Committee	<i>Education, Children and Families Policy Committee</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Matthew Peers / Candi Lawson</i>	Job Title: <i>Strategic Commissioning Managers</i>
	Date: <i>20th January 2023</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Bidding Opportunity and Process

- 1.1.1 The national alternative provision free school process, led by the Department for Education, provides an opportunity to bid for new alternative provision free schools to be built.
- 1.1.2 Capital is provided by central government for successful bids, with the Local Authority funding abnormal capital costs.
- 1.1.3 For this process, bids are submitted by Academy Trusts. To submit a bid, the Trust must have the support of their local authority.
- 1.1.4 An initial expression of interest process was completed in summer 2022, to identify potential academy trust partners for this bidding opportunity.
- 1.1.5 Brigantia and Minerva Multi Academy Trusts emerged from this process, jointly undertaken between Integrated Commissioning, and Education & Skills, as the most suitable partners for bids.
- 1.1.6 Detailed bids are now being developed with both Trusts, ahead of the 17th February 2023 deadline.

1.2 Statutory Duties

- 1.2.1 The Local Authority has statutory duties as detailed in the Education Act 2011, and the Children and Families Act 2010. Guidance for local authorities is detailed in the Alternative Provision, Statutory Guidance 2013.
- 1.2.2 Local Authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for permanently excluded children and for other children who, because of illness or another reason, would not receive a suitable education without alternative arrangements being made. In this context we are proposing Alternative Provision that seeks to meet the needs of children as an early intervention to prevent exclusion or escalation of need wherever possible.
- 1.2.3 Statutory guidance outlines the following regarding 'Good Alternative Provision':

Good alternative provision is that which appropriately meets the needs of pupils which required its use and enables them to achieve good educational attainment on par with their mainstream peers. All pupils must receive a good education, regardless of their circumstances or the settings in which they find themselves. Provision will differ from pupil to pupil, but there are some common elements that alternative provision should aim to achieve, including:

- *good academic attainment on par with mainstream schools – particularly in English, maths and science (including IT) – with appropriate accreditation and qualifications.*
- *that the specific personal, social and academic needs of pupils are properly identified and met in order to help them to overcome any barriers to attainment.*
- *improved pupil motivation and self-confidence, attendance, and engagement with education; and*
- *clearly defined objectives, including the next steps following the placement such as reintegration into mainstream education, further education, training, or employment.*

1.3 Case for an Alternative Provision Free School

1.3.1 The SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper sets out an ambition for an integrated system that increases inclusion in mainstream settings.

1.3.2 There will always be a number of children for whose needs can not be met in mainstream, and for whom an alternative high-quality provision will enable them to thrive.

1.3.3 As part of our wider strategic work to develop an Alternative Provision model for the city, we have identified a need for high quality registered AP that can deliver the following in line with recommendations from the Green paper:

- Proactive outreach and expertise to the mainstream sector to prevent exclusions and escalation of need
- Short term, part time alternative provision as a step out from mainstream school with the aim of reintegration
- Long term full time alternative provision that supports young people through their education journey

1.3.4 As part of developing this provision, there will be a specific focus on addressing inequalities. We know that Children from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be excluded than their white counterparts. Children who are identified as having additional needs are also more likely to need adjustments or alternative approaches to enable them to reach their potential. Children and young people who need an alternative to mainstream school are amongst the most vulnerable in our city, and therefore require the highest quality and aspirational provision.

1.3.5 We believe there is a strong case for developing our approach to Alternative Provision in Sheffield, and these bids, if successful, will support us to achieve this. In the event that neither bid to DFE is successful, we are proposing that officers continue to consider operational solutions to achieving the intended outcome without the investment from Department for Education.

1.4 Proposed Alternative Provision Free School Bids

1.4.1 Both bids are for an 80 – 100 place Free School with a target cohort through from Key Stage 2 – 4. Key focus for both bids:

- Transitions between Key Stage 3 and 4
- Supported and planned reintegration into mainstream wherever possible.
- Transition from Key Stage 4 into post 16 employment, education or training.
- Child / Young person centred, and needs led plans that clearly articulate a pathway and goals.
- Trauma informed inclusive interventions that are tailored to an individual plan.

1.5 Brigantia

This bid will be for provision that spans Key Stages 2 to 4, with up to 50% of places being focused at Key Stage 4 young people and the transition into post 16.

There is a particular focus on transitions between primary to secondary.

1.6 Minerva

This bid will focus on Key Stages 2 and 3, aiming to identify children at risk of exclusion and build wrap-around support based on individual needs assessments. Supporting children to build resilience and move through the key stages of education is a focus.

1.7 Rationale for two bids

1.7.1 The Local Authority is supporting two bids that create an opportunity to meet a broad spectrum of ages and need across our city, targeting the most vulnerable children. Based on our work to date, we believe there is a need for two provisions supporting a total of 200 children and young people.

1.7.2 We estimate that the Department For Education is likely to support up to 20 applications nationally, so by submitting two bids, we have a stronger chance of success. However, if we are not successful, or receive only one successful bid, we believe there remains a strong rationale to work towards the aims of the bids to improve inclusion in our city.

1.8 Wider Alternative Provision Context

The co-produced Sheffield Inclusion Strategy is the overarching strategy which underpins priorities in this area. These bids sit as part of the wider strategic approach to Alternative Provision in Sheffield. (See paper on Alternative Provision) as part of the committee agenda item.)

2 Funding Model for the Alternative Provision Free Schools (section under development)

2.1 National Benchmarking and recent research by officers have found that the average cost of an Alternative Provision place is £18,000. The figure of £18k also fits neatly into the current provision in Sheffield being a little higher than the average cost of an integrated resource place and slightly lower than a special school place.

2.2 The size of the provision is another factor in the funding model. It needs to be large enough to support an appropriate management and staffing model, while being the correct size to support the needs of the young people accessing the provision. Based on research of successful AP provision elsewhere in the country and the findings of the 2 Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) we are currently assuming 80 places in the school and 20 flexible places. This would give 8 classes of 10 pupils and allow the AP school to deliver the interventions mainstream schools are describing that they need.

2.3 The estimated total income for the planned AP school is shown below. The table below shows the income sources to the new AP over the first 4 years and identifies the financial implications for the LA from our High Needs block which forms part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
School Places	48	64	80	80
Flexible Places	8	12	20	20
	56	76	100	100
	£	£	£	£
Base Funding ESFA	560,000	760,000	0	0
Base Funding LA			1,000,000	1,000,000
Top Up LA	89,600	121,600	160,000	160,000
Top Up Traded	358,400	486,400	640,000	640,000
Total Income	1,008,000	1,368,000	1,800,000	1,800,000

Expenditure from DSG	89,600	121,600	1,160,000	1,160,000
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2.4 Work done already with the 2 Multi Academy Trusts suggests that this income model would allow them to recruit and retain the staff and therapy structures they want to establish to ensure that the Alternative Provision will be successful. All of the research done so far is that successful AP is delivered by experienced extremely well trained and passionate staff, which is reflected in the staffing structures being developed by both MATs.

- 2.5 The income will come from 3 sources. Years 1 and 2 only the Education and Skills Funding Agency will fund the base funding for any places being commissioned by the Local Authority. The top up will come from trading with schools and the Local Authority. From year 3 the base funding is normally deducted from the high needs block.
- 2.6 Sheffield intends that we will commission 20% of the provision directly. This will serve a number of purposes:
- a. It will give financial stability to the Alternative Provision and support financially for the periods of the year that the provision is unable to bring traded income in (experience shows that the percentage uptake in provision is lower September to December)
 - b. Ensure the Sheffield Local Authority are able to commission places / interventions as and when necessary

3. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

3.1 One Year and Corporate Plan

- 3.1.1 This proposal contributes to the council's aim to reduce exclusions in all forms. Children and young people accessing alternative provision are likely to do so as a preventative measure to reduce risk of exclusion from school.
- 3.1.2 If successful, the development of an Alternative Provision Free school will strengthen the city's ability to support our most vulnerable children and young people.

3.2 Reducing Inequalities

- 3.2.1 This proposal contributes to recommendation 2 within the Race Equality Commission final report: 'Educating Future Generations and Showing Leadership in our Educational Institutions'.
- 3.2.2 Specifically, the formation of quality aspirational alternative provision will seek to reduce the number of children from over-represented ethnic groups being excluded from our schools.

3.3 Climate change

- 3.3.1 There should also be a positive contribution to Sheffield's climate goals. The school's construction will be led by the Department for Education and be constructed to a low carbon footprint.
- 3.3.2 The school will also reduce the risk of longer distance travel outside the area, or to schools on the other side of the city, reducing carbon emissions. (See paragraph 4.4).

4. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 4.1 As outlined, through the co-produced Sheffield Inclusion Strategy, there is consultation underpinning the activity and intentions in this area.
- 4.2 As part of the bid development, there is planned consultation with young people who have experienced alternative provision and their parents. This consultation will be facilitated independently by Community Youth Services to capture the voice of young people and parent / carers.
- 4.3 Local health services and commissioners have been made aware of this bid and potential implications on therapy services. They will be further involved if a bid is successful.
- 4.4 In the event of a successful bid, further consultation will take place on development and delivery of the school.

5. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

5.1 Equality Implications

- 5.1.1 Decisions need to take into account the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- 5.1.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.
- 5.1.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and highlights that the proposal to submit two bids for new alternative provision free schools will increase equality for disabled children, young people and their families by providing access to alternative provision education places for those that need it. It will also reduce the likelihood of a child/young person having to travel out of Sheffield to access alternative education and provide connections to the community promoting social cohesion.

5.2 Revenue

- 5.2.1 The financial model for delivery of the Alternative Provision Free School is still being developed for inclusion in an Department for Education bid.

- 5.2.2 It is anticipated that the financial model will be similar to that used by other authorities who have an Alternative Provision school of this nature. It is likely to involve a split of the placement costs between the local authority and the school.
- 5.2.3 For the first two years of operation, the Department for Education will provide £10k of revenue funding for each place. The additional cost will be charged to schools, although it is anticipated that Sheffield City Council will purchase some places and fund the top-up.
- 5.2.4 After year 2, additional High Needs Block Direct School Grant will be required to support ongoing revenue costs, as Department for Education funding will end. This will equate to approx. £1m per year based on current costs. An assumption has been made that the High Needs Block allocation made to SCC will continue to increase for the next 3 years.
- 5.3 High-cost placements
- 5.3.1 Currently the cost of alternative provision is benchmarked at £18k per place. This compares to an average placement cost of £21k for an in-house special school, £63k for an Independent Special School and £19k for a place at the Sheffield Inclusion Centre.
- 5.3.2 There may therefore be some opportunity to avoid costs by using the new AP provision to support young people before their needs escalate to either special school or the Inclusion Unit.
- 5.3.3 Ultimately this is a proposal to provide new alternative provision and so will require revenue investment from SCC.
- 5.4 Capital
- 5.4.1 The capital funding implication on SCC resources for this bid is abnormal capital costs of which a high level estimate of £1m has been made (see below). Remaining capital costs i.e. main construction, would be met by central government, estimated at £12m-£15m.
- 5.4.2 SCC is in receipt of £13.5m of High Needs Capital Funding from Central Government over 2022/23 and 2023/24. £5.2m of this is already committed to existing schemes leaving £8.3m from which it is proposed the £1m for abnormal costs will be allocated.
- 5.4.3 It should be noted, that in the absence of any information on High Needs Capital Allocations from 24/25 onwards, the remaining £7.3m would not be sufficient to fund the 5-year strategy to deliver the growth in SEND places in the strategy currently under development.
- 5.5 Abnormal capital costs
- 5.5.1 These costs cover a large range of issues including, but not limited to,

flooding and alleviation measures, utility provision and ecological provision.

5.5.2 Abnormal costs will be confirmed once in the full feasibility stage following a successful bid. However, to reduce risk, Sheffield City Council has undertaken initial feasibilities on the proposed site.

5.5.3 Sheffield's High Needs Capital allocation would be used to meet this.

5.5.4 The need to fulfil abnormal costs, and risks associated, will be the subject of a capital budget approval of £1m to be presented to Strategy & Resources Committee as part of the regular capital approvals cycle subject to approval of the bid submission by this committee.

5.6 Special Educational Needs Transport

5.6.1 Although detailed implications cannot be assessed without knowing where future students will be travelling from, broader issues and costs can be identified.

5.6.2 An additional 100 students would incur transport costs of around £500,000 per annum has been provided by the Transport service.

5.6.3 The potential location of the new school is in an area of greatest need within the city, therefore the costs of transport are likely to be lower that if transport was required to less targeted locations or our of area.

5.7 Legal Implications

5.7.1 As set out in the main body of the report, local authorities have a duty under Section 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, as amended, to make alternative arrangements for the education of children who would not otherwise receive suitable education because of illness, exclusion, and other reasons. This applies to all children of compulsory school age resident in the local authority area, whether or not they are on the roll of a school, and whatever type of school they attend.

5.7.2 As long as the Council is satisfied that the proposals set out in this report will assist the Council to comply with this duty, then it will be acting within its powers. If the proposed application is successful any further legal implications will be considered at that stage. Successful applications will be announced early autumn 2023.

5.8 Climate Implications

5.8.1 Consultation with climate service colleagues has indicated a climate impact assessment is not possible at this point. Once the location of the schools has been confirmed and details of the build(s) provided, an assessment can be completed.

5.8.2 Despite this, an initial view is provided below against key thematic areas of the climate impact tool, to give the committee a sense of potential climate implications.

5.9 Building and Infrastructure

5.9.1 The construction of the school will be determined by central government, but it is expected this will be in line with national building standards, to reduce carbon emissions and wasted energy.

5.10 Transport

5.10.1 The AP Free School will be the first regulated AP school provision for the city, which will prevent the need for as many young people to be transported out of city too access alternative education.

5.10.2 The location of the AP Free School will be within an area of need in the city, reducing the level of transport across the city for access to this alternative/specialist education provision. This should reduce carbon emissions relating to transport in the city for pupils accessing alternative provision.

5.11 Energy

The construction of the school should mean minimal usage of energy to run and maintain the building. The Academy Trust assigned to the school, should have a focus and policy on ensuring the building is utilised as efficiently as possible.

5.12 Economy

Engagement of local contractors with the contractor that the Department for Education procures to build the school could be explored, as a means of increasing local skillsets in low carbon construction.

5.13 Nature/land use

Commissioned feasibility activity will highlight any issues with a site identified for the school, and if developed and appropriate, steps would be taken to manage and minimise any risk to nature and biodiversity.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 No bid

The alternative would be for Sheffield not to put a bid into the Department for Education. This would minimise any risks but would remove the opportunity to receive funding for a capital build and initial base running costs of a provision.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 We are recommending that the Local Authority supports and contributes to two bids to the Department for Education's Alternative Provision round as this is an excellent opportunity for Sheffield to develop provision in the city. If successful, this would provide the capital costs to build a new provision that may not otherwise be possible.
- 7.2 Ultimately this is an opportunity to expand and build on our approach to Alternative Provision to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people.

Corporate Parenting Strategy for Looked after Children and Care Leavers 2021 – 2023

Brief Overview:

'Corporate Parenting is the term used to refer to the responsibility of the council, to provide the best possible care and protection for children and young people who are 'looked after'. At the core of this responsibility is the moral duty to provide the kind of support that any good parents would provide their own children. This includes enhancing the quality of life of looked after children as well as simply keeping them safe.'

House of Commons Children, Schools and Family Committee March 2009

This Corporate Parenting strategy describes how the Sheffield City Council and its partners, such as housing, health services, Police and schools, act as 'responsible parents' to children and young people living within their care.

It outlines our vision and approach, reports on some of our recent achievements and developments and sets out how we intend to achieve our goals. The strategy outlines the context in which this strategy sits, and the governance structure in place to ensure that our vision is achieved.

Our strategy demonstrates our Partnership's commitment to ensuring that the life chances of every child and young person in our care are improved in-line with their peers.

Vision

Our overarching vision for all our children and young people in Sheffield's is that:

'Children and young people are safe and supported to achieve their full potential', and that: children are at the centre of our practice; we intervene at the earliest opportunity; our workforce is skilled and supported to do the work that they need to; and that children and families benefit from high performing and high-quality services.

Key objectives:

The strategy details the four strategic outcomes that have been developed by the Corporate Parenting Board, having taken account of what children and young people have told us about their experiences of being in our care, as well as providing a response to the impact that Covid has had on children and young people's lives. These objectives are as follows:

Objective 1. To increase provision of high-quality in city care placements

Objective 2. To support looked after children to catch up with the schooling they have missed.

Objective 3. To improve looked after children and care leavers' emotional wellbeing

Objective 4. To support more care leavers to engage in education, employment, and training (EET)

This is a three-year strategy, supported through a series of live action plans that are driven within specific priority theme groups with by partners/officers and supported by elected member champions. The current strategy will be reviewed in 2023.