

**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.

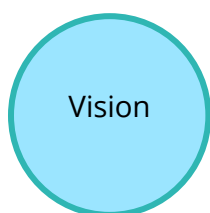
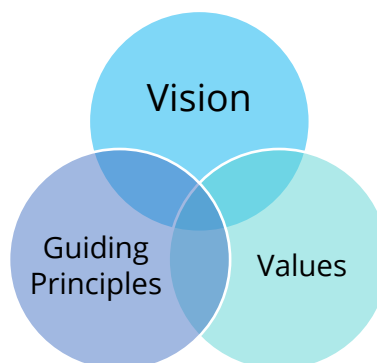
It highlights the work that we have already done across each sector, but it also contains a series of action plans which set out our strategic priorities for early education, childcare, primary, secondary and post 16 sectors for the period 2023-2026.

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.

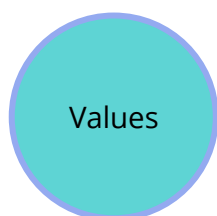
Thank you.

## 2. Vision, Values & Guiding Principles

# Place Planning

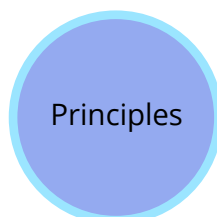


- Ensuring that every child and young person in Sheffield has access to a great local place, at each phase from early education and childcare, right through to the post 16 sector by providing a responsive, agile, and flexible place planning system that meets current and future demand in a timely and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

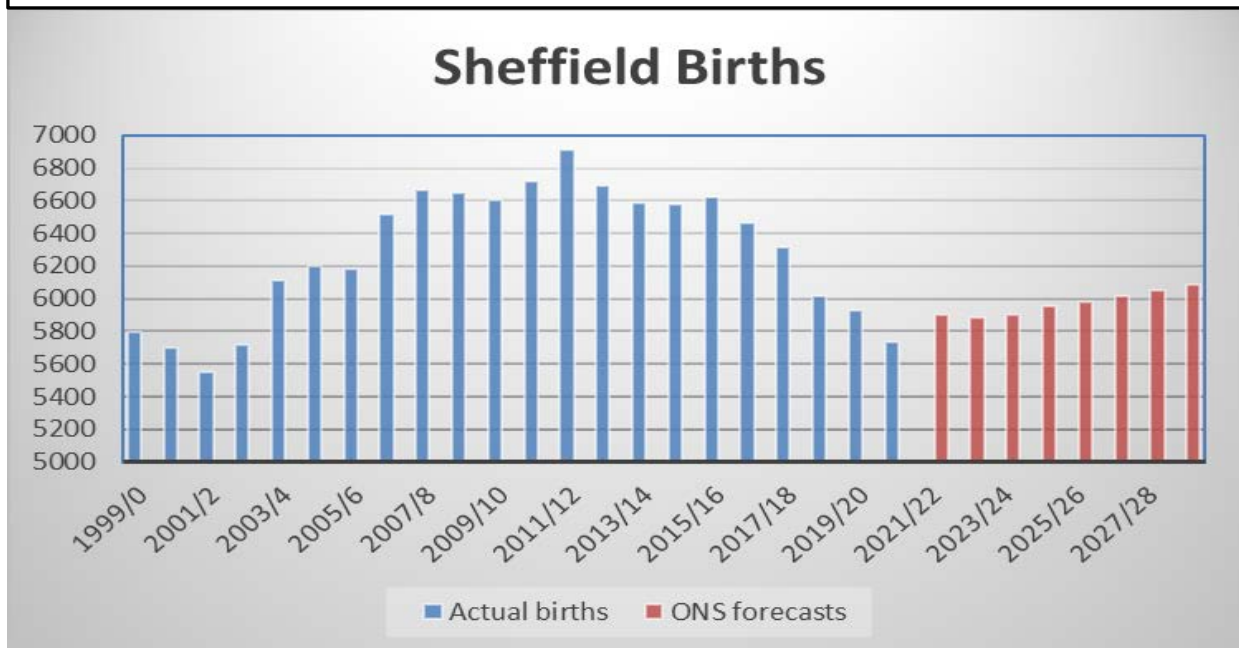
The overall population in Sheffield has grown steadily, rising from 531,000 in 2001 to 589,000 in 2020 (Source: Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates). Sheffield's population is projected to rise by 62,000 people between now and 2034, although this may be higher if economic growth 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.

| <b>Table 1.0: Take up rates for Funded Early Learning entitlements Spring 2022</b> |                   |                            |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Local Authority</b>   | <b>2-year-old</b> | <b>3- &amp; 4-year-old</b> |
| 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.

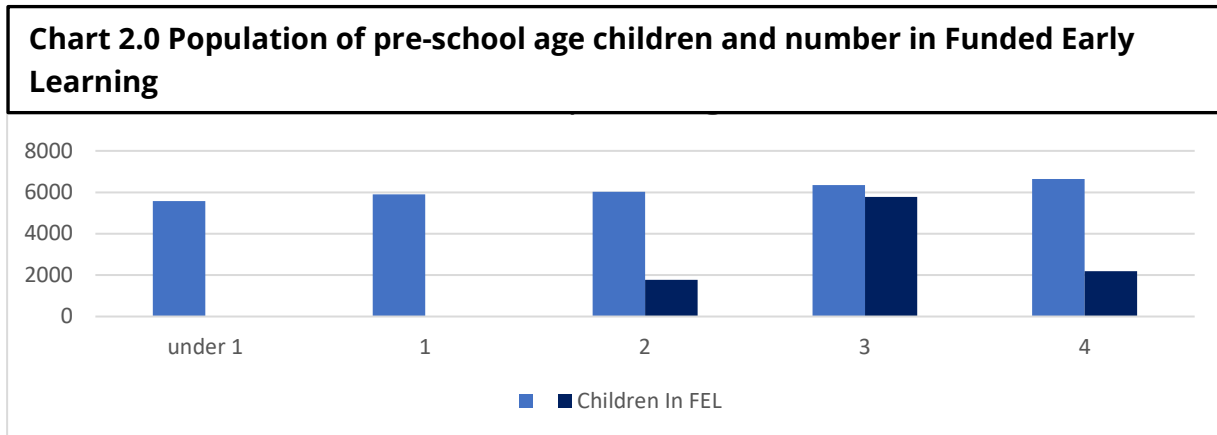
We will continue to raise awareness of the Entitlement to encourage working families into taking up the Extended Free Entitlement in those areas. We are aware of those levels of deprivation, particularly in the Northeast and East of the City are reflected in the low numbers of children accessing Extended 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.

| <b>Comparison</b> | <b>Children in 3- &amp; 4-year Funded Early Learning</b> | <b>Children in Extended Free Entitlement</b> | <b>Take up of Extended Free Entitlement</b> |
|-------------------|--|--|---|
| 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.

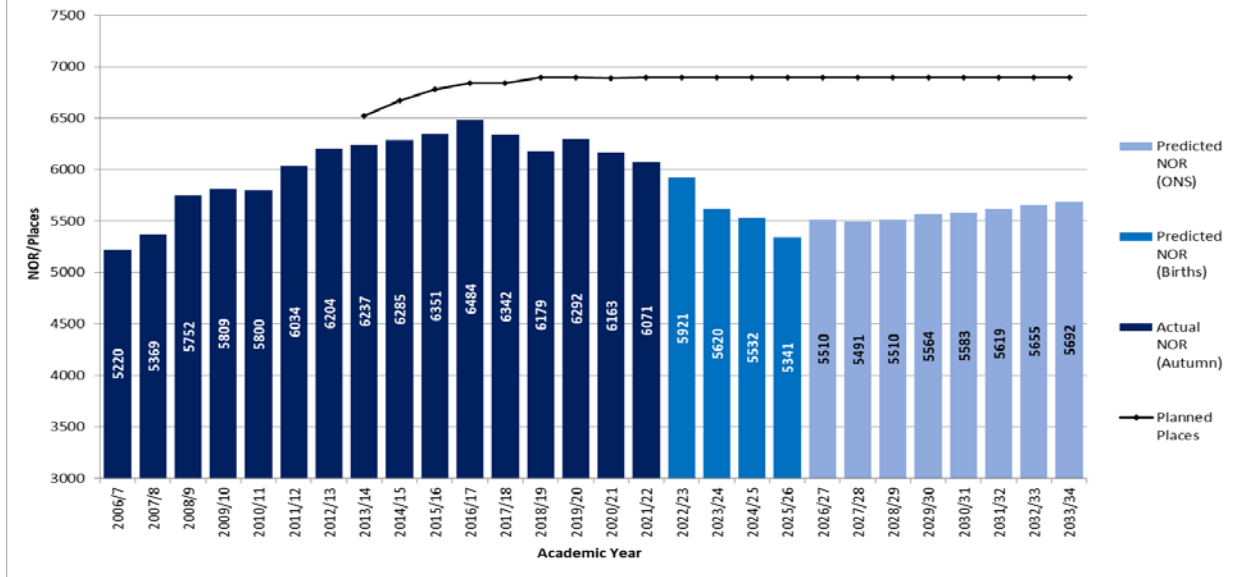


*\* NB: some four-year-olds will have started reception*

### **Pupil Cohorts – Primary**

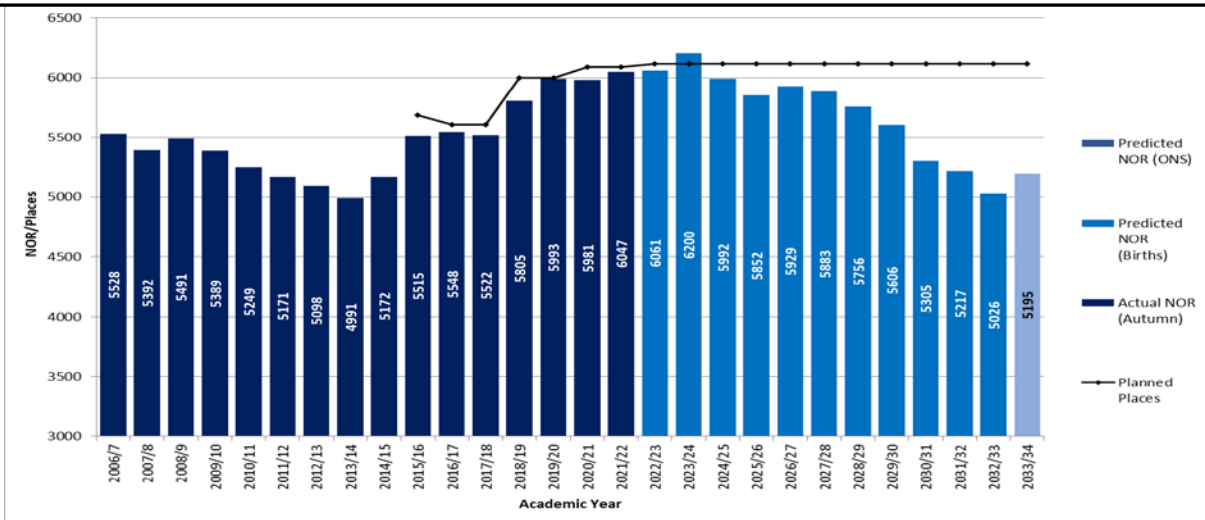
Reception year primary school intakes have fallen and continue to fall. **Chart 3.0** below shows the current city-wide picture for primary school places. It forecasts a surplus of reception places across the city between 2020-2024. Numbers on Roll are forecast to hit the lowest point in 2025/25, after 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 15<sup>th</sup> January for Primary and 31<sup>st</sup> 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.

| <b>Table 3.0 Provider type by Planning Area</b> |                     |   |                     |              |
|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|--------------|
| <b>Planning Area</b>                            | <b>Sector</b>       |   |                     |              |
|   | <b>Childminders</b> | <b>Private, Voluntary &amp; Independent</b> | <b>School Based</b> | <b>Total</b> |
| 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           |
| <b>Sheffield</b>                                | <b>193</b>          | <b>137</b>                                  | <b>82</b>           | <b>412</b>   |

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.

| <b>Table 4.0 Out of School Clubs by Planning Area - August 2022</b> |                     |   |                |              |
|---|---------------------|---|----------------|--------------|
| <b>Planning Area</b>  | <b>Type</b>         |   |                |              |
|   | <b>Childminders</b> | <b>Private, Voluntary &amp; Independent</b> | <b>Schools</b> | <b>Total</b> |
| 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            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>0</b>            | <b>19</b>                                   | <b>15</b>      | <b>34</b>    |

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.

| <b>Table 5.0 Types of School in Sheffield as at 1/9/2021</b> |           |              |                      |                 |                      |
|--|-----------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 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%.

| <b>Table 6.0 Types of Post 16 provision in Sheffield as at 1/9/2021</b> |                     |  |
|---|---------------------|--|
| 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.

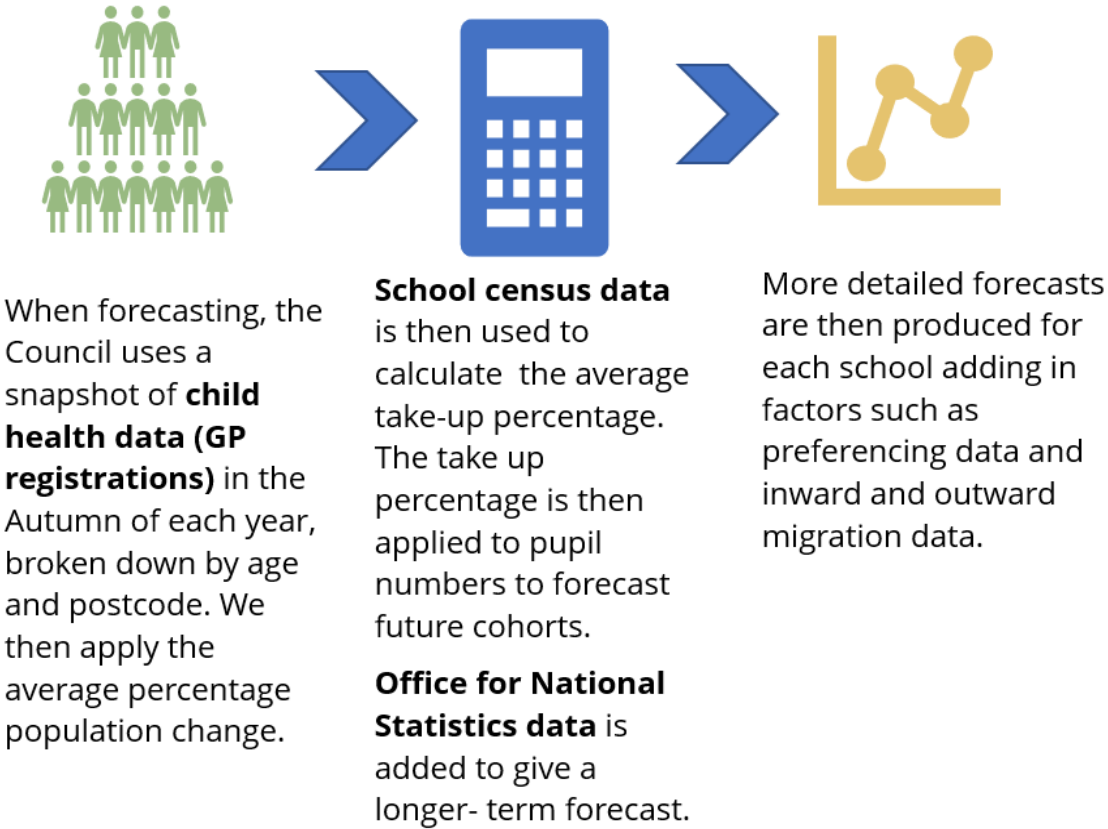
To help address this, the Local Authority will firstly ensure that it does not increase the number of pupil places on a permanent basis unless there is sustained demand for places e.g. up until and beyond the end of the decade. Secondly, the Local Authority will work with the sector to develop a plan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

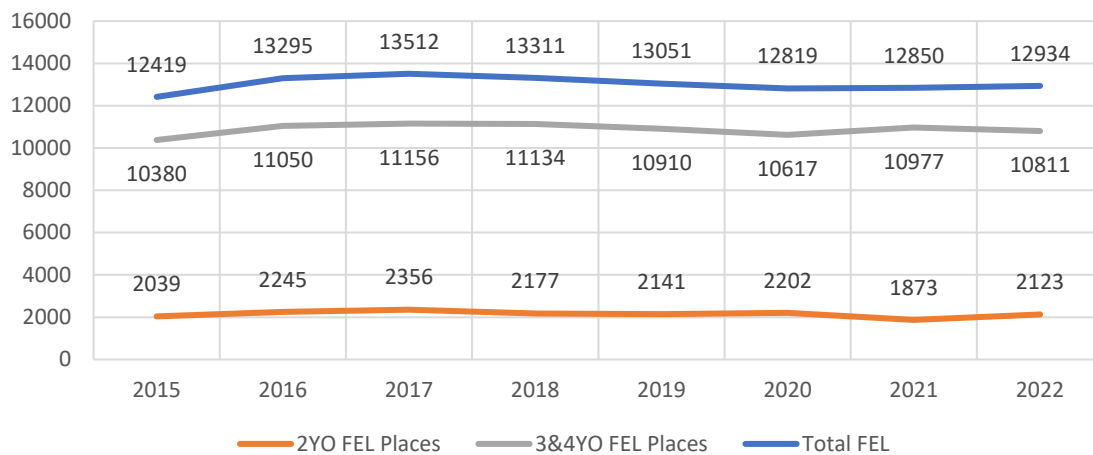
The outcome of the review could lead to the identification of schools where support should be provided for governors to explore issues specific to the organisation and leadership challenges in their school.

## **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.

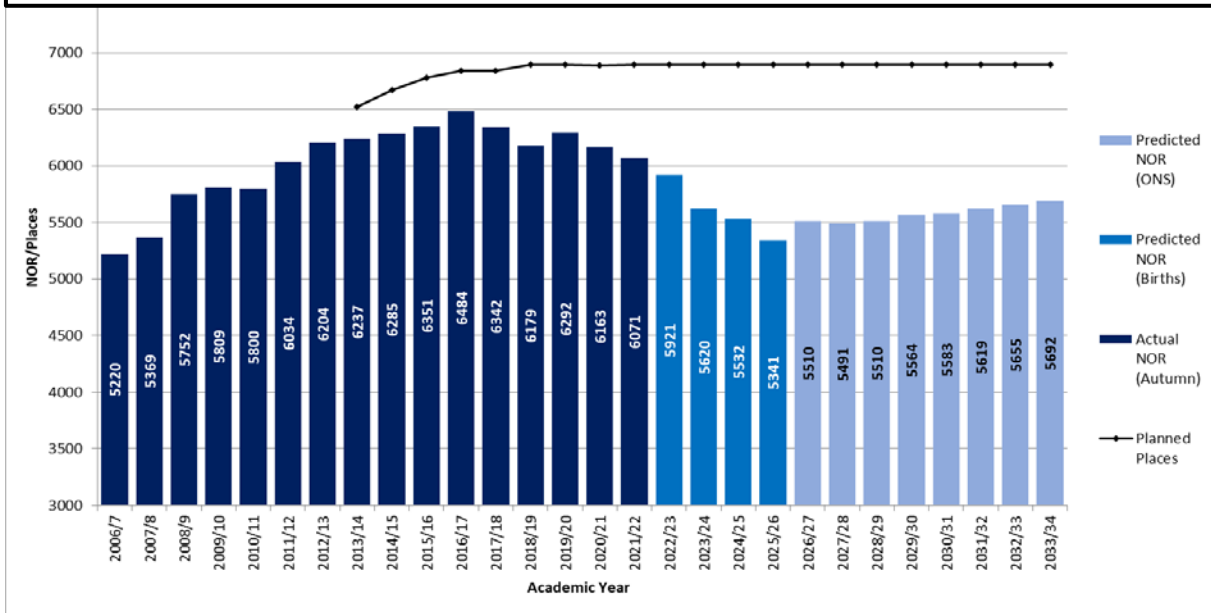
We will continue to raise awareness of the Entitlement to encourage working families into taking up the Extended Free Entitlement in those areas.

### 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

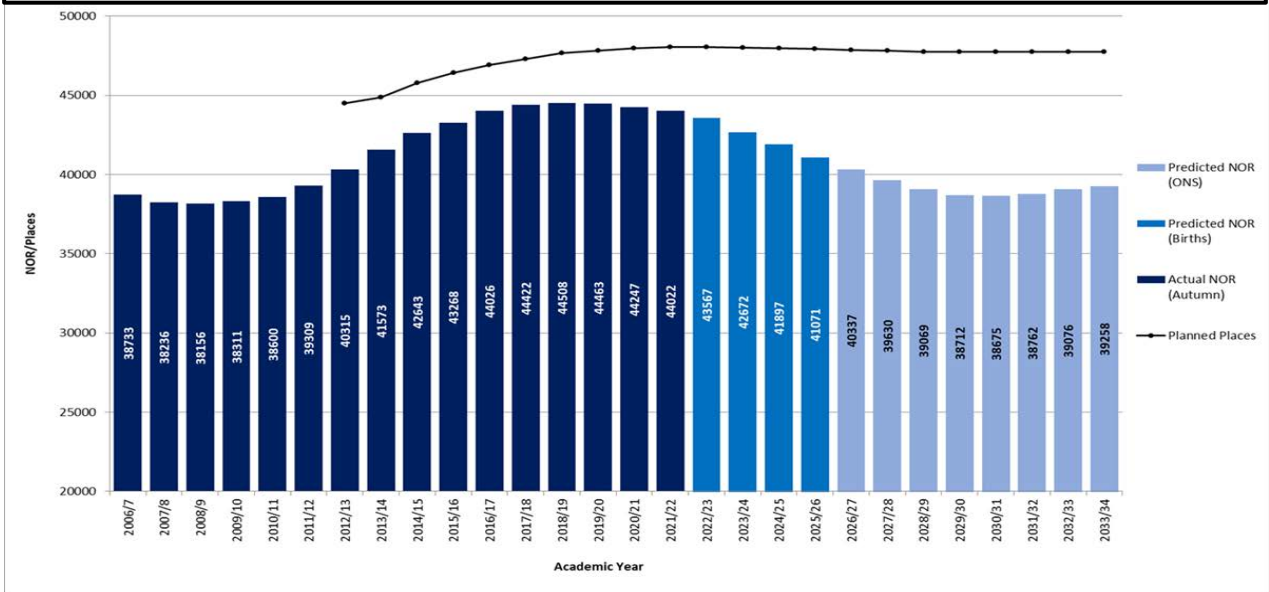
The cumulative impact of lower reception cohorts entering our primary schools year on year can lead to significant surplus across the whole school having a severe impact on school budgets.

**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**

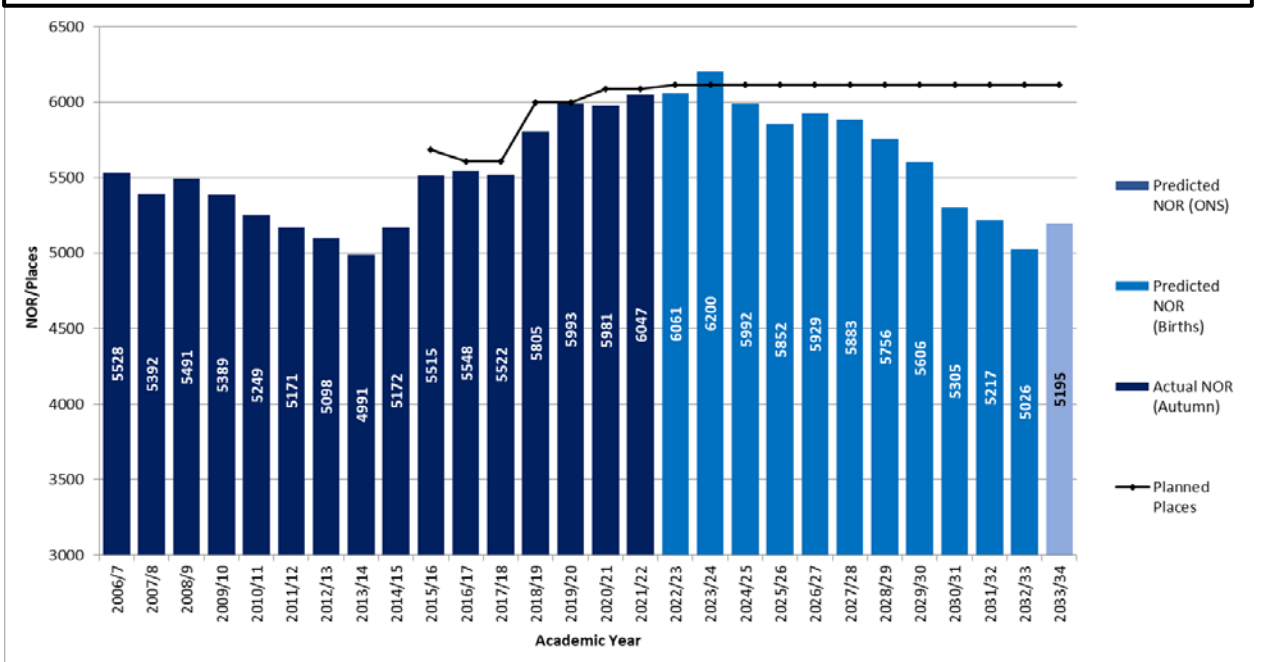


**Secondary**

**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**





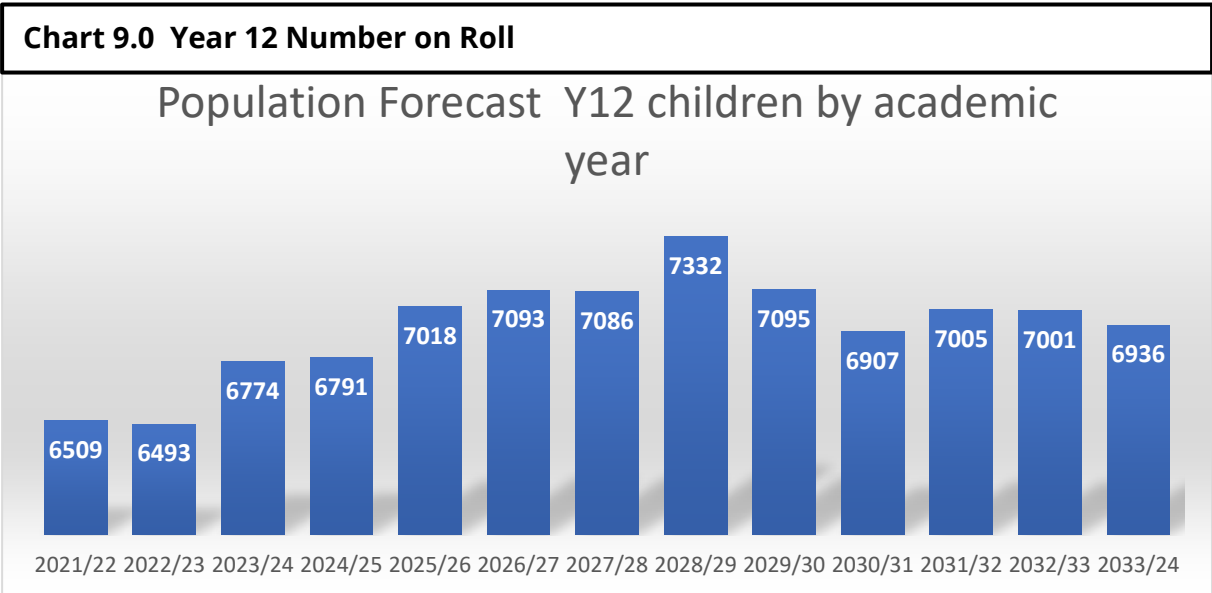
Many areas of the city are currently experiencing growth in 11-16 pupil numbers, and the demand is not evenly distributed across the city. For example, within the southwest (Planning Area 1) and northeast (Planning Area 5) of the city, they are experiencing the most growth - there is a pressure on secondary 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"> <li>a) Targeted area and city-wide actions to increase take-up of funded 2-year-old offer and 3-and-4-year-old offer.</li> <li>b) Enhance and expand communication of early learning entitlements through established and new network channels.</li> <li>c) Annual publication of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and analysis, with support for early education and childcare providers to expand in areas of need.</li> </ul>  | <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"> <li>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.</li> <li>b) Both digital and actual Offers are accessible and reflect the needs of the city's diverse population and those of professionals.</li> </ul>  | 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"> <li>a) Continue to monitor the impact of actual and planned housing developments and feed projections into forecasts.</li> </ul>  | 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"> <li>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.</li> <li>b) Promote the Sheffield Directory by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 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>   |

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|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>II. Referencing it as the key point of information in all responses to enquiries from the public and in electronic bulletins to providers</li><li>III. Supporting it being kept up to date with advice and information, including records of registered providers</li><li>IV. Targeting schools to update their listings to include their full offer e.g., provision of wrap around care available</li></ul> |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|

# 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

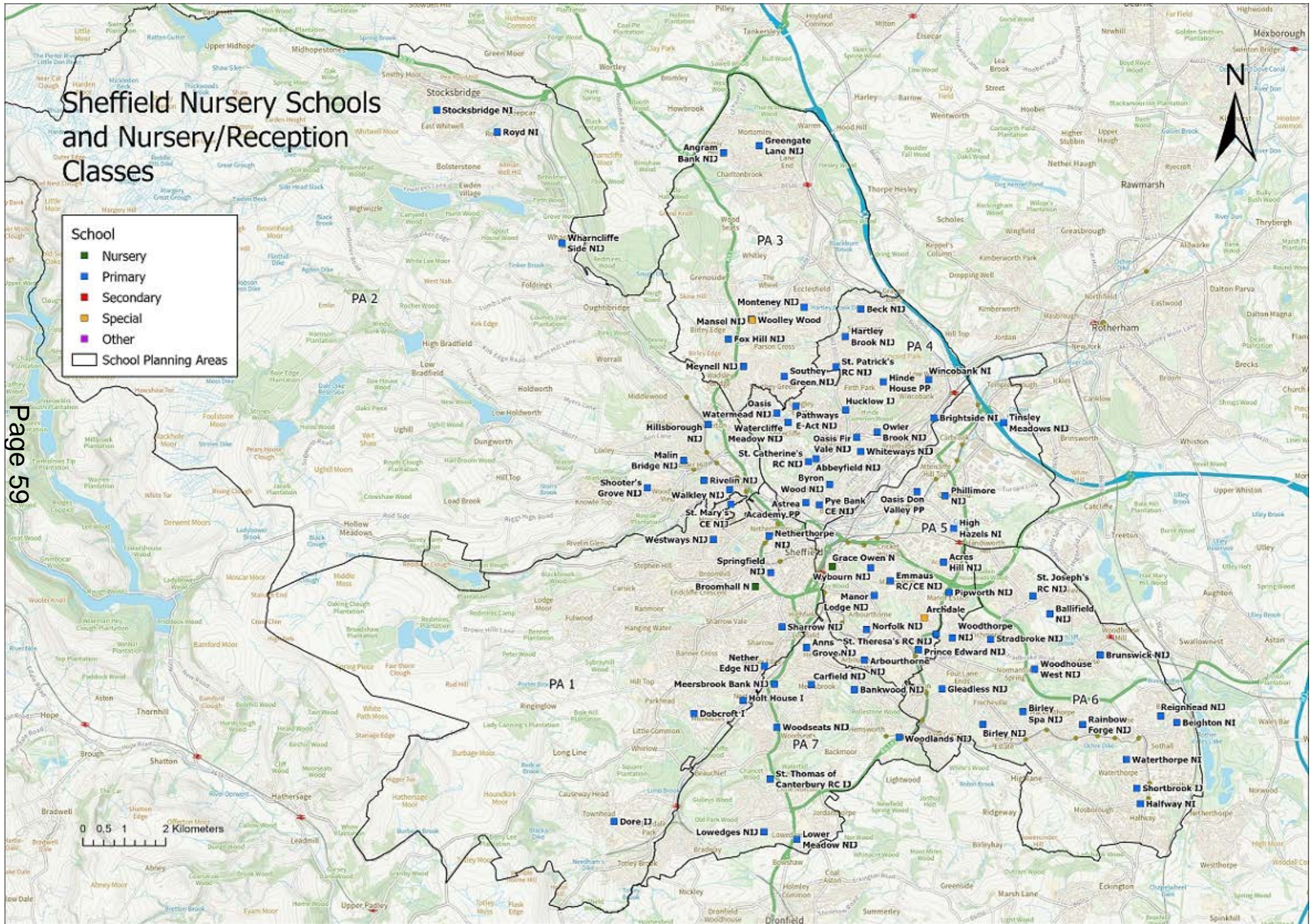
|         | Activity   | Key Steps  | Target Date                         | Outcome   |
|---------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1.      | Increasing Pupil Admission Numbers (PAN) with existing schools                         | Continue to work with secondary schools in the city 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<br>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.  |

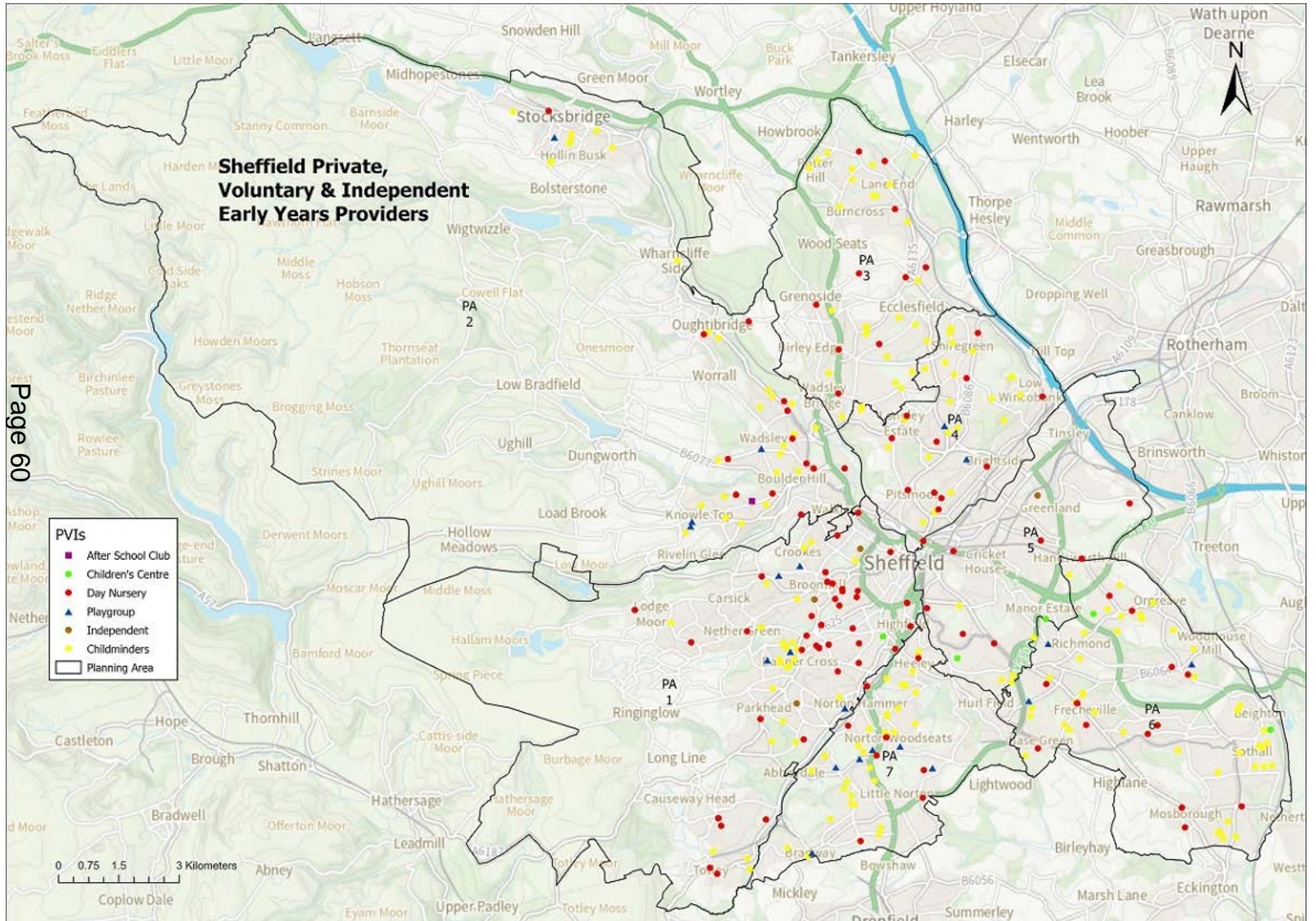


# Appendix A: Sheffield Nursery Schools and Nursery/Reception Classes 2022





# Appendix B: Sheffield PVI Early Years Providers 2022















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