



# Foreword

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Knowsley Council has a strategic responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient school places available for children and young people in the borough. Knowsley Council as an education authority has a duty to promote high standards of education and fair access to education. It also has a general duty to secure sufficient schools in their area, and to consider the need to secure provision for children with Special Educational Need and Disabilities. This includes a duty to respond to parents' representations about school provision. These are referred to as the school place planning duties. This School Organisation Strategy is essential for the strategic planning of this.

This document seeks to outline the current and projected pupil populations in Knowsley, alongside the policies and principles associated with the successful supply of school places. The strategy defines the main challenges that Knowsley will face in meeting the demand for school places over the next 10 years – and how by future planning, we aim to address and mitigate any possible challenges to ensure pupil place planning in Knowsley is effective from now until 2029.

Whilst Knowsley Council has no powers to direct academies to expand, we will seek to work with Multi-Academy Trusts, the Regional Schools Commissioner, and the Department for Education to consider any future expansion plans that would benefit the Knowsley community.

In Knowsley we are proud of our partnerships. Aligning with Knowsley Better Together, this strategy has been produced in collaboration with school leaders. In doing this, we will continue to work together to ensure that we deliver our vision for:

Every Knowsley child to have access to a great school or academy in Knowsley



**Cllr Margaret Harvey**  
Cabinet Member for Children's Services



**Colette Dutton**  
Executive Director (Children's Services)



**Jill Albertina**  
Assistant Executive Director (Education)



# Our vision and principles

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It is important that Knowsley Council is open and transparent in our role as the strategic commissioner of education provision. To help guide us in this role we have set out an overarching vision and commit to abide by clear working principles in every area of our approach.

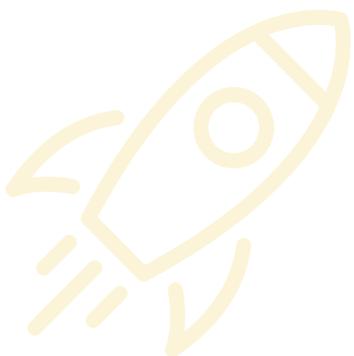
Our vision for school organisation is fundamentally linked to our wider education goals and seeks to ensure:

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We have agreed eight principles that will underpin our approach to pupil place planning, and school organisation. These are the principles that guide the planning and decision making processes set out in this strategy, and for how we will monitor demand for school places, undertake capacity reviews, work with partners and stakeholders, and take decisions on adding or removing pupil places from the local system.



**Principle 1:** To work effectively with partners to plan an adequate supply of high quality school places in the borough (i.e. Department for Education, Education and Skills Funding Agency, Regional Schools Commissioner, Governing Bodies, Head Teachers, Diocesan authorities, and Multi Academy Trusts).

**Principle 2:** To undertake pupil place capacity reviews at the local planning area level where intelligence indicates a school capacity issue.

**Principle 3:** To consider specific models of school organisation to inform the development of school organisation proposals across the borough. These models are clearly set out in this strategy.

**Principle 4:** To ensure that any proposal for changes to places is considered in accordance with Knowsley's School Organisation options appraisal framework for school organisation decision making.

**Principle 5:** To consult with schools, parents and local communities as part of the pupil place planning process.

**Principle 6:** To support the expansion of existing local popular and successful schools where there is a clear need for new places, or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools.

**Principle 7:** To monitor the future impact of housing developments, ensure the requirement for additional school places are incorporated into new housing development plans, and collect Section 106 contributions from developers to fund new school places.

**Principle 8:** To consider the impact of developments in neighbouring boroughs on potential pupil migration in and out of the borough.

# Supporting Knowsley's wider priorities

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In Knowsley, we believe that children and young people have the right to receive high quality teaching and learning every day, in every school and in every lesson. By strategically planning school places in the borough we will help deliver the borough's priorities related to ensuring the best outcomes for Children and Families, and improving Education.

As the value of a good education cannot be underestimated, this strategy helps give our children the best possible start in life by having sufficient high quality school places available to them in the borough, so they have the opportunity to fulfil their true potential locally. Pupil Place Planning and School Organisation is a key element of Knowsley Council's current and future strategies for Knowsley.

## Strategy for Knowsley (2016-20)

"Children get the best possible start in life and have opportunities to reach their potential"

## Knowsley Children and Young People Plan (2017-20)

"Give children the best start in life"  
"Make education irresistible"

### Knowsley School Organisation Strategy (2019-29)

"Every Knowsley child to have access to a great school or academy in Knowsley"

### Knowsley Education Strategy (2018-21)

"Transforming life chances and enhancing opportunities for all so that barriers to participation and progress are diminished and opportunities are maximised."

### Knowsley Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy (2018-21)

"Improve education, health and care outcomes for children and young people with SEND."



# Purpose of the strategy

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## What is School Organisation and Pupil Place Planning?

A School Organisation Strategy is a document that sets out the principles and direction that the local authority will take to meet the statutory duty of ensuring the provision of suitable and sufficient places for school aged pupils in the borough.

Planning future education provision and predicting future demand of school spaces is a complex process. To do so, a local authority uses a range of information including population forecasts, local demographic data, migration data and information regarding planned housing developments. By analysing all of this data, we can review trends in pupil numbers, and this helps with effective future forecasting of pupil places.

This strategy sets out how we will work with key partners to shape education provision, and transparently sets out how decision making will be made to meet demands for school places.

## Who is this School Organisation Strategy for?

This document is for headteachers, teachers, other school staff, school Governors, the diocesan authorities, academy trusts, parents, pupils, and any other key stakeholders who have a vested interest in schools and education in Knowsley.

Having this strategy in place will provide education partners with the data and trends needed to help inform decision-making, and establish a transparent school planning framework that makes clear how and why school place planning decisions are taken.

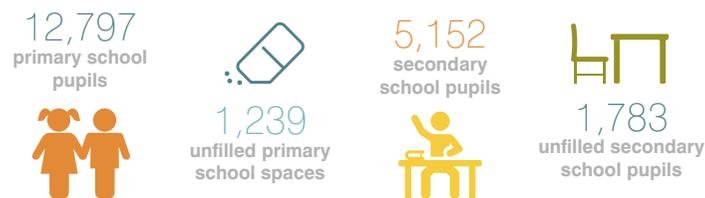
## Why do we need this strategy in Knowsley, and why now?

Knowsley's previous School Organisation Strategies were published in 2006 and 2008 and focussed on managing implementation of a significant re-organisation programme of the primary and secondary sectors undertaken since 2006. Unlike many areas nationally where the focus on school organisation has been on meeting pressures for places, reductions in local pupil numbers has meant that Knowsley has needed to focus on reducing capacity in schools because of surplus places.

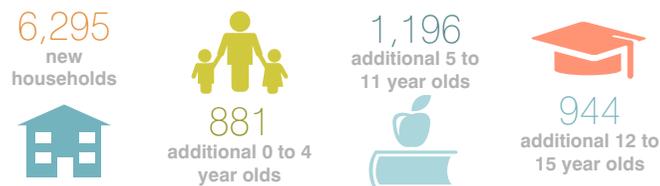
However, Knowsley is an area that is currently undergoing a period of growth and more expected over the next fifteen years. This is both as a result of natural growth in households and population, and as a result of significant housing developments currently planned in each of Knowsley's main townships.

Given the projected growth in Knowsley's population size, as set out in the infographic, this strategy is timely and provides a strategic approach to ensuring that Knowsley has an adequate numbers of school places, so our schools can sustain the future demand brought by new housing.

### In 2019 there are:



### We estimate by 2029 there will be:



## Statutory requirements and duties

Under specific legislation and subsequent amendments, local authorities have statutory duties for providing school places.

- Ensure sufficient school places (Education Act 1996 Section 14).
- Comply with preference expressed by parents provided compliance with the preference would not prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources (School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Section 86).
- Increase opportunities for parental choice (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 2).
- Ensure fair access to educational opportunity (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 1).

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 changed the way in which education provision is established and aimed to empower schools by devolving decision making to them. It also increased the strategic role of local authorities as champions of pupils and parents, and a duty to act as commissioner of school places, rather than provider.

In this context the role of the local authority has evolved and moved from being direct provider of the majority of state-funded school places, to being a strategic commissioner of a mixed school system.

## Voluntary Aided Schools

A voluntary aided school is a state-funded school in which a foundation or trust (usually a religious organisation), contributes to building costs and has a substantial influence in the running of the school. The foundation or trust usually owns the school's land and buildings, and appoints a majority of the school governors, who run

the school, employ the staff, and decide the school's admission arrangements (subject to the national Schools Admissions Code). This accounts for a significant number of schools in Knowsley (over half of primary schools and just over a third of secondary schools), which are overseen by the two diocesan authorities of Liverpool.

## Academies and free schools

An academy is a public funded independent school (not maintained by a local authority) that is accountable directly to the Department for Education, and funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Academies directly employ staff and have freedoms to set their own pay and conditions of service, deliver the curriculum as they see fit, and vary the length of school terms and school day. Academies are required to follow the same admission guidance and exclusion processes, but can set their own admissions criteria. They must also meet statutory processes for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

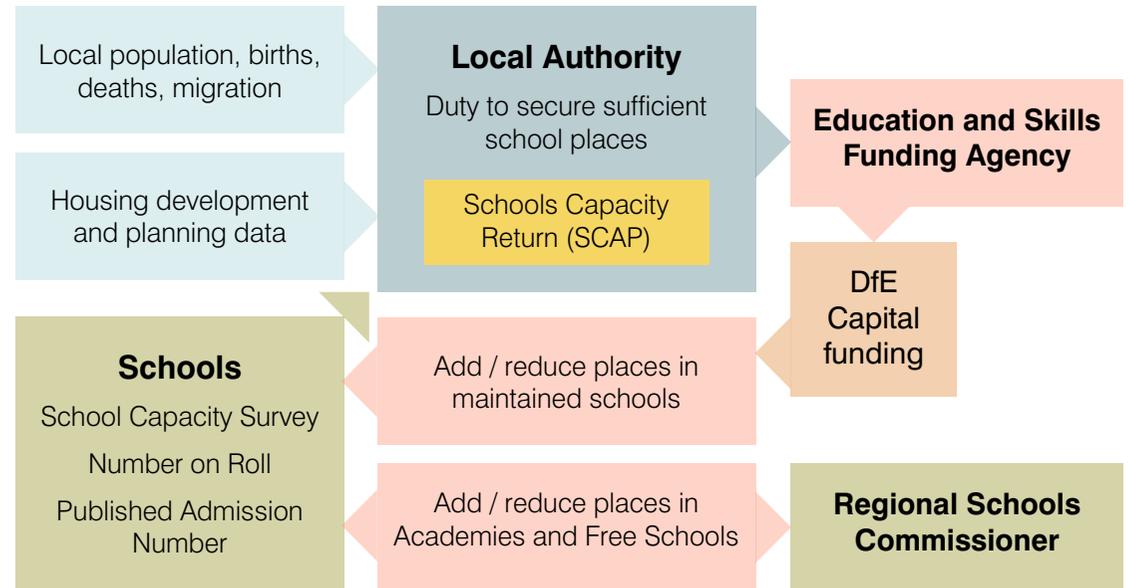
The Academies Act 2010 enabled more schools to convert to Academies without always needing a sponsor. The Education Act 2011 sets out the expectation that most new schools will be established via the Academy / Free School process and that there are limited circumstances in which the establishment of a new maintained school can be proposed.

Under these circumstances, where a new school is considered necessary, Knowsley Council is required to formally publish and invite proposals for the establishment of a new school, carry out an assessment, and put forward recommendations to the Regional Schools Commissioner. The final decision on the most suitable proposer to take forward the new school lies with the Regional School Commissioner.



## Roles and responsibilities

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to ensure enough school places are available to children and young people to meet local demand. Local authorities need to show that they have robust procedures and systems for forecasting pupil numbers and taking account of changes in local circumstances to ensure there will be the right number of schools in the right places for the number of pupils expected in the future.



Due to this, Knowsley Council is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a sufficient supply of primary and secondary school places in the borough, including suitable positions for vulnerable children and those with additional needs and Alternative Provision Academies (formerly Pupil Referral Units);
- Reducing surplus school places;
- Assessing school capabilities;
- Publishing statutory proposals for school reorganisation;
- Ensuring fair access to schools;
- Calculating Section 106 contributions from new housing developments for additional school places;
- Planning and reviewing the pattern and provision of schools across the area.

Knowsley Council must conduct each of these requirements collaboratively within an increasingly autonomous school sector.

Schools, Governing Bodies, Diocesan Authorities, Academy Trusts, the Regional Schools Commissioner and Education and Skills Funding Agency all have collective duties and roles to play in planning, providing and funding school places.

The Regional Schools Commissioner, who acts on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education, has responsibility for supporting performance of all academies as well as assessment, intervention and support to schools judged to be 'coasting'. The Education and Adoption Act 2016 mandated Regional School Commissioners to issue Academy Orders for any school judged to be inadequate by Ofsted.

# National context

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Nationally the pattern of demand for pupil places in England is changing. In July 2018 the Department for Education released the most recent set of national pupil projections from July 2018 to the end of 2027. The key trends are:

- The number of children (up to and including age 15) attending all state-funded schools has been rising since 2010, and is projected to continue on an upward trend until 2024, albeit at a gradually slowing rate after 2019. The overall population is then expected to fall slightly until the end of the projection period (2027).
- There was a 1.1% increase in the population of state-funded primary schools in the last year between 2017 and 2018. The annual rate of increase is expected to fall gradually to 0% for 2020 and 2021 before decreases are projected (between 0.3% and 0.7% each year) until 2027.
- In 2018 the overall number of pupils in secondary school increased by 1.9% compared to the previous year. This is lower than the rate of increase forecast in the previous Department for Education projections of 2.4%. However, as in common with previous projections, the rate of increase is expected to reach around 3.1% for the next two years before slowly dropping to 0% by 2027.

In the last decade national policy has been principally focussed on addressing a shortage of primary places as a result of increasing birth rates (particularly in the Midlands and South East). The government has aimed to address such shortages primarily through supporting the opening of Free Schools, expansions of Academy Trusts, and expansion of successful and popular primary schools.

Significant surpluses in schools would historically receive significant attention from the Department for Education, and local authorities would be required to put in place rigid plans to remove surplus places from the system. Significant surplus is now receiving much less government attention as falling rolls are considered part of the 'education market' whereby less successful schools will become unviable as high performing neighbours attract more pupils.



# Local context

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## Raising standards of education

Raising achievement for all learners is a key priority across Knowsley's strategic framework for children and young people. Through a coordinated approach to planning and commissioning local school places, there is an opportunity to ensure new school places are provided by the highest quality providers, and play a key role in increasing standards of education across the entire sector.

Quality educational provision supports more than just family schooling needs. The sustainability of the borough and the health of the local economy depend upon well-educated school leavers entering the job market. A better educated population will lead to improved social mobility thereby reducing child poverty, worklessness and ill health linked to joblessness and low incomes, and risk taking behaviours.

## Access and choice

Knowsley is committed to providing equal access to good quality education provision and recognises the diversity that exists within local communities. Schools play a central role in the local community and different types of school model or governance will need to be considered in the context of each individual local community to determine the best approach in different areas.

The current pattern of school provision includes a mix of community and schools with a religious character. We will work closely with the Diocesan authorities in the planning of school places to provide opportunities for parents to express a preference for denominational education.

## School admission and equity of access

Our commitment is to make Knowsley a very good place to be educated and build a high quality, sustainable and successful learning community. Our admissions policies and procedures aim to achieve this by fairly offering parents and carers their preferences for their child's education within the borough. This school organisation strategy will ensure that the demand for school places by future parents in the borough continue to be met fairly, with the provision of a suitable number and quality of school places.

Admission authorities are required to formally consult on proposed policies and admission numbers (for a minimum of six weeks between October and the end of January) for the academic year after next. It is during this period that we will formally consult on proposed changes to the Published Admission Number of community primary schools and other schools who adopt the local authority admission policy.

In addition, some voluntary aided and academy schools consult on their own individual policies during this period (as admission authorities). Knowsley Council will consider proposed changes to Published Admission Numbers in the context of the pupil place planning process and respond accordingly during this period. As best practice schools are encouraged to engage with Knowsley Council prior to formal consultation, to enable proposed changes to be informed by the current data and intelligence.



### Spare school places

Not all unfilled school places are considered surplus to requirements and best practice has shown that some level of spare school capacity is necessary to allow for flexibility for unexpected additions of children, either through the annual admission round, or in-year admissions.

Previous national best practice guidance has recommended for local authorities to aim for between five and 10 per cent surplus to allow flexibility to respond to changes in patterns of parental choice.

In line with best practice, this strategy sets out a target surplus within this range at the school planning area level, and at individual school level.

### Planning and delivering places in the Early Years sector

The Childcare Act 2006 places a statutory responsibility on us to ensure sufficient Early Years and Childcare places for children between the ages of birth to 18 years.

An annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is undertaken to analyse current and future levels of childcare demand, assess the current supply and cost of childcare provision, and respond to local and national policy objectives.

Planning and delivering places in the early years sector is currently undertaken separately to pupil place planning, but there will be opportunities to align the two within the strategic framework of the school organisation strategy, given the similarity in demographic data that is used to project demand for places.

### Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and alternative provision

The vast majority of Knowsley's mainstream schools will be able to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities through individual interventions and programmes set out in the Knowsley Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy 2018-2021 and the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

Whilst special school population and alternative provision population will be expected to grow as new housing is built and birth rate trends change, forecasting these pupil numbers needs to be undertaken separately from mainstream schools due to the smaller numbers involved and the greater level of variation and impact of external factors.

There are also additional factors that affect the number of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, such as the protocol and definitions of SEND, as well as a different process for admission to Special Schools that is linked to needs assessments and placements.

A Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency Strategy is being developed to manage demand for places for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

# Capital funding for school places

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## Capital funding for school places

The cost of providing additional school places can be met from a range of capital funding sources; primarily the Education and Skills Funding Agency Basic Need Grant, and developer contribution monies. This is supplemented by a complex pattern of additional funding made available by central government.

Local authorities receive an element of grant funding direct from central government. This is provided mainly through annual Basic Need Grant calculated in response to the local capacity and pupil number forecasts submitted to the Department for Education.

The allocations for 2019/20 and 2020/21 show a significant increase in the level to be received from the years before, reflecting the growing demand for new places in Knowsley schools. Nevertheless, the allocations are significantly lower than other areas, making development of a capital programme for early planning of future growth in pupil numbers more difficult as there is no flexibility to use an established local capital funding pot to make longer term capital investments.

We will therefore seek to maximise capital funding opportunities and actively seek additional funding sources for school expansion capital expenditure where available.

Year	Basic Need Allocation
2015/16	£57,254
2016/17	£60,117
2017/18	£0
2018/19	£0
2019/20	£148,422
2020/21	£459,840
<b>Total (2018 – 2021)</b>	<b>£608,262</b>

## Additional funding sources that will be used to fund school places

### Capital Maintenance

A formula grant to the local authority for all maintained community, voluntary controlled, trust and foundation schools. The fund is managed locally by the Education Asset Management Working Group. Knowsley's Pupil Place Capacity Steering Group will work closely with this group to understand the condition of the maintained education estate, and to enable targeted use of the capital maintenance grant where pupil place demands are likely to be sustained.

### Academies Condition Improvement Fund

A Department for Education grant available directly to academies to maintain the condition of academies, and to finance a limited number of expansions of successful academies (rated Good or Outstanding).

### Free Schools

The government operates a central capital fund to support provision of new schools. Additional government funding for school places is made available to independent proposers of new free schools through ad hoc bidding rounds called the free school waves programme.

### School contributions and Devolved Formula Capital funding

A limited capital allocation made directly to state funded schools by the Department for Education to support small scale refurbishment.

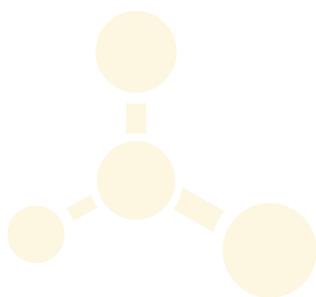
### Local Co-ordinated Voluntary Aided Programme

A formula grant for voluntary aided schools (notionally assigned to the local authority) targeted at condition and suitability issues. Additional funding is made available on a bespoke funding round basis to pay for 90% of capital costs where demand is sufficient. Allocations for voluntary aided schools will move into line with other schools from 2020/21 and they will access School Condition Allocations directly.

### Developer contributions

For new pupil places required because of new housing development it is necessary to look to other funding, specifically developer contribution monies.

Developer contributions will be sought to fund additional provision arising from new housing that can't be filled within existing capacity. In these circumstances Knowsley Council will seek a developer contribution through a Section 106 agreement to fund the additional places needed.



# School provision in Knowsley

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Knowsley's school provision consists of a total of 65 schools. The state-funded sector consists of 50 primary schools, and six secondary schools. In addition, four special schools and one Pupil Referral Unit support children with special educational needs and disabilities.

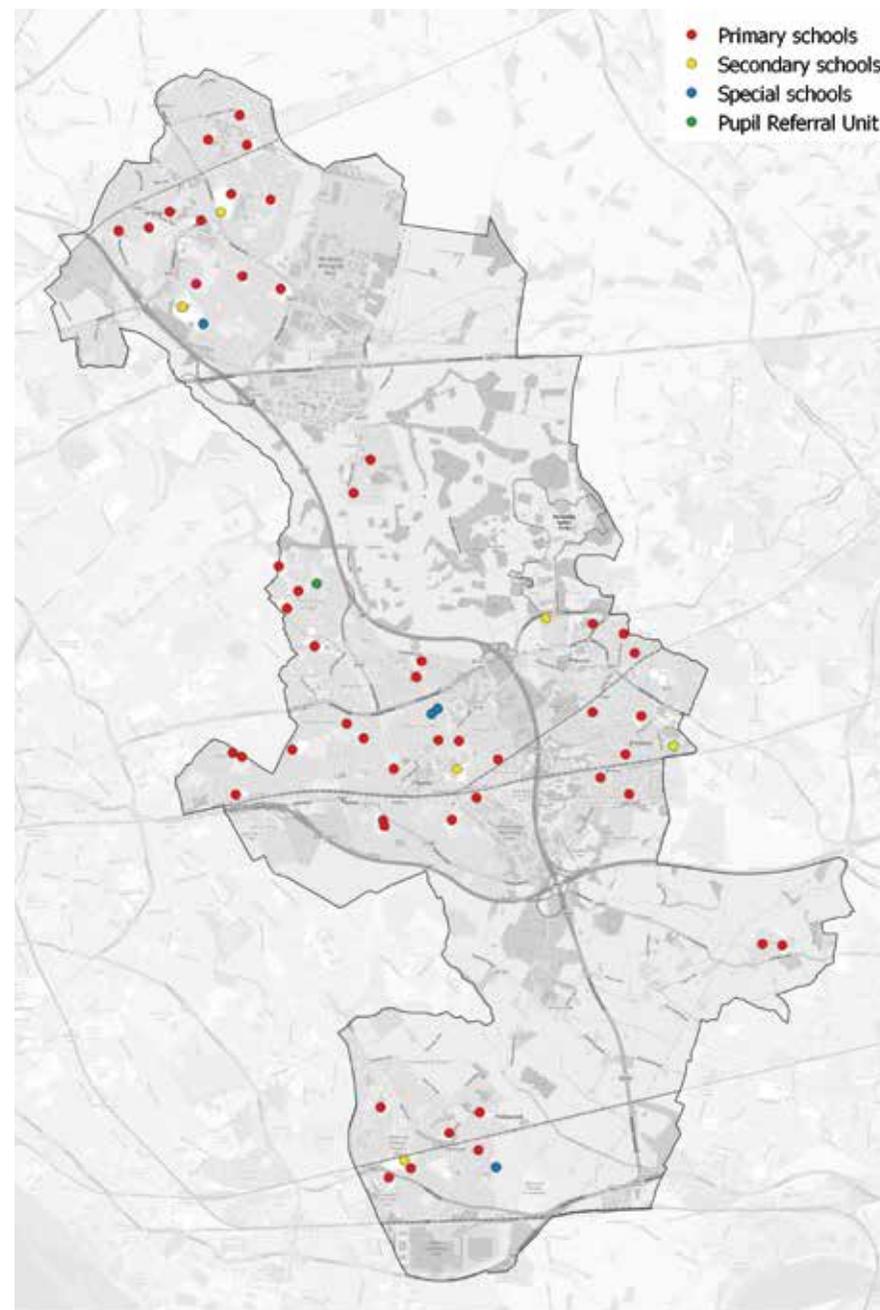
Category	Primary	Secondary	Special	Total
Community	16	0	3	19
Foundation	0	0	0	0
Academy	7	4	1	12
Voluntary Aided	26	2	0	28
Voluntary Controlled	1	0	0	1
Free school	0	0	0	0
Independent	0	0	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>65</b>

## Primary schools

There are currently 50 state sector primary schools in Knowsley, seven of which are academies, 26 voluntary aided, and 17 community or voluntary controlled schools. There is range of provision from one form to two forms of entry which conforms to statutory class size requirements and makes the most effective use of revenue resources.

## Secondary schools

There are currently six secondary schools in Knowsley, with four of these being academies, and two voluntary aided. All secondary schools offer 11-16 curriculum delivery, and one school (All Saints) offers a limited sixth form provision. The Published Admission Numbers of secondary schools range from 200 to 240, whilst the Indicated Admission Number ranges from 210 to 271, indicating surplus net capacity across all schools.



## Pupil numbers

There are 18,747 pupils attending schools in Knowsley (Number on Roll) as of Jan 2019. The vast majority are attending primary schools.

Schools	School type	Number on Roll
50	Primary	12,796
6	Secondary	5,336
5	Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units	615
<b>65</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>18,747</b>

## Cross border movement

A higher than average number of children resident in Knowsley cross into neighbouring boroughs to attend school. This is particularly predominant for secondary education where 45.4% of resident children are educated outside of Knowsley. In the primary sector, the proportion is lower at 16.2%, but still much higher than average.

Likewise, there is a far smaller scale of cross border movement of children from neighbouring boroughs into schools in Knowsley. There were 17,779 pupils educated in Knowsley mainstream schools (primary, and secondary) in the 2018 school census with 86.3% of these places taken by children resident in Knowsley. The remaining 13.7% of places were taken by children living in other neighbouring Liverpool City Region boroughs.

Taking into account the clear impact of patterns and trends in cross border movement on effectively planning and delivering pupil places, Knowsley Council works closely with neighbouring boroughs to share relevant data, and information about changes that can have an impact on cross border movement.

## Ofsted ratings

Giving all children access to high quality education in Knowsley is one of our key education objectives. A higher than average number of our primary and secondary schools are judged as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' by Ofsted. The Knowsley Education Strategy (2018-21) sets out actions to work with schools to bring about improvements in existing schools. In conjunction, this School Organisation Strategy will ensure that new pupil places are focussed in 'good' or 'outstanding' schools.

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	No grade available
Primary	6%	60%	18%	0%	16%
Secondary	0%	17%	50%	17%	17%
Special	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Pupil Referral Unit	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%

# Our approach to pupil place planning

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Effective pupil place planning is an essential process that enables us to work with local schools to commission and create high quality school places in the area that both fulfils the requirement to meet the basic need for school places, and provides the right level of choice for parents.

We undertake a robust and comprehensive approach to pupil place planning that forecasts the numbers of children requiring school places.

We are required to submit projections of primary and secondary pupil numbers each year to the Department for Education through the School Capacity Planning return (SCAP). This is used to calculate the Basic Need capital allocations provided to the local authority to support commissioning of sufficient school places.

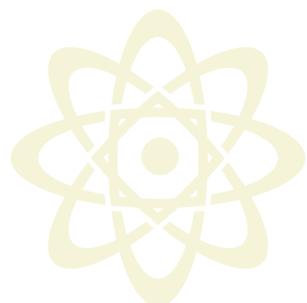
Forecasting of demand for school places under the School Capacity Planning return is undertaken based on groups of schools that reflect the local geography (reasonable travel distances, typical travel patterns, and existing patterns of supply and demand for school places). These groups of schools represent the functional 'Planning Areas', to which capacity and demand is most suitably assessed, and the most suitable level to consider options for supply of mainstream schools places.

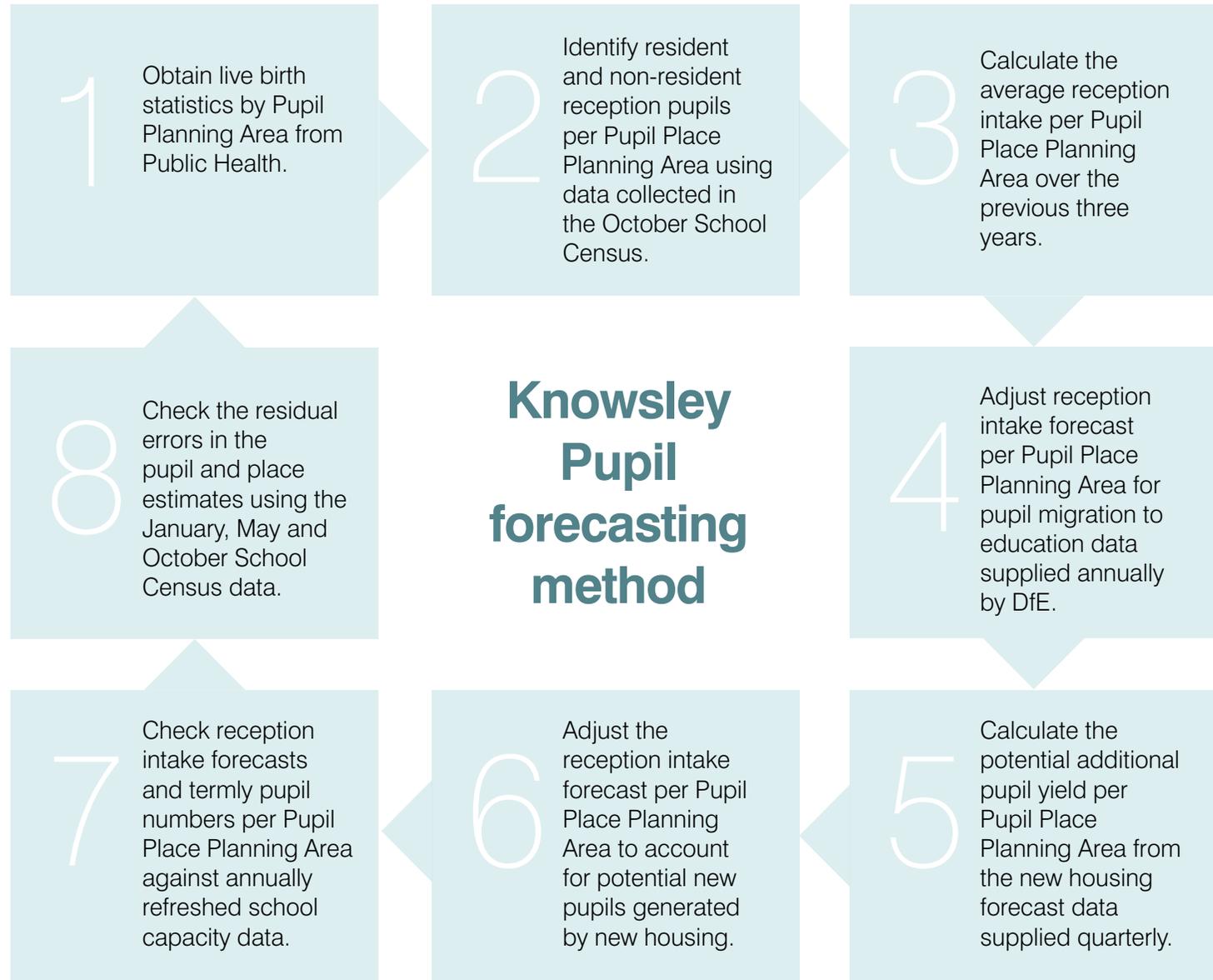
## Pupil forecasting

We have designed and adopted a robust mathematical model in order to estimate the future demand for school places in Knowsley education settings. The model considers a range of factors that are currently known to influence internal education migration in Knowsley. There are five specific factors that have the greatest



Primary Planning Areas	Planning Area Code	Secondary Planning Areas	Planning Area Code
Kirkby Primary	3400001	Kirkby Secondary	3400007
Central West	3400002	Central Secondary	3400009
Central East	3400003	Halewood Secondary	3400008
Knowsley Village	3400004		
Halewood Primary	3400005		
Cronton Primary	3400006		





influence on the number of children living in Knowsley, and attending education provision in Knowsley:

- Births
- Deaths
- Population migration
- Cross border movement
- Housing development

These factors are all incorporated in our pupil forecasting model, which considered collectively ensure that trends or changes in any one of these factors is reflected in pupil forecasts looking into the future.

### Capacity surveys

Net capacity is a calculation of the number of children that a school can reasonably be expected to accommodate. This takes into account the floor space of teaching areas and how those teaching areas are used.

An assessment of the physical capacity of schools in the area is undertaken on an annual basis through a capacity assessment survey.

The capacity assessment survey is required to be completed by schools and returned to Knowsley Council each year in advance of the School Capacity Planning return. Schools are reminded in advance that the capacity survey is due for completion.

Accurate information on the capacity of the school estate is critical to effective place planning and ensuring that capital investment is targeted where capacity pressures are greatest. This enables us to understand where there may be additional 'hidden' capacity within existing schools, for example where a Published Admission Number has been reduced, and teaching space converted to other uses.

### School asset management

To ensure that capital investment in schools is used effectively, we administer an Education Asset Management Working Group. The group contains education and asset management representatives from Knowsley Council, alongside the diocesan authorities and school representatives from Knowsley's school collaboratives.

We undertake a three year cycle of surveys to establish the physical condition of all community schools, and the work needed to bring them up to a suitable state of repair. Individual academies and the diocesan authorities are responsible for understanding and managing their own school estate.

We will work with academy trusts and the diocesan authorities to share and receive information on the condition of the school estate as part of the pupil place planning process. This will ensure that capital investment is used efficiently, and pupil place planning decisions are taken with school condition and future investment requirements in mind.

Data collectively generated from this process is used to inform the School Capacity Planning return, and is also considered when we make decisions around School Organisation.

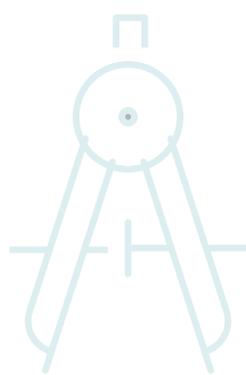
### School Organisation Operational Plan

This School Organisation Strategy sets out our overall vision, principles and approach to pupil place planning based on the long-term pupil projections for the whole borough available at the time of writing.

A School Organisation Operational Plan sits alongside this strategy and contains the detailed short, medium and long-term projections at planning area level, current school capacity position, and the short, medium and long-term actions that are being undertaken within each planning area to address surplus or shortfall in places.

# Demographic trends

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Knowsley has a total resident population of 148,600, living in approximately 67,120 households. The population of Knowsley has declined over the last 30 years, but is estimated to have begun an upward trend of year on year growth since 2012. Projections indicate that the population is expected to increase by 6.6% to 158,400 by 2041 (based on current trends).

There are currently 34,400 resident children and young people aged between 0 and 19, which is around a quarter of the whole population in the borough. Based on existing trends, the 0-19 population is expected to increase over the ten year period of this strategy to 38,900.

The current school populations are likely to change in the long term as a result of natural population change factors, particularly at secondary school age.

## Cross border movement

Knowsley's has a unique urban geography at the centre of the Liverpool City Region metropolitan urban area. This contributes to a significantly higher than average proportion of cross border movement of children to the schools they attend.

There were 17,779 pupils educated in Knowsley schools (nursery, primary, secondary and sixth form) in the 2018 school census. Of these pupils 86% were resident in Knowsley and a further 14% lived in other neighbouring Liverpool City Region boroughs. The largest numbers of pupils migrating into schools in Knowsley were resident in Liverpool, whilst smaller numbers come from Halton, Sefton and St Helens.

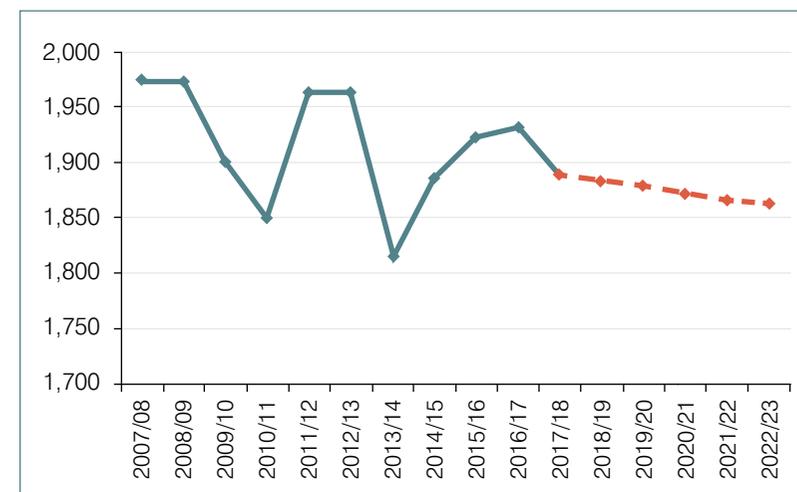
There were 20,472 pupils with a Knowsley postcode recorded in the 2018 school census. This means that 5,896 Knowsley resident children were educated in schools in neighbouring areas.

The proportion of locally resident children attending Knowsley secondary schools has typically been, and continues to remain lower compared with other areas as higher percentages are admitted to schools in neighbouring boroughs, typically in south and central Liverpool, as well as Sefton, Halton and St Helens.

## Births

Births are the major determinant of pupil numbers, with one birth more or less meaning the need for one school place five years later.

Local analysis suggests that live births are projected to decline over the next few years from an actual figure of 1,924 live births in 2015/16 to a projected 1,863 live births in 2022/23.



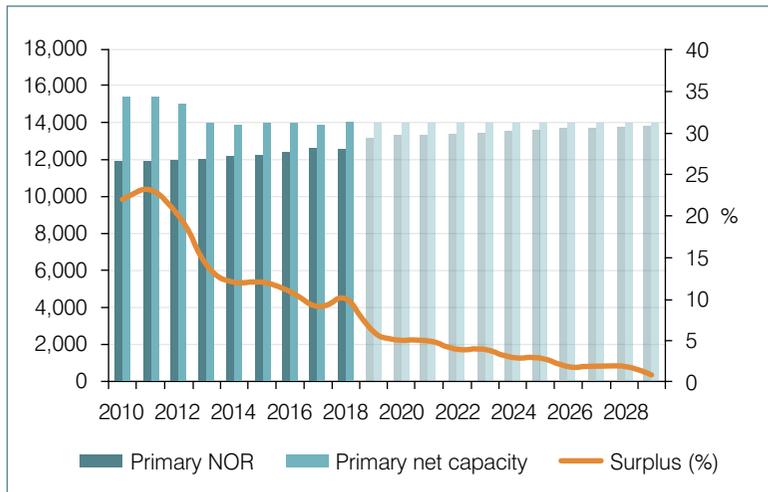
Live births per year in Knowsley: actual (blue) projected (red)

### Primary school population

Knowsley's primary population experienced a significant decline from the mid-1990s, and in line with the stabilisation in the number of births per year, has begun to stabilise at around 500 pupils lower than peak reception intakes in the 1990s.

Between 2010 and 2014, 1,538 primary school places were removed from local provision in Knowsley in response to the falling birth rates over the previous ten years. The most recent data shows a surplus across the primary sector of 10%. This has reduced from a high of 23% in 2011.

Primary numbers are now projected to continuously increase over the next ten years to 13,858 in 2029. Based on current primary net capacity, this would reduce surplus capacity to just 1%.

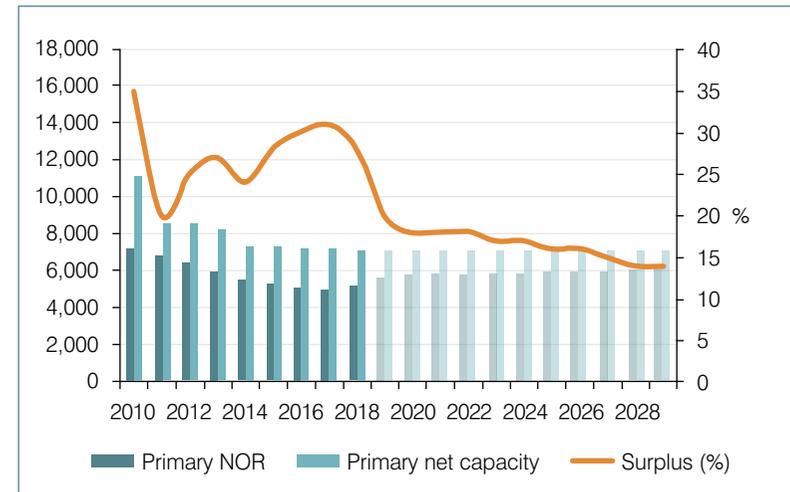


**Number on roll, net capacity, surplus %**  
(actual = dark, projected = light)

### Secondary school population

The secondary school population has been in decline since 1999 and current numbers are nearly half the peak figures of the mid-90s. Despite the significant reorganisation and reduction in secondary schools in the last decade, surplus capacity has remained high and is currently at 28% surplus across the whole borough.

Increasing birth rates from 2003 onwards are expected to lead to stabilisation in the secondary population as slightly larger cohort numbers filter through. Correspondingly, secondary pupil numbers are projected to naturally increase over the next ten years to 6,144 in 2029. Based on current secondary net capacity, this would reduce surplus capacity to 14%.



**Number on roll, net capacity, surplus %**  
(actual = dark, projected = light)

# Housing growth

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## Housing growth

Knowsley has ambitious plans to rebalance the local housing market and Knowsley's Local Plan and Housing Strategy sets a target for delivery of 8,100 homes by 2028 at an average of 450 new homes per year. Going beyond this, there are further major sites that are expected to contribute additional housing beyond that period.

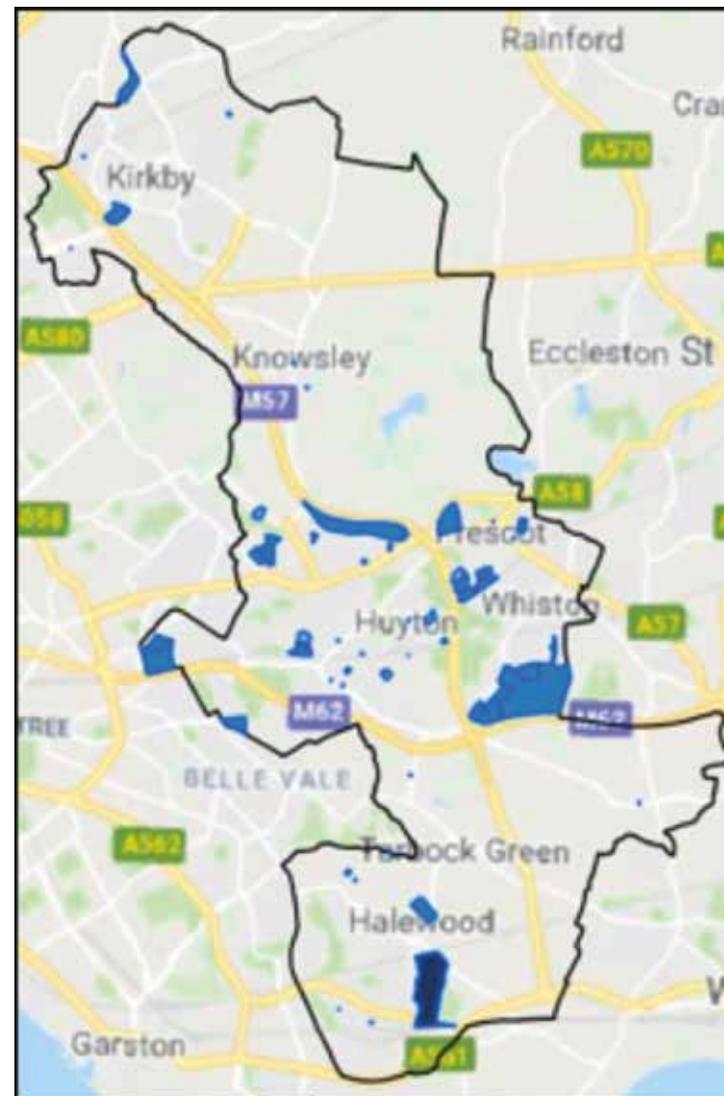
Significant progress in housebuilding is underway at the time of publication and 1,388 net additional dwellings have been added to the housing stock in the last three years alone (since 2015). There are currently 37 new housing developments in progress across the area at the time of publication in 2019. The map opposite shows the scale of active and potential housing development across Knowsley at the time of publication of this strategy.

The addition of new homes in Knowsley means there will be more resident school age children living in Knowsley requiring a local school place. It is necessary to consider the gross impact of cumulative housing from all sites within a planning area, and assess how many additional children will require a school place.

## Estimating delivery of new housing

Knowsley's pupil projection model combines housing identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment with additional local data on live planning permission, phasing schedules supplied by housing developers, and actual housing completions.

Collation of this data is coordinated by Knowsley Council's Housing and Commercial Development Data Group which meets on a quarterly basis to review and update data sources that contribute to the composite housing development dataset.



Where significant changes occur to expected housing construction schedules that significantly alter the assumptions contained in the School Organisation Strategy, a review of the strategy will be undertaken.



## Projecting additional pupils

To establish the impact of existing and new housing development proposals on education facilities, and to develop an understanding of increased demand for provision it is necessary to identify the likely number of pupils that will be generated.

Assumptions on housing delivery are adjusted within the pupil projection model to take into account:

- Housing size (number of bedrooms);
- Housing tenure (market or social housing);
- Historic cross border movement of children attending schools (three year averages);
- New pupil age groups;
- Live births.

Analysis of historical housing construction in Knowsley establishes that on average, every 100 new households leads to an additional 50 children aged 0-16. Equal distribution of age groups equates to 19 primary aged pupils, and 16 secondary aged pupils per 100 new households.

When necessary the ratio can be adjusted for a specific planning area in response to significant housing developments that are expected to have a unique impact on the area, and significantly alter the housing stock profile. Where the data shows a need to adjust the ratios this will be considered and agreed by Knowsley Council's Pupil Place Planning Steering Group.

## Planning applications

The Pupil Place Planning Steering Group will be Knowsley Council's consulting body for school organisation for all significant housing developments and consider the extent of new school places required, and the financial contribution necessary to meet demands for new places.

## Impact on demand for school places

Over the lifetime of this strategy, if all anticipated housing is delivered to the expected date by 2029, there will be demand for an additional 1,990 school places as a result of housing growth consisting of:

### Primary school



1,112

additional primary  
(R to Y6) school age  
children

### Secondary school



878

additional secondary  
(Y7 to Y11) school age  
children

## Developer contributions

A central aim of planning school places is to provide places near to where children live, and locate schools at the heart of communities. Where additional school places are needed due to new housing development, as far as possible the costs should fall on the landowners and/or developers by way of contributions falling within planning obligations.

Knowsley's Planning Policy Framework sets out the agreed approach to seek contributions from new developers towards social infrastructure, including education capacity. Knowsley Council does not currently operate a Community Infrastructure Levy, so the process for requesting contributions from developers is made under Section 106 Agreements (S106) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (TCPA 1990).

# Governance

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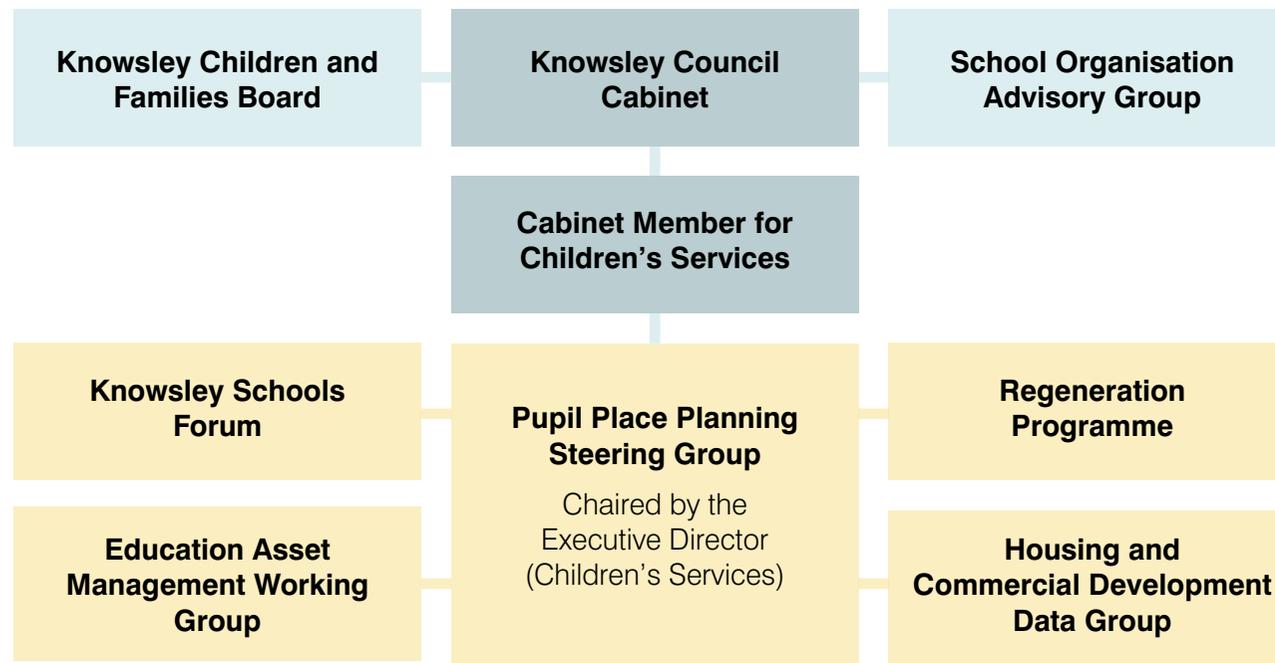
Management of school organisation and pupil place planning is undertaken by Knowsley Council's Pupil Place Planning Steering Group. The group is the primary advisory body for all matters relating to school organisation and pupil place planning.

The group is a multi-disciplinary advisory group with the purpose to develop proposals to address school capacity issues, and to make recommendations for decisions in relation to Knowsley Council's duties to ensure sufficient supply of pupil places. In doing this, the group takes into account:

- The sufficient provision of quality school places; and
- The impact of any options to address this capacity on overall place-shaping.

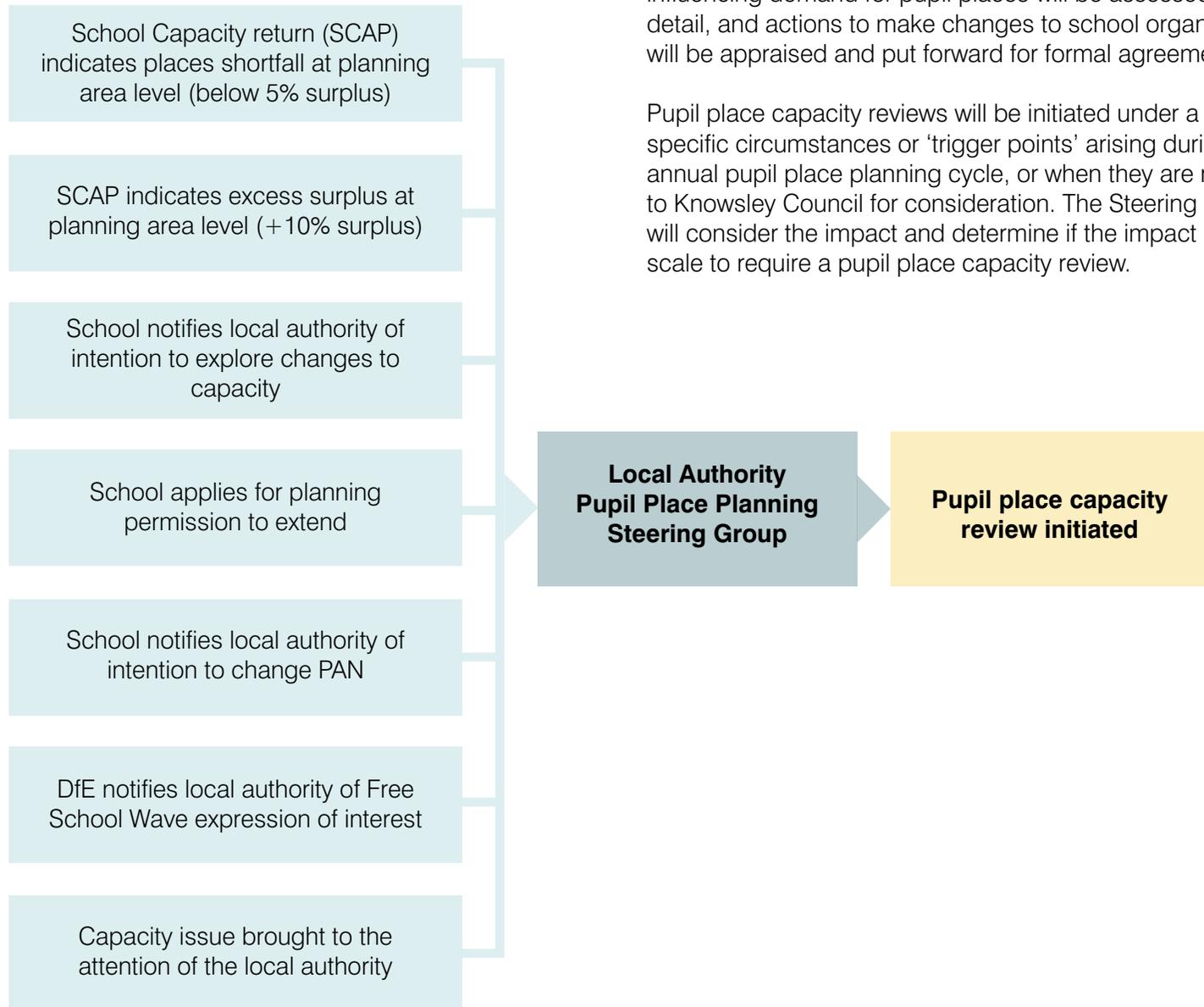
There are additional forums and groups to which school organisation is an important factor within their purpose (see diagram).

The Pupil Place Planning Steering Group will maintain an active dialogue with these groups (including cross-representation) to ensure that decisions taken by all groups are informed by the current pupil place position, and that the School Organisation Operational Plan incorporates accurate information on asset management and schools finance.



# Pupil Place Capacity Reviews

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Pupil place capacity reviews are the main way that factors influencing demand for pupil places will be assessed in detail, and actions to make changes to school organisation will be appraised and put forward for formal agreement.

Pupil place capacity reviews will be initiated under a set of specific circumstances or 'trigger points' arising during the annual pupil place planning cycle, or when they are referred to Knowsley Council for consideration. The Steering Group will consider the impact and determine if the impact is of a scale to require a pupil place capacity review.

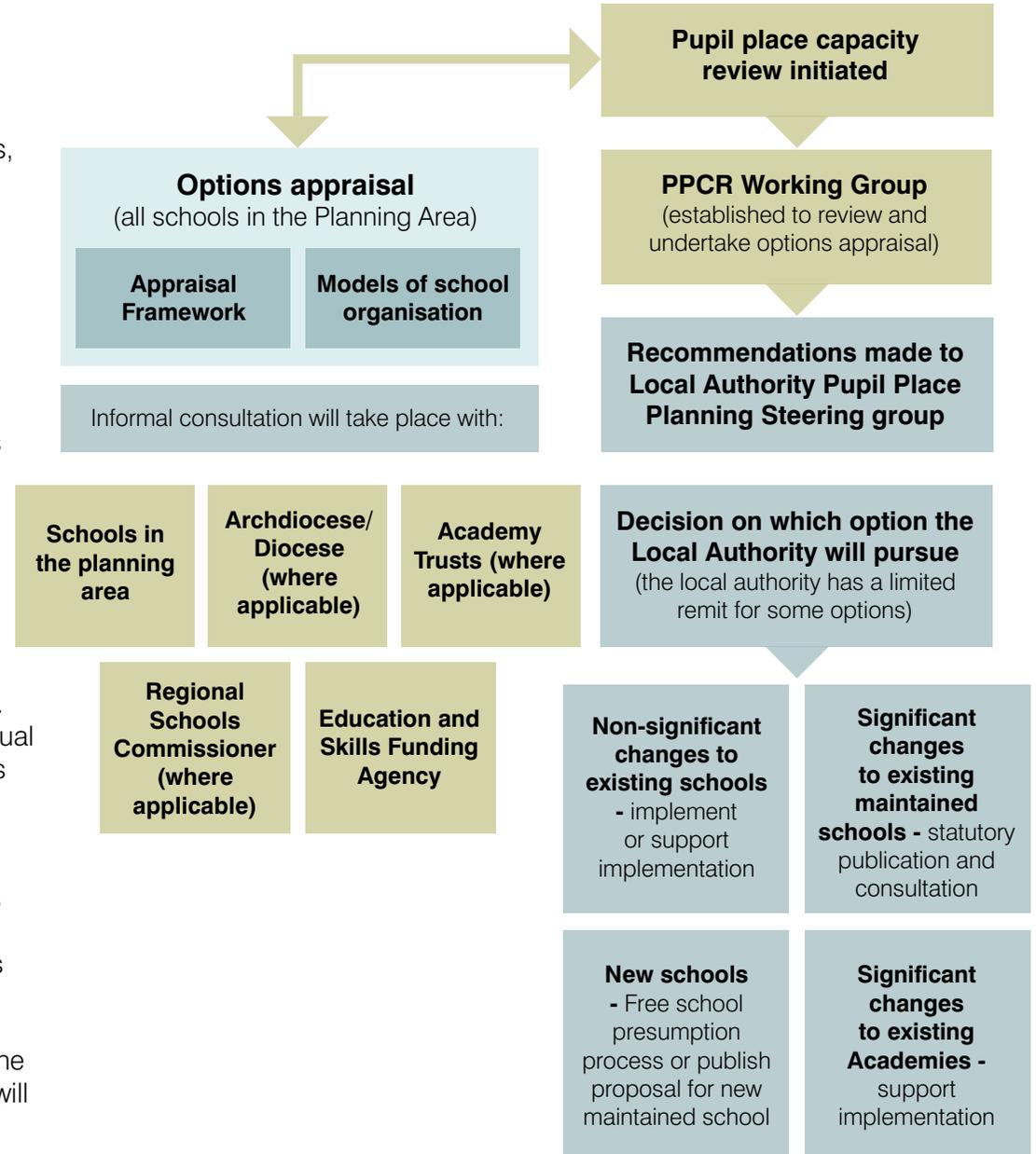
When a pupil place capacity review is initiated, a Working Group is formed to undertake the detailed consideration of different options. The group will consist of the relevant Knowsley Council officers, and (where applicable) stakeholder representatives from the diocesan authorities, schools and academy trusts in the planning area.

Reviews will differ in scale depending on each individual situation, and the scale of the options being considered. The group will consider different models of school organisation, and appraise each in accordance with an options appraisal framework.

Through this process informal consultation will take place with all relevant stakeholders who have an interest in the options being considered. This will enable consideration of contextual factors not captured through the options appraisal metrics.

When pupil place capacity reviews are undertaken, options for different models of school are assessed against the factors and criteria set out in the options appraisal framework (see page 24).

There is no implicit weighting to any of the appraisal factors, and different reviews will necessitate consideration of some or all depending on the scale of the review.



Appraisal factor	Criteria	Measure
<b>Educational Standards</b>	To improve educational standards by only supporting expansions at schools that are already achieving high standards, or consider educational performance when there is a need to reduce places.	Ofsted rating Direction of travel. KS2 or KS4 performance
<b>Quality of leadership</b>	To only support expansions at schools where leadership is secure and consider quality of leadership when there is a need to reduce places.	Ofsted – Effectiveness of leadership and management
<b>Condition of buildings</b>	To ensure that buildings are fit for purpose and to consider the physical condition of schools, and the level of future investment needed to maintain condition when making place planning decisions.	Stock condition surveys
<b>Current net capacity</b>	To understand the current net capacity of schools and utilise existing capacity for new pupil places (in line with the appraisal criteria).	School capacity surveys
<b>Capacity to extend</b>	To consider the use of the school estate, whether schools have capacity to extend, and the extent that school space is being used for other purposes.	School capacity surveys
<b>Finance and viability</b>	To only support expansions at schools that are in good financial health and viable, and consider the impact of new places on the financial health of other schools in the planning area. To also consider financial health when making decisions to reduce places.	School balances (long-term deficit or surpluses)
<b>Travel distance</b>	To ensure places are provided as near to where children live as possible and minimise school travel distances. It is preferable that children attend a school no more than two miles (primary) or three miles (secondary) from home.	Distance from local population concentration
<b>Choice and diversity</b>	To endeavour to provide sufficient places to enable parental choice in the category of school (for example religious character).	Bespoke data on future demand for places with a religious character
<b>Reputation and quality of Academy Trusts (where applicable)</b>	To support Multi-Academy trusts that are high quality and have a good reputation.	Judgement of the Regional Schools Commissioner.
<b>Impact on existing education provision</b>	To minimise or mitigate the impact of new school developments, or place reductions, on existing schools, by making decisions in consideration of the appraisal criteria.	Options appraisal covering all schools in the planning area.
<b>Improvement of the local area</b>	To consider how community benefits from local schools can be, or are being maximised.	SWOT analysis

# Models of School Organisation

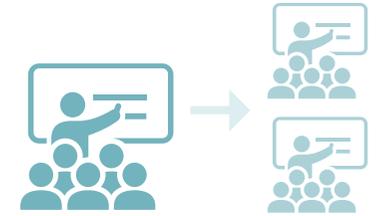
With great changes having occurred in the education landscape, there are a number of different options and models for education provision that are now available for consideration. The right options will depend on the circumstances in each case and the appropriateness of each model for the individual situation.

Any pupil place capacity review will involve consideration of the merits of proposals in how they best deliver improved educational provision and promote positive outcomes for children and young people. These issues are captured through the options appraisal framework through which the different models will be assessed.

**No change or keep under review**



**Increase or reduce Published Admission Number**



25

<p><b>Amalgamation of schools</b></p>	<p><b>New Schools</b></p>	<p><b>Federation of schools</b></p>	<p><b>Closure of schools</b></p>
<p><b>Temporary expansion</b></p>	<p><b>Permanent expansion</b></p>	<p><b>Relocate schools</b></p>	<p><b>Changes to 6th Form Provision</b></p>



# Decision making

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Proposals for changes to school place provision or for new schools can be made by the local authority, Governing Bodies or academy trusts.

The decision making framework and procedures for decision making differs depending on the changes being proposed, who the proposer is, and the types of school involved in the proposals.

Knowsley Council's role in school organisation is both as a provider (for existing maintained school places) and as a commissioner (for existing academy places and for new schools). Knowsley Council can only take decisions relating to maintained schools. The Regional Schools Commissioner (on behalf of the Secretary of State) is the decision maker for all significant decisions relating to academies.

Knowsley Council's decision making role consists of the following:

- Making changes to maintained schools that Knowsley Council has proposed.
- Determining whether Knowsley Council supports proposals made by a Governing Body to make changes to a maintained school.
- Determining whether Knowsley Council supports proposals made by an academy trust to make changes to an Academy.
- Determining the need for a new school, the model of school to take forward to a free school presumption, and the preferred sponsor.

The Pupil Place Planning Steering Group will facilitate all the relevant evidence and intelligence to support pupil place planning.

The steering group will ensure that trustees and diocesan authorities are involved in formulating school organisation proposals, and commit to undertaking fair and open consultation with parents, typically as part of the pupil place capacity review process. Following recommendation of the Pupil Place Steering Group, decisions will be taken by the Cabinet Member or Cabinet (where necessary).

## Collaborating and consulting with partners

It is one of the key principles of this School Organisation Strategy to work closely in partnership with all stakeholders in planning an adequate supply of school places in Knowsley. School organisation doesn't affect schools in isolation, and it is therefore important to work in partnership across planning areas to understand the impact decisions will have in the area.

We recognise the range of partners that have important roles in school place planning, as well as the importance of consulting and involving parents and local communities. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Schools;
- Archdiocese / Diocese;
- Academy Trusts;
- Education and Skills Funding Agency;
- Regional Schools Commissioner;
- Schools Adjudicator;
- Elected members;
- Parents, children and young people.

Through this strategy we commit to working with (relevant) stakeholders at the earliest stage possible when conducting pupil place capacity reviews. Likewise, we expect to be consulted and involved at the earliest possible stage for any proposed changes to school organisation made by academies or voluntary controlled schools.



### **Making significant changes to existing maintained schools**

Knowsley Council can propose making significant changes to existing maintained schools whilst Governing Bodies are able to propose some limited types of changes.

In many cases, expanding existing schools can create additional capacity more quickly than building new schools, and at a lower cost.

Legislation sets the process for decision making around any significant changes to existing maintained schools, such as enlargement, or changing the age range.

The legislation requires that full consultation will take place prior to making any decisions around these school changes. A statutory consultation and decision-making process is defined that we will follow in these circumstances.

### **Making minor changes to existing schools**

There are some minor changes to maintained schools that Knowsley Council (and Governing Bodies) can make without following a statutory process. This is set out in detail in Department for Education guidance.

In many cases, changes in pupil capacity can be achieved by increasing the school's Published Admission Number. Proposals under this route will need to adhere to the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

We will ensure early engagement with Governing Bodies, trustees, and diocesan authorities as part of the pupil place capacity review process. Likewise, we expect Governing Bodies and schools to inform Knowsley Council at the earliest opportunity of any proposed minor changes.

### **Closing maintained schools**

Knowsley Council is able to propose the closure of all categories of maintained school. The Governing Body of a voluntary or foundation school can also publish proposals to close its own school. Decisions on closures are taken by Knowsley Council.

The statutory process for proposals to close a school is the same as for making significant changes, but with the addition of an extended period of informal consultation before a formal proposal is published. This will take place over a period of at least six weeks, be held during term time, and will typically be incorporated into the pupil place capacity review process.

### **Opening new schools**

Where we identify the need for a new school, legislation states that we must set out proposals through a free school presumption. Only in circumstances where no viable sponsor comes forward, or there is a clear identified need for a specific type of school (such as faith school) can a new maintained school be considered.

Our role in new free schools is to approve the need for a new school, undertake a free school presumption, and to agree which preferred sponsor we will recommend to the Secretary of State and Regional Schools Commissioner.

Independent proposers can also apply directly to the Department for Education to establish a free school, as part of time limited waves administered by the Department for Education.

The final decision on all new free school proposals rests with the Secretary of State for Education, which is delegated to the Regional Schools Commissioner.

### **Making significant changes to academies**

Knowsley Council has no formal role in approving or delivering significant changes in academies, but is able to propose making changes in response to local basic need for school places. As with maintained schools, there is an expectation that only academies rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted will be considered for expansion.

Changes need to be approved by the Regional Schools Commissioner and generally require a Full Business Case, though some can follow a fast track route in limited circumstances. In all cases, the Regional Schools Commissioner will expect consultation to have taken place with Knowsley Council.

Proposals for significant changes to academies can occur in two ways:

- A proposal put forward by an academy or multi academy trust; or
- A pupil place capacity review determines a change to an academy as the best option in response to local basic need.

Academy trusts can propose closure of academies and must follow the prescribed procedure set out on the Department for Education guidance. It is expected that trusts will engage with us at the earliest opportunity if such a proposal is being considered to enable a detailed pupil place capacity review to be conducted in the planning area, and provide relevant evidence to help inform the final decision.

# Appendix

# A

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## State funded school provision in Knowsley

### Primary School Provision

School name	Forms of Entry	Status
Blacklow Brow School	1 FE	Academy
Cronton Church of England Primary Academy	1 FE	Academy
Eastcroft Park School	1 FE	Community school
Evelyn Community Primary School	1.2 FE	Community school
Halewood Church of England Primary Academy	1 FE	Academy
Halsnead Primary School	2 FE	Academy
Holy Family Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
Holy Family Catholic Primary School	1.3 FE	Voluntary aided school
Hope Primary School - A Joint Catholic and Church of England Primary School	2 FE	Voluntary aided school
Huyton With Roby Church of England Primary School	2 FE	Academy
Kirkby CofE Primary School	1.2 FE	Voluntary aided school
Knowsley Lane Primary School	1 FE	Academy
Knowsley Village School	1 FE	Community school
Malvern Primary School	2 FE	Community school
Millbrook Community Primary School	1.3 FE	Community school
Mosscroft Primary School	0.8 FE	Community school
Northwood Community Primary School	2 FE	Community school
Our Lady's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
Park Brow Community Primary School	2 FE	Community school
Park View Academy	2 FE	Academy
Plantation Primary School	2 FE	Community school
Prescot Primary School	2 FE	Community school
Ravenscroft Community Primary School	1 FE	Community school

School name	Forms of Entry	Status
Roby Park Primary School	1 FE	Community school
Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School	1.5 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Aidan's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Albert's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Aloysius Catholic Primary School	1.5 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Andrew the Apostle Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Anne's Catholic Primary School	1.3 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Brigid's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Columba's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Gabriel's CofE Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St John Fisher Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Laurence's Catholic Primary School	1.7 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Leo's and Southmead Catholic Primary School Serving the Community	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Luke's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Margaret Mary's Catholic Infant School	4 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Margaret Mary's Catholic Junior School	4 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Marie's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Mark's Catholic Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Mary and St Paul's CofE Primary School	1 FE	Voluntary aided school
St Michael and All Angels Catholic Primary School	2 FE	Voluntary aided school
Stockbridge Village Primary School	1 FE	Community school
Sylvester Primary Academy	1 FE	Academy
Westvale Primary School	1 FE	Community school
Whiston Willis Primary Academy	1 FE	Academy

### Secondary School Provision

School name	Published Admission Number	Status
All Saints Catholic High School	210	Voluntary aided school
Halewood Academy	240	Academy
Kirkby High School	200	Academy
Lord Derby Academy	220	Academy
Saint Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School	210	Voluntary aided school
The Prescott School	210	Academy

### Special and Alternative Provision

School name	Capacity	Type
Alt Bridge School	104	Special
Bluebell Park School	190	Special
Finch Woods Academy	50	Special
Knowsley Central School	98	Special
Meadow Park	104	Pupil Referral Unit