

School Place Planning Strategy 2018- 2022

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1 Foreword



Councillor Andrew Mackness
Lead Member, Children's Services



Councillor Martin Potter
Portfolio Holder for Educational
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In Medway, we want all children and young people to have the best start in life, regardless of their needs and where they live.

As a school community, which includes the Local Authority, maintained schools and Academy Trusts, we are committed to working in partnership to embed a collaborative and school led approach to raising educational standards, so that all children and young people can achieve their potential, and the gaps between the least advantaged and their peers are narrowed.

Medway Council continues to pursue the aim of a coherent and sustainable approach to full academisation across the authority through the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) model; a model which affords the opportunity to share expertise and resources and provide positive challenge to schools through strong leadership.

We share the Regional Schools Commissioners preferences with regard to MATs. We believe that infant and junior schools which are on the same site should belong to the same MAT so that pupils are supported through transition; MATs should not be made up of predominantly underperforming or vulnerable schools and that MATs grow sustainably and strategically.

Medway Council has made 'Supporting Medway's people to realize their potential' one of the Council plan priorities, with the planned outcome of 'all children achieving their potential in schools.' School organisation provides an important foundation for this, by providing good quality school places and learning environments for every child in Medway.

School organisation describes the range of planned activities that affect the number, type and location of schools in Medway, as well as the condition and suitability of school buildings and ultimately the number of school places available at each. The outcome of good school organisation is to ensure sufficient quality school places across the local authority. School organisation contributes to raising achievement through the provision of quality learning environments.

The School Organisation Plan 2011-2016 has proven to be a huge success. A £45m programme of new schools and expansions, resulting from the plan's framework, has provided over 3,000 additional primary school places, and ensured that sufficient school places have been, and will be, available up to 2020/21.

This School Place Planning Strategy, and its annual updates, will work alongside other local plans and strategies, including the School Improvement Strategy and SEND Strategy. Together, these support the drive to raise standards, aspiration, and achievement, providing Medway's children with the best life chances possible.

It is essential that beyond 2022, Medway is in a position to meet demand, which is forecast to continue to rise due to expected housing arising from the new local plan, leading to continued inward migration.

Therefore, we are delighted to introduce Medway's School Place Planning Strategy 2018-2022, which we are confident will provide the foundation for effective decision making.

2 Introduction



Ian Sutherland,
Director of Children and Adults Services

There is no longer a requirement for local authorities to have a School Organisation Plan. However, in 2011 Medway's Cabinet decided that having a strategic plan will provide a framework for school organisation decisions to ensure an appropriate supply of good school places.

Medway Council, as the local authority, has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. This School Place Planning Strategy describes the principles, methods, and challenges of this duty.

2.1 Aims of the plan

Proposals that flowed from the 2011-16 School Organisation Plan and the annual reviews have provided over 3000 primary schools places, ensuring that sufficient places have always been available when and where required, as shown in the table below.

Table 1 - Additional school places provided 2013 - 2018

School	Planning Area	Number of additional places	Year implemented
Wainscott Primary School	Strood	210	2013
Brompton Westbrook	Gillingham	105	2013
Napier Primary School	Gillingham	210	2013
Saxon Way Primary	Gillingham	210	2014
Cedar Primary School	Strood	105	2014
New Horizons Academy	Chatham	630	2014
Woodlands Primary	Gillingham	210	2014
Cuxton Infant and Junior	Cuxton	70	2014
Hundred of Hoo	Peninsula	210	2015
St Thomas of Canterbury	Gillingham	30 (Bulge Class)	2016
Delce Academy Infant Phase	Rochester	210	2016
Bligh Infant and Junior	Strood	210	2017
Cliffe Woods	Peninsula	105	2017
St Mary's Island Primary	Gillingham	210	2018
Riverside Primary	Rainham	210	2018
Halling Primary	Cuxton	140	2018
Total		3075	

Annual updates have been, and will continue to be produced to monitor the current requirements, identify emerging need and new projects and monitor the progress of existing projects to ensure sufficient places.

To continue the excellent outcomes from the previous School Organisation Plan this School Place Planning Strategy will aim to:

- Ensure sufficiency of school places
- Expand “good” or “outstanding” Ofsted rated schools
- Expand popular and successful schools
- Work collaboratively with all stake holders when adding additional provision
- Ensure schools provide safe and appropriate environments

2.2 School organisation principles

In 2008, Cabinet approved the School Organisation Plan Principles. These are a set of guidelines to ensure decisions are made in a clear and consistent way, so that sufficient good school places are available in the future. The core of these principles ensures that any changes to the organisation of schools in Medway are designed to improve schools and raise standards

However, the education landscape has shifted significantly in recent years, and the principles that were approved in 2008 are less relevant today. A new set of principles that better reflects the current national and local policy position is proposed in section 6 of this strategy.

2.3 Commitment to work with schools and academies

The Council has to ensure there are sufficient school places in the right locations and at the right time to meet demand, taking account of parental preference. This, coupled with the local and national policy of successful schools expanding, means that consideration must be given to the OFSTED rating of the school, its current performance, and its popularity with parents.

Local authority maintained schools and academies will both be considered on the above criteria when proposing and deciding which schools to expand. Medway Council has worked closely with all schools to expand a number of academies and maintained schools in recent years and makes no distinction between the two when ensuring appropriate school place demand is met.

3 Local and national context

3.1 Medway context

- 3.1.1 Medway came into existence as a unitary authority in 1998 with the amalgamation of Rochester-Upon-Medway and Gillingham Borough Councils. Medway is located on the estuary of the River Medway, bordered by Kent to the South, East and West, and by the River Thames to the north.
- 3.1.2 The population of Medway in 2017 is estimated to be 282,000¹. This is forecasted to grow to 330,200 by 2035.
- 3.1.3 According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015, Medway was 118th most deprived Local Authority in England, out of 326. For the education, skills, and training measure it was ranked 86th.
- 3.1.4 Medway has excellent transport links to London and the rest of Kent. It is served by the Southeastern high speed train service, the M2/A2, and the M20. This makes it ideal for commuters.

3.2 Academy programme

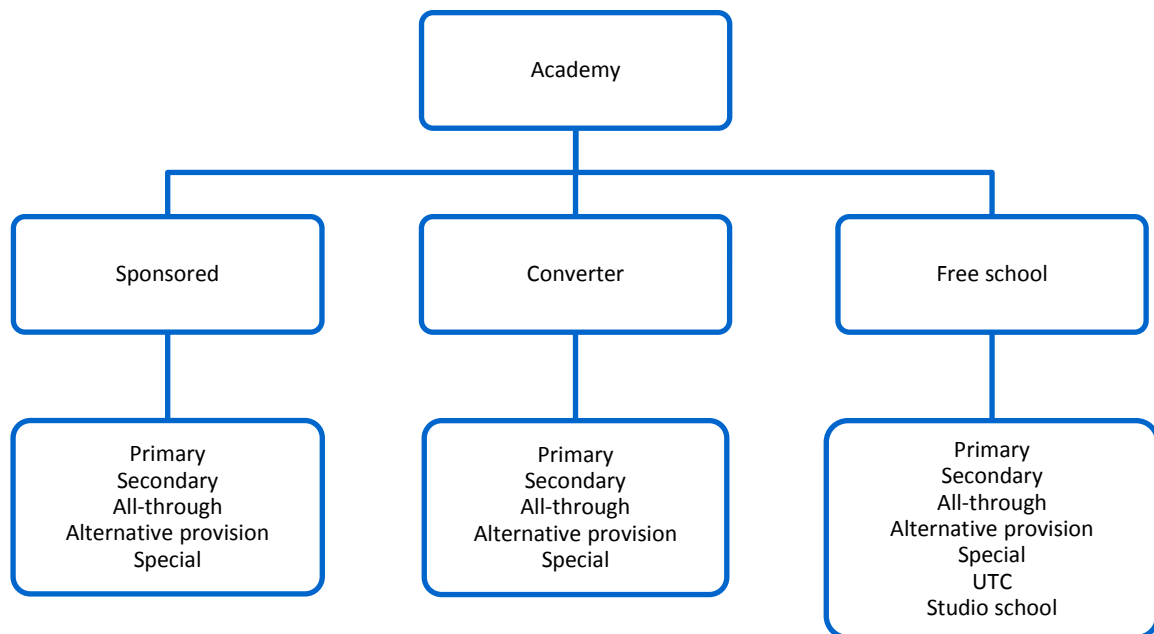
- 3.2.1 The academies concept has been introduced and developed in a number of stages by successive governments. The first academies, prior to 2010, were sponsored by individuals or organisations. It was under this scheme that Medway's first three academies were formed; Strood Academy, Brompton Academy, and Victory Academy (originally called Bishop of Rochester Academy).
- 3.2.2 The Academies Act 2010 introduced converter academies, allowing any good or outstanding school to apply to become an academy. The Secretary of State also has the power to make an academy order to force an underperforming school to convert to an academy.

3.3 Free school initiative

- 3.3.1 Free schools were introduced in 2011, allowing parents or other groups to apply to create a new school. This also introduced University Technical Colleges (UTC). The difference between a free school and an academy is that a free school has not converted from an existing school. All new schools will be free schools.
- 3.3.2 More recently, the government has worked to align the free school programme with Local Authority school place requirements. This has resulted in one secondary and one all-through free school to help meet basic need in Medway.

¹ ONS 2014-based Subnational Population Projections.

Figure 1 - Academy types



3.4 Regional Schools Commissioner

- 3.4.1 Regional schools commissioners (RSC) were introduced in 2014 to act on behalf of the secretary of state. They work with a regional headteacher board who advise the RSC on decisions and actions. The main responsibilities of the RSC are to improve standards of performance and governance in academies. They decide on applications from LA maintained schools who want to convert to academies, and can also issue academy orders for poorly performing LA schools.

3.5 National funding - basic need

- 3.5.1 Local authorities receive funding from the government for providing school places, maintaining school buildings, and providing services to schools. When schools convert to academy status, the government funds the academy, or their trust, directly for maintenance and for purchasing services. As more schools convert, this reduces the amount of funding provided directly to the Council.
- 3.5.2 Capital funding for school places is based on the annual School Capacity (SCAP) return. The Council provides forecasts of the number of pupils and the capacity of schools for the next five years at primary, and seven years for secondary. The level of funding is proportional to the deficit in places.

4 Local Perspective

4.1 Population and forecasted population growth

- 4.1.1 In 2017, Medway had a projected population of just over 282,000. This is forecasted to grow to 330,200 by 2035². Medway's local plan is currently under consultation. There is a forecasted need to provide up to 29,000 new dwellings by 2035. This, in combination with the planned increase in employment opportunities, will further encourage population growth, movement into the area, and in turn demand for school places.

4.2 Local plan

- 4.2.1 In the local plan, the vision for Medway is "By 2035 Medway will be a leading waterfront University city of 330,200 people, noted for its revitalised urban centres, its stunning natural and historic assets and countryside."
- 4.2.2 Consultation has been carried out on the preferred way to achieve this vision, with a number of scenarios offered for comment. These range from suburban expansion, to expanding the towns and villages on the peninsula.
- 4.2.3 The large increase in the number of dwellings in Medway will also bring with it a larger school age population. The type, location, and phasing of the housing will determine the size of this population increase, and the rate that it occurs.
- 4.2.4 School organisation officers are deeply involved in the local plan process from an education perspective to ensure that sufficient provision of school places is considered in the areas of development. The most appropriate response in terms of new or expanded schools will depend on the locations of new housing developments. In preparation, officers have made use of the scenarios, produced as part of the local plan consultation, to explore potential solutions.

4.3 Births and pre-school population

- 4.3.1 The number of births in Medway (Figure 2) increased from 3,054 in 2001 to a high of 3,567 in 2012. While the number has fallen in recent years, it has only dropped to a level similar to 2009. It is likely that the rate will rise again in the future, in line with the increase in adult population. Forecasts from the Office for National Statistics indicate that births are likely to rise to over 4,000 by 2037. The number of four-year olds requiring a school place is forecasted to continue increasing, reaching almost 4,000 in 2027, shown in Figure 3.

² ONS – Subnational Population Projections for Local Authorities in England – 2014 based

Figure 2 - Births in Medway

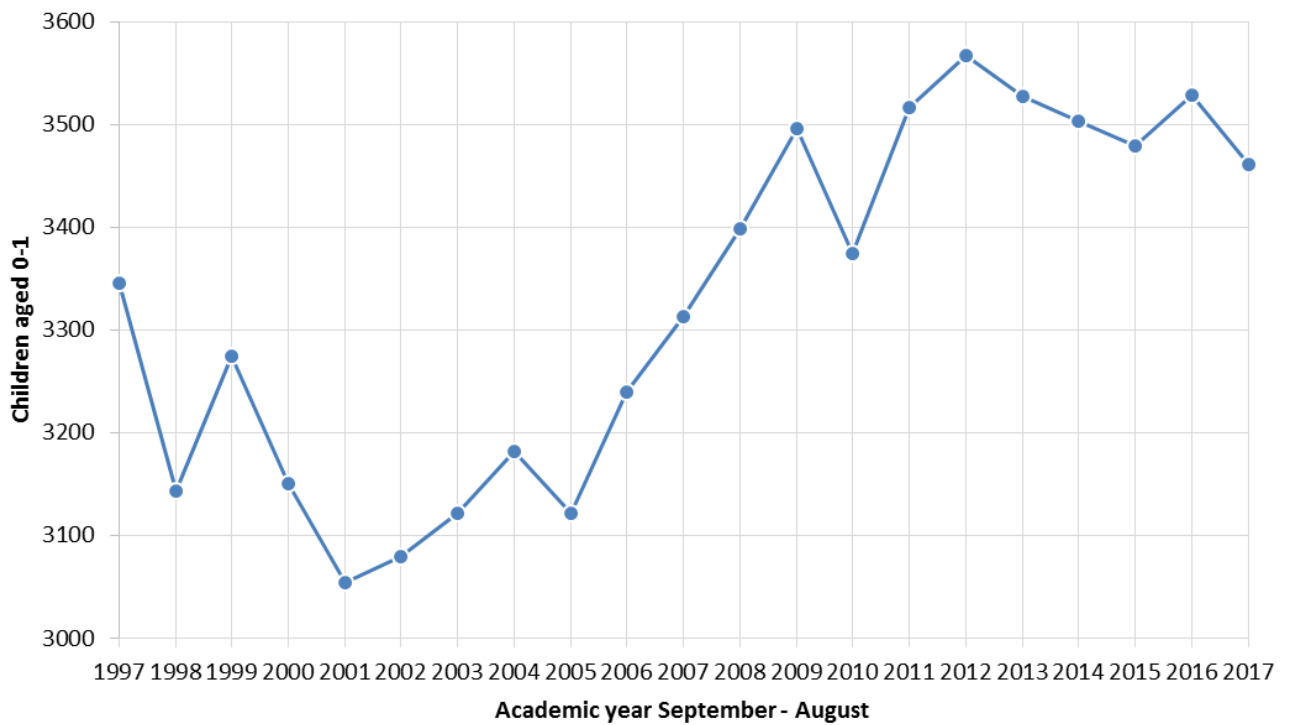
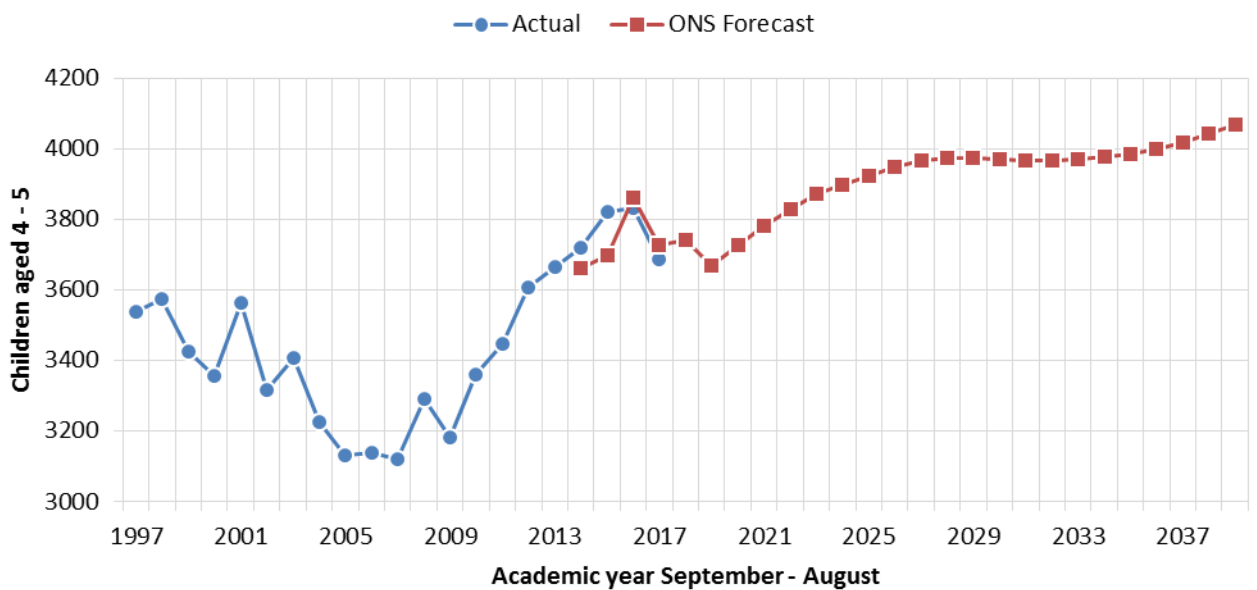


Figure 3 - Actual and forecast 4 year olds in Medway



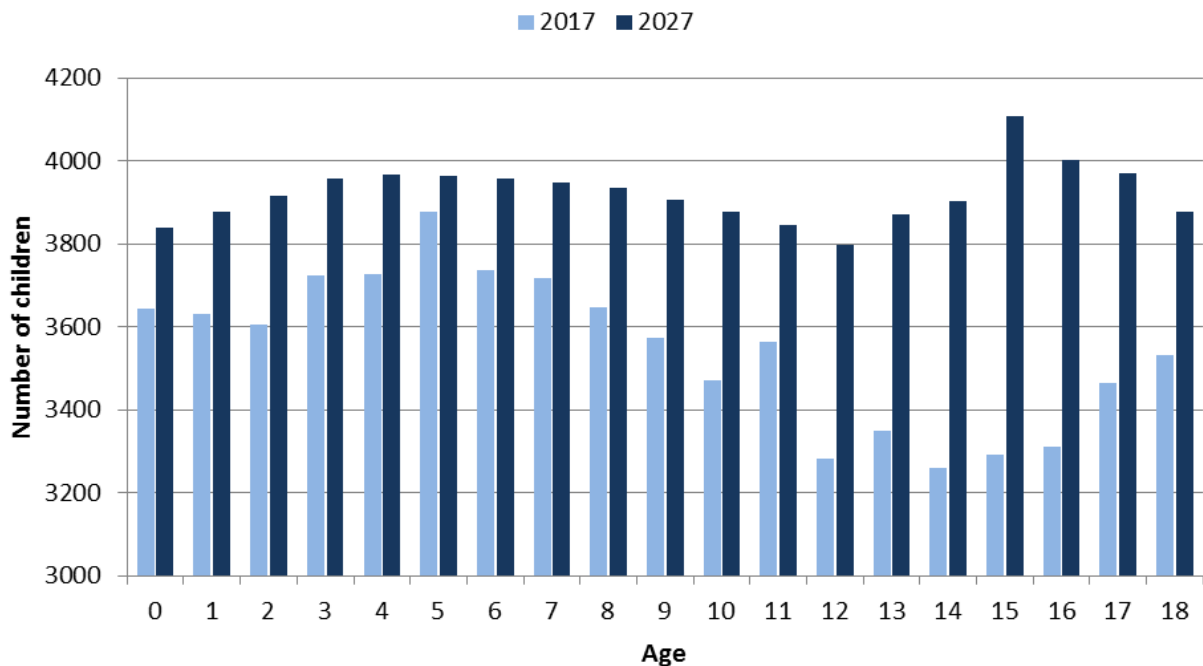
4.4 School population

4.4.1 There is currently a growing population of primary age children in Medway, increasing from 20,708 in spring 2009 to 23,966 in spring 2017. This has driven the primary school expansion programme over the life of the previous school organisation plan. Now these children are reaching secondary age, and there is increasing pressure on secondary school places. The secondary school population was 18,774 in spring 2017, and this is forecasted to grow to 21,635 by spring 2024. ONS projections show that the larger pupil numbers will be sustained over time in

both primary and secondary. The overall population of 0-18 year olds in Medway will grow significantly in the next 10 years, with larger numbers of children in each age group in 2027 compared to 2017 (Figure 4).

- 4.4.2 The size of the current primary cohort will also be increased by migration each year, which will increase the pressure further, at both primary and secondary level. At secondary age pupils are able to travel further and Medway schools, particularly selective schools, attract pupils from further afield.

Figure 4 - Estimated age breakdown of 0-18 year olds in 2017 and forecasted in 2027

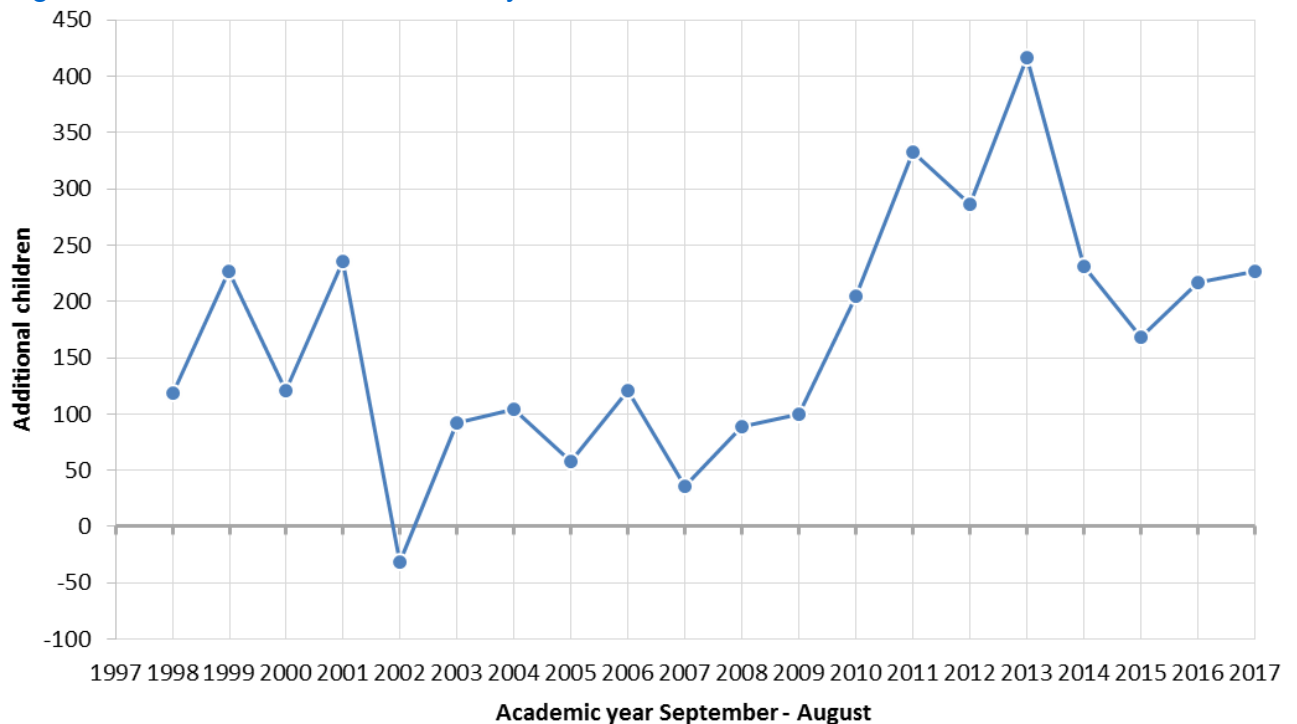


Source: 2014-based Subnational Population Projections. Local Authorities in England, mid-2014 to mid-2039

4.5 Migration to and from other authorities

- 4.5.1 Every year people move into or out of Medway, from other local authorities in the UK and abroad. The number of people moving varies by age, and based on pre-school GP registration data, there is a net inward movement of children between birth and age 5.
- 4.5.2 This net inward movement of pre-school age children has fallen compared to 5 or 6 years ago, and has been more consistent over the past four years. However, there are a number of housing developments coming to completion and others due to start. This will provide more opportunities for families to move into Medway.

Figure 5 - Inward movement of 0-5 year olds



4.6 Planning provision on the boundaries with Kent County Council

- 4.6.1 Medway shares a boundary on three sides with Kent County Council. The most significant areas of cross-boundary movement are in Walderslade, Halling and Rainham. In Walderslade, the boundary runs through the middle of some roads. So for some Kent pupils the nearest school is in Medway. There are a number of small villages over the boundary to the east of Rainham, and so for these pupils the nearest secondary school is in Medway.
- 4.6.2 Halling Primary is very close to the Kent boundary, and so offers an alternative school for people living in Snodland. There is likely to be an increase in movement across the boundary at Halling. A new bridge across the river has been built just south of Wouldham as part of a housing development. This development also involves the relocation and expansion of Wouldham School. Before this bridge was built, the nearest crossings were at Rochester or Aylesford. Wouldham School has been expanded to meet the additional demand from the new housing. However, if a large number of children in the same year group were to move in, this could then result in more applications to Halling Primary. Alternatively, Wouldham is a Church of England School, and this may attract pupils from Halling whose parents want them to attend a church school.
- 4.6.3 In each of these areas, intelligence is shared between Kent and Medway to highlight any school expansions, new provision and housing development which could impact upon school place planning across both areas.

4.7 Pupil number variability

- 4.7.1 There are a great number of factors that can affect pupil numbers year on year. This can make forecasting difficult, especially in the long term. The number of births

each year varies, but even if two years have the same number of births, then inward migration can increase this by a greater or lesser extent. For example, 2003 and 2005 both had 3122 births. After 4 years one cohort decreased by 1 child, and the other increased by 60.

- 4.7.2 To allow for these changes, plans have been in place for a five percent surplus in reception year. If inward migration increases the size of a cohort as it passes through school, then this surplus helps ensure there will be enough places for the additional children. Five percent is a nationally accepted figure for surplus places.
- 4.7.3 In Medway, there is a large inward movement of families. As more children move into the area, the five percent margin reduces and has proven to be insufficient in certain areas as cohorts progress through the year groups.
- 4.7.4 Therefore, in the reception year group in some areas where there is a high level of inward migration Medway works to an initial eight percent surplus at planning area level. This will ensure sufficient spaces as classes move through the school. This may be a little higher than the average surplus levels, but will ensure a sufficiency of places in areas of demand. It will also avoid the need and costs for emergency bulge classes and schools admitting over number, which can prove difficult for schools to organise at short notice. Working to eight percent should not endanger the financial viability of any schools.

5 Medway Schools

5.1 Numbers of schools by type

5.1.1 Medway has 112 schools of a range of different types. 103 are state-funded (local authority maintained or academy), and 9 are independent schools.

Type	Number
Infant	15
Junior	11
Primary	52
All-through	1
Secondary selective	6
Secondary non-selective	10
University Technical College	1
Special primary	1
Special secondary	3
Special all-through	1
Pupil referral unit	2
Independent	6
Independent special	3
Total	112

5.1.2 There are 26 infant and junior schools in Medway. Through the admissions process, junior schools are linked with infant feeder schools. Some of these infant and junior pairs are federated; they have a single governing body for both schools. It is possible for infant and junior schools to amalgamate into a single primary school. The last amalgamation in Medway was in 2013 when Swingate Infant School and Spinnens Acre Junior School became Swingate Primary. It has been a long-standing policy of the Council to support federation and amalgamation of infant and junior schools where appropriate. This removes the need for transition between schools, and allows for continuity of educational experience.

5.1.3 Research shows that each transition is likely to have a negative impact on a child's work. An independent review of the primary curriculum, called the Rose Review (2009), argued that transfers may contribute to post-transfer dips in motivation or attainment.

5.2 Faith schools

5.2.1 There are 18 state-funded faith schools in Medway, nine Church of England and nine Roman Catholic. The remaining 85 state schools have no religious character. Medway sits within the Church of England's Rochester Diocese and the Roman Catholic Church's Southwark Diocese.

5.2.2 As part of its place planning strategy, Medway will endeavour to maintain the proportion of faith places, which will maintain choice and diversity in the system.

5.3 Pupil referral units

- 5.3.1 Medway has two pupil referral units. The Will Adams Centre is for students aged 14-17 who have been permanently excluded from mainstream school. The Rowans takes excluded pupils aged 11-16 with behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties.

5.4 Post-16

- 5.4.1 Mid Kent College has a Medway campus which provides education and apprenticeships for learners aged 16 and over.

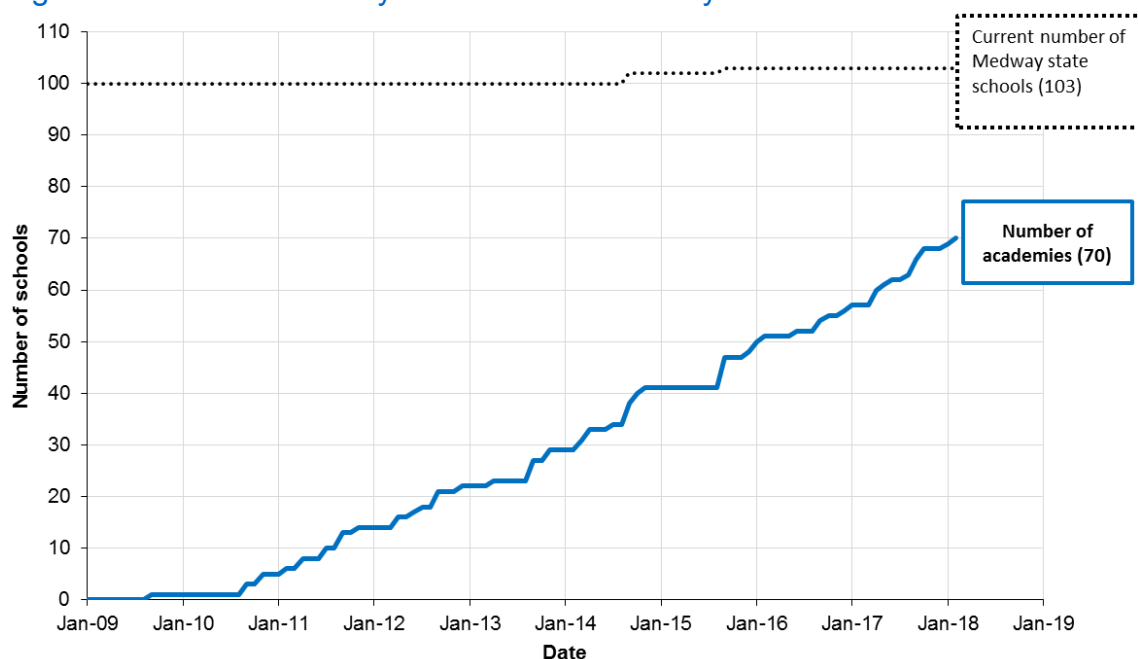
5.5 Early Years

- 5.5.1 Currently, 38 Medway schools have integrated nursery provision, while a number of others have private nurseries on their site. To ensure there is a sufficient supply of pre-school places, the Council, where possible and practical, includes integrated nursery provision in new schools and expansion projects.

5.6 Academies

- 5.6.1 Medway had three academies created under the original academy programme in 2009-10. After the Academies Act 2010 came into effect, Medway schools have converted to academies at a relatively constant rate. Between 2015 and 2017, the average rate has been 0.9 conversions per month. If conversion continues at this rate, then all schools in Medway will be academies by December 2020. Whilst there is no requirement for schools to convert to academies, Medway Council's preference is for full academisation.

Figure 6 - Rate of academy conversion in Medway



5.7 School size

- 5.7.1 The reception year intakes of Medway primary schools range from 20 to 90 children per year, giving maximum total numbers of between 140 and 630 pupils. The most common, and preferred, size is 420, or 2 forms of entry (FE). 630 pupils or 3 FE is generally the largest. Whilst most schools are 2 FE or below, many are on limited sites, so no have no room for expansion. The DfE building bulletin 103 (BB103) outlines the recommended sizes for school sites and buildings. Medway uses these to determine the size of new schools and expansions, and will continue to do so in future.

Table 2 - Recommended primary school site sizes

Size	Minimum site size (m ²)	Maximum site size (m ²)
1 FE - 210 pupils	9,000	11,200
2 FE - 420 pupils	16,000	20,000
3 FE - 630 pupils	23,000	28,800

- 5.7.2 Secondary schools are generally much larger than primaries. The schools in Medway range from 4 FE to 9 FE. They teach a wider range of subjects, and practical subjects are covered in more depth than primary schools. This means it is more efficient having larger numbers of pupils, and as a result, the buildings have a much larger footprint. These large numbers require more outdoor play and social areas. As the children are older, they also require full size sports pitches, and this contributes to an increase in outside area required.

Table 3 - Recommended secondary school site sizes

Size	Minimum site size (m ²)	Maximum site size (m ²)
4 FE - 840 pupils	51,000	64,000
6 FE - 1080 pupils	63,000	79,000
8FE - 1440 pupils	81,000	101,720
9 FE - 1620 pupils	90,000	113,000

6 School Organisation Plan Principles

6.1 Background

- 6.1.1 The original School Organisation Plan Principles were agreed in 2008. These were a set of guidelines drawn up to help ensure decisions were taken in a clear and consistent way. Now, almost ten years later, there have been a number of significant changes to education policy, not least the introduction of the academy concept.
- 6.1.2 Therefore, a new set of principles has been proposed, to better reflect this new education landscape. These are set out below.

6.2 Proposed School Organisation Plan Principles

- 6.2.1 Address issues of underperformance in schools by providing quality and appropriate learning environments by:
- Working with schools when expanding or designing new schools to understand school's requirements and address difficult accommodation arrangements
 - Considering BB103 recommendations when designing new and expanding schools
 - Ensuring schools are accessible to all pupils and staff to enable full access to the curriculum
 - Maintaining schools in a warm, safe, dry, and compliant condition
- 6.2.2 Ensure the viability of all schools by avoiding over supply in local areas by:
- Maintaining robust forecasting to keep an appropriate level of flexibility within the system, but also to flag early warnings to the potential of oversupply
 - Ensuring that too much provision is not in place, which could endanger the viability of the less popular schools
 - Working with the Regional Schools Commissioner to coordinate the timing of demand and responding to changes proposed by academies
- 6.2.3 Where possible, provide a good choice of provision, support successful schools to expand, and meet parental preference by:
- Prioritising 'Good' and 'Outstanding' schools for expansion
 - Considering recent performance of schools
 - Factoring in parental preferences demonstrated when applying for schools
 - Including schools and academy trusts in discussions when assessing schools for expansion and planning for new provision at

- 6.2.4 Ensure sufficient places are available to meet demand, and retain some flexibility within the system by operating to 5% surplus places overall by:
- Maintaining robust forecasting to enable forward planning
 - Retaining up to 8% surplus in reception classes in urban areas or areas demonstrating a high level of inward migration to allow flexibility within the system to cater for likely demand from new housing. This will result in the surplus percentage figure reducing as the cohort progresses but will ensure sufficient places without impacting upon the viability of schools
 - Promoting continued engagement with Academy Trusts on School Organisation matters, ensuring a mixed economy of high quality providers and sufficient places to meet demand
- 6.2.5 Where appropriate, support collaboration and partnership working between schools including academisation, federation or amalgamation of infant and junior schools, by:
- Supporting the Council's preference for academisation by coordinating the conversion process with all stakeholders
 - Leading on the process of amalgamation between maintained infant and junior schools to create primary schools
 - Supporting Governing Bodies as necessary towards federation with an appropriate partner
 - Extending co-educational places when new schools are established.

7 Forecasting Methodology

7.1 Background

- 7.1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for children in Medway. To ensure there are the right number of places available at the right time we produce pupil forecasts twice a year. These are based on the January and October school censuses. We produce pre-school forecasts once a year, based on GP registration data.
- 7.1.2 These forecasts provide an indication of the likely future numbers of pupils. By comparing these with current and planned school capacities, any shortfall in places can be identified. The forecasts are also submitted to the Department for Education as part of their annual School Capacity survey (SCAP). This is used by the department to determine the level of funding provided to create additional places.

7.2 Methodology - primary

- 7.2.1 To forecast the likely numbers of reception age pupils, we look at the numbers of children aged between 0 and 4 years old, and see how the size of these cohorts changes over time. We calculate the average gain or loss of children per year over the last 3 years. This is added on to each cohort to create a forecast of the number of children when the cohort reaches 4 years old.

Table 4 - Illustration of forecasting pre-school cohorts

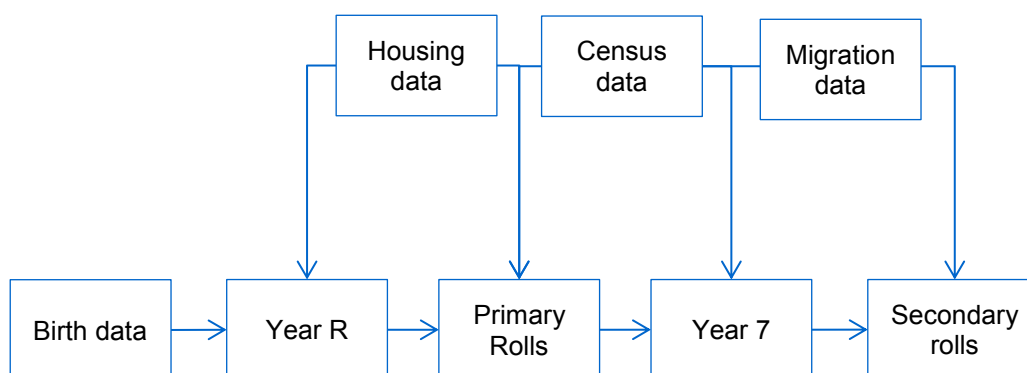
	0	1	2	3	4	
2016	100	110	105	95	100	Average gain of 5 children per year
2017		105	110	115	100	
2018			105	110	115	
2019				105	110	
2020					105	

- 7.2.2 A forecast of 4 year olds is produced in this way for each primary planning area (see section 8). For each school, we calculate the average percentage of 4 year olds in the planning area that the school admits to its reception year. The percentage is used to give an estimate of the future reception year. Estimated numbers of pupils produced by approved housing developments are also added to the Year R forecasts.
- 7.2.3 Individual school rolls are updated with the latest data from the school census. The future rolls are produced in the same way as the pre-school numbers. For each school, the average gain or loss of pupils over the last 3 years is calculated. This is added on to the numbers of pupils in current year groups, to produce a forecast of the future school rolls.
- 7.2.4 The school forecasts are totalled to give a forecast for the planning area, and Medway as a whole. Estimated numbers of pupils produced by approved housing developments are also added to the total roll forecasts.

7.3 Methodology – secondary

- 7.3.1 The school census is used to update the roll numbers for all secondary schools. The average change in pupils between year 6 and year 7 over the last 3 years is calculated. This is added to the future year 6 rolls from the primary forecasts. This gives an estimated size for the overall year 7 cohorts for the next 7 years.
- 7.3.2 The past intake of year 7 pupils at each school is divided by the total cohort for the last 3 years. This percentage is then applied to the forecasted year 7 cohorts, to give a year 7 forecast by school.
- 7.3.3 For each school, the average gain or loss of pupils over the last 3 years is calculated. This is added on to the numbers of pupils in current year groups, to produce a forecast of the future school rolls.
- 7.3.4 The forecasts are then totalled for selective and non-selective schools, and for Medway as a whole. At this stage, the estimated number of pupils produced by approved housing schemes are added in to the forecast.

Figure 7 - Forecasting flowchart



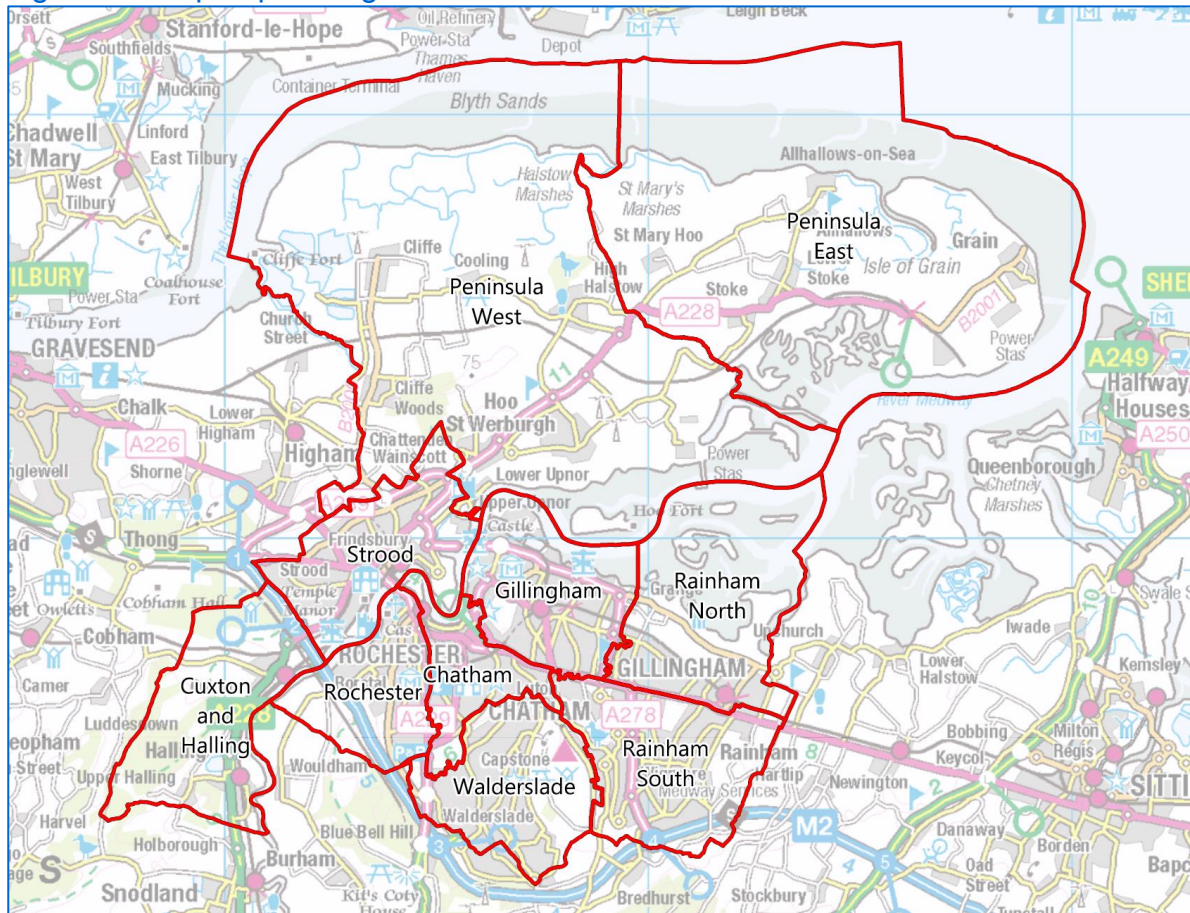
7.4 Accuracy of forecasts

- 7.4.1 The accuracy of forecasts is lowest when looking at individual planning areas. It improves when looking combinations of planning areas, and is greatest when Medway is looked at as a whole. This is because the forecasts are based on historic trends. They are more accurate when the trend is consistently moving in one direction, and less accurate if it is frequently changing.
- 7.4.2 Accuracy of individual school forecasts is also affected by parental preference. This can be influenced by easily quantifiable factors such as exam results or Ofsted ratings, or qualitative aspects such as school ethos or teaching styles.
- 7.4.3 Overall Medway's pupil place planning forecasts have proven to be very accurate which provides confidence to Members when making decisions on which schools to expand and when. Against national scoring, Medway is comfortably within the accepted 1% error margin on all benchmarks.

- 7.4.4 It is important that the forecasts are as accurate as possible, as they help identify any potential shortfalls in provision, and ensure the Council meets its statutory duty. They also provide evidence for the funding necessary to add new places, and so need to be accurate to ensure the Council is funded at the correct level. Each year the actual numbers of pupils are compared with the forecast from the previous year. Any large differences are identified and reasons for these are explored and identified where possible, to help make future forecasts more accurate.
- 7.4.5 As well as making sure there are enough places, it is important to avoid providing too many places. Expanding schools is expensive, and so providing places that are not needed, or in the wrong area, reduces the amount of money available for providing places when or where they are needed. Schools are funded on a per pupil basis, and so they still have to pay for the extra heating, lighting, equipment etc associated with a larger building but without the extra funding.

8 Planning area descriptions

Figure 8 - Map of planning areas



8.1 Primary

- 8.1.1 Medway has previously been split into nine planning areas at primary school level. These are based on groups of super output areas, which are areas defined by the Office for National Statistics for analysing census data. Moving forward, the Peninsula area will be split into two to assist place planning in the more populous areas, which experience differing trends to the more remote villages. This will result in ten primary place planning areas see section 8.2.2.
- 8.1.2 To better align with local understanding, three place planning areas will be renamed. 'Gillingham West' will become 'Gillingham'; 'Gillingham East' will become 'Rainham North'; and 'Rainham' will become 'Rainham South' – see figure 8 above. There will be no changes to the numbers of schools in each area
- 8.1.3 The planning area boundaries tend to be natural barriers, such as main roads and the river. Because of this, pupils tend to go to schools in the same area that they live in. However, as there are no catchment areas for Medway schools, there are also significant numbers of pupils who travel between planning areas to go to school. As a result, planning areas are often analysed in combination. For

example, Gillingham, Rainham South, and Rainham North are looked at together, as pupils often travel from Gillingham to Rainham to go to school.

Table 5 - Schools in primary planning areas

	Infant	Junior	Primary	All-through
Peninsula West and East			8	1
Strood	3	2	7	
Chatham, Rochester, Walderslade	7	4	18	
Gillingham, Rainham South, Rainham North	4	4	18	
Cuxton and Halling	1	1	1	
Total	15	11	52	1

8.2 Primary – Peninsula West and East

- 8.2.1 The majority of the Peninsula planning area is rural. There are several villages, but these tend to be too far apart for children to walk between them. Therefore many have their own small primary school. The largest village, Hoo, has a primary school and the all-through Hundred of Hoo Academy. The schools in the west of the Peninsula area are close enough to Strood and Kent for pupils to travel between the two by car or bus. Those in the east are much more isolated, and tend to serve the immediate surrounding community. The schools in the Peninsula area tend to be on slightly larger sites than those elsewhere in Medway.
- 8.2.2 To make future place planning more straightforward in this area, the Peninsula place planning area will be split into two. 'Peninsula East' will encompass the villages in the most distant areas and include the schools in Allhallows, Stoke and St James' Grain. 'Peninsula West' will include the areas covered by the following schools; Hoo St Werburgh and Hundred of Hoo, Chattenden, Cliffe Woods, St Helen's at Cliffe and High Halstow.

8.3 Primary – Strood

- 8.3.1 The Strood planning area is almost entirely urban. This makes it much easier for pupils to attend a school other than the one nearest their home. There are areas of significant housing and regeneration planned in Strood. The schools are generally on more restricted sites.

8.4 Primary - Chatham, Rochester, and Walderslade

- 8.4.1 These three planning areas are analysed not only individually but also together, as there are few physical boundaries between them. Apart from the Coney Banks between Chatham and Walderslade, the three form an almost continuous urban area. This makes it easy for pupils to travel between areas. Like Strood, the school sites in Chatham and Rochester tend to be quite restricted, although some in Walderslade are more spacious.

8.5 Primary – Gillingham , Rainham South and Rainham North

- 8.5.1 Like Chatham, Rochester, and Walderslade, these three planning areas form a continuous urban area. The schools in Gillingham are nearly all on restricted urban sites, while there are some with more space in Rainham South and Rainham North. There is a tendency for pupils in Gillingham to travel to Rainham schools.

8.6 Primary – Cuxton and Halling

- 8.6.1 This is a mostly rural area, with Cuxton in the north, and Halling to the south. Cuxton has a paired infant and junior school, while Halling has a primary. Generally the schools serve their respective village. However, Cuxton is close enough to Strood for pupils to travel by car or bus between the planning areas. Similarly, Halling is next to the border with Kent, and so pupils can easily travel to or from Snodland. In September 2016 a new bridge across the Medway was opened. This links the A228 with the new Peter's Village development in Kent. This may further increase movement between this planning area and Kent.

8.7 Secondary

- 8.7.1 At secondary school level, there are two non-geographic planning areas, for selective and non-selective schools. This is because older pupils are more independent and able to travel greater distances to go to school.

Table 6 - Secondary schools

	Boys	Girls	Mixed
Selective	2	3	1
Non-selective	2	2	8
Total	4	5	9

8.8 Secondary – non-selective

- 8.8.1 The majority of Medway's secondary schools are non-selective, and these are generally well spread throughout the authority. The four single-sex schools are sited so that boys and girls schools are on adjacent sites, with one pair in Walderslade, and the other pair in Rainham. Pupils do not necessarily go to their nearest school, but non-selective schools tend to draw from their surrounding area to a greater extent than selective schools do.

8.9 Secondary – selective

- 8.9.1 Medway has six selective schools, five of which are either in Rochester or Chatham. Five of the schools are single-sex, three for girls and two for boys. This results in slightly more girl's places than boy's places, but this is balanced by the mixed-sex school admitting more boys than girls. While Kent County Council is also a selective authority, there is some cross-border movement of pupils between the two authorities. Medway also attracts pupils from some London boroughs.
- 8.9.2 There are no grammar schools north of the river. Therefore any pupils in Strood or on the peninsula who wish to attend a selective school must travel into Rochester,

Chatham, or Gillingham. For pupils who live in St James on the Isle of Grain, this could be a trip of 13 miles or more.

9 Special educational needs

- 9.1.1 Every parent wants the best education for their child. For most parents this involves having a choice of schools and, as they grow older, helping young people make choices of which subjects to study, and which career to follow.
- 9.1.2 For parents whose child has a special education need or disability (SEND) the choices may be more limited, but are no less important. All children and young people need to be equipped to be resilient in a diverse and challenging world. Whatever their ability, they need to be able to be fully included in society, to assess and take appropriate risks, and to live as independently as possible.
- 9.1.3 Medway Council is responsible for commissioning school places in both mainstream and special schools. Over the period covered by this strategy we will be seeking to support more children with SEND in mainstream schools, and fewer in specialist settings. To do this, we will:
- increase the funding available to mainstream schools
 - work with headteachers and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) to ensure staff are appropriately trained and have the confidence to meet a wide range of needs and
 - invest more in adapting buildings, where possible
- 9.1.4 This strategy plays an important role in delivering the priority set out in the Council Plan 2016-17 to 2021 to support Medway's people to realise their potential, through enabling older and disabled people to live independently, ensuring that families are resilient, and all children achieving their potential in schools.

9.2 Our Vision

- We believe that every Medway child has the right to attend a good local school. Our default position is that all children should attend a mainstream school unless there is an overwhelming reason why this cannot happen
- We believe that every Medway child and young person has a right to have their health, social care and education needs met within their local community
- We expect every early years setting, state-funded school, further educational college and training provider to make good provision (as defined by Ofsted) for children and young people with SEND, to ensure that they make good progress in their education and development, that they transition smoothly into the next stage of their education and that they are helped to secure independent living and opportunities for employment as far as possible
- We will ensure that the views and wishes of children and young people with SEND and their parents are heard, and we will work with them to ensure that they have confidence in the ability of local providers to meet their children's needs

9.3 Our Priorities

- 9.3.1 We will use our commissioning powers and responsibilities, and our funding, to deliver the following priorities:
- All children start their education and continue to be educated alongside their peers within their local community
 - With our partners, we will ensure a smooth education pathway from childhood to adulthood for children and young people with SEND
 - We will ensure that children and young people with SEND have opportunities to develop resilience and learn to be as independent as possible, as they transition to adulthood
 - We expect all providers to ensure high quality educational provision, particularly in mainstream schools and further education colleges, for all children and young people with SEND

9.4 Strategic Priorities and Action Plan

- 9.4.1 All children should start their education and continue to be educated alongside their peers within their local community.
- 9.4.2 With our partners, we will ensure a smooth education pathway from childhood to adulthood for children and young people with SEND.
- 9.4.3 We will ensure that children and young people with SEND are provided with opportunities to develop resilience and learn to be as independent as possible, as they transition to adulthood.
- 9.4.4 We will expect all providers to ensure high quality educational provision, particularly in mainstream schools and further education colleges, for all children and young people with SEND.

10 Finance

10.1 Capital grants

- 10.1.1 Basic Need Funding is the money the Council receives from the government, to help meet the statutory duty of providing sufficient school places. The level of funding depends on the need for school places in an authority. This is determined by the annual School Capacity survey (SCAP).

Table 7 - Basic need funding

Year	Funding
2011-12	£3,836,404
2012-13	£3,012,299
2013-15	£5,026,158 + £10,049,855*
2015-16	£2,237,275
2016-17	£4,644,376
2017-18	£6,754,932
2018-19	£3,110,961
2019-20	£4,910,629
Total	£43,582,888

* In 2013-15, an additional Targeted basic need fund was made available, to be spent by August 2015 on specific projects.

- 10.1.2 This funding, supplemented with developer contributions, has been spent on a series of school expansion projects. These have been carried out over a number years to meet the demand as it arises across Medway.

Table 8 - New school and expansion projects

School	Year	Places provided	Cost
Greenvale	2012	90	£365,000
Brompton Westbrook	2013	105	£2,000,000
Napier	2013	210	£1,000,000
Wainscott	2013	210	£4,000,000
Cuxton Schools	2014	70	£1,200,000
New Horizons	2014	670	£6,200,000
Saxon Way	2014	210	£1,800,000
Danecourt	2015	40	£1,300,000
Hundred of Hoo	2015	210	£5,700,000
St Thomas of Canterbury	2016	30	£26,000
Abbey Court	2017	76	£13,000,000
Bligh Federation	2017	210	£2,900,000
Cliffe Woods	2017	105	£700,000
Halling	2018	140	£1,300,000
Riverside	2018	210	£1,600,000
St Mary's Island	2018	210	£2,300,000
Total		2796	£45,391,000

10.2 Capital receipts

- 10.2.1 There are restrictions on the change of use or sale of land that is, or has been, used for education purposes. The secretary of state expects that the money raised by the sale of education land is reinvested in education facilities.

10.3 Government initiatives

- 10.3.1 In 2011, the government introduced free schools. These are new academy schools which are opened in response to local demand, either for places, or for a certain style of education. They can be proposed by parents, local groups, or existing academy trusts. Any new school proposed by the local authority must also be a free school.
- 10.3.2 The free school programme has become more aligned to local authority need in recent years. This has led to four free schools being agreed for Medway to provide; one primary, one all-through, one secondary, and one alternative provision.
- 10.3.3 The government introduced the Priority School Building Programme (PSBP) in 2011. It aimed to repair or rebuild the schools that were in the worst physical condition. Schools were asked to submit bids for funding, and 260 schools were selected. In 2014, a second phase, PSBP2, was launched. This looked at individual blocks at schools for refurbishment or replacement. There were 277 schools selected for the second phase. Two schools in Medway were selected under PSBP2. The PSBP2 scheme is due to run from 2015 to 2021.
- 10.3.4 In 2014, the government introduced a Targeted Basic Need Programme. This was a £982 million fund that local authorities could bid for to provide school places. These could either be in the form of expansions, or new schools. Three projects were selected in Medway, two expansions at special schools, and one new mainstream school.

10.4 Developer contributions

- 10.4.1 Housing developments can put pressure on existing infrastructure. When developers present proposals for new developments, there is a duty upon them to contribute towards improving the supporting infrastructure to meet this additional demand³. This can include a variety of facilities, such as schools, GP surgeries, highways, and parks.
- 10.4.2 This contribution is proportional to the size of the scheme. A legal agreement (section 106) is included with planning permission which sets out how the developer will provide these services. This is usually in the form of a 'developer contribution'; a financial obligation that is paid in stages as the development evolves. Alternatively, a developer could provide land or facilities if this is more suitable. For example, a developer could provide a nursery as part of the development, rather than paying to expand existing nursery provision.

³ <http://www.medway.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/applyforplanningpermission/developercontributions.aspx>

- 10.4.3 The government introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in 2010. This was designed to complement section 106 agreements as a means of mitigating the impact of developments. In 2015, restrictions were introduced on the number of section 106 contributions that could be pooled for a single project. CIL has not been adopted in Medway, and so section 106 agreements continue to be used.
- 10.4.4 Larger developments, for example those of over 775 two bedroom dwellings, would generally provide a new school rather than a contribution towards providing additional places at local schools. For example, Rochester Riverside is a development of up to 1,400 dwellings, which will come with a new primary school. Combinations of medium or large developments are also considered together, to make the most efficient use of any contributions.

10.5 Condition programme

- 10.5.1 Central Government provides local authorities with annual grant funding specifically for the condition and maintenance of schools. This funding is only for local authority maintained schools; academies and voluntary aided schools are funded separately. As more schools become academies, the level of funding will reduce, as will the responsibility for the work. An annual programme of works is planned according to need, priority of work and available funding.
- 10.5.2 The objectives of the Condition Programme are to ensure schools are watertight, have heat and hot water supplies and are compliant with statutory regulations. These basic elements are needed to ensure schools can remain operational.
- 10.5.3 Schools do receive an element of devolved funding to enable them to undertake basic maintenance works, but the level of this funding has significantly reduced in recent years.
- 10.5.4 In the past condition work has focussed on roofing and boiler replacement works only. Now that schools no longer have access to the level of Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) funding previously received, the Council has had to increase the scope of the Condition Programme for schools to ensure statutory compliance and minimise any health and safety risks.
- 10.5.5 The Condition Programme focuses on major maintenance works for schools such as roofing and boilers along with other works such as fire risk works, electrical works, asbestos removal, health & safety issues, school security, water management and other emergency works as they arise.
- 10.5.6 The table below outlines where recent funding has been spent;

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19 (Predicted)
Roofing	£1,244,283	£543,443	£0
Boilers	£674,525	£225,388	£739,691
Electrical	£2,991	£0	£0
School Security	£214,674	£4,695	£257,000

Fire Risk work	£101,107	£23,800	£537,337
Water Management	£22,675	£1,440	£0
Asbestos	£267,670	£25,000	£14,000
Other	£441,999	£197,256	£558,668
Total	£2,969,924	£1,021,256	£2,106,696

11 Statutory Consultation

- 11.1.1 When changes are made to maintained schools, the local authority must follow the statutory process as set out in “Making ‘prescribed alterations’ to maintained schools” – statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers (April 2016).
- 11.1.2 There is no longer a prescribed ‘pre-publication’ (informal) consultation period for prescribed alterations. However, in some cases it would be prudent to include a period of informal consultation to gauge views prior to formal publication of the proposals. Each project will be assessed and recommendations made on its merits as to whether the full process should be in place. Cabinet will determine this at the point of initial proposal for each individual project.

12 Annual review

- 12.1.1 This report will be reviewed annually starting in the autumn of 2018. The reviews will outline to Medway's Cabinet the actions taken against the action plan as well as highlighting emerging need and presenting proposals to meet demand.
- 12.1.2 The annual reviews will be based upon the information and data provided from the spring round of forecasting, which in turn are based upon the Schools January Census and the latest health, housing and migration data available.

13 Key challenges

- 13.1.1 The key challenges over the next five years will be:
- Managing the expected conversion of all Medway schools to academy status within a coherent and sustainable programme and working collaboratively with academy trusts to ensure a supply of good quality places within a diverse system
 - Monitor and act on increasing secondary pupil numbers to ensure sufficient places are available, through the expansion of current schools and in partnership with the ESFA on the timely delivery of Free Schools
 - Providing sufficient places with limited and decreasing funding availability, by seeking funding from a variety of sources and taking advantage of opportunities and initiatives as they present themselves
 - Championing equality and inclusion at all schools through the promotion of collaborative school to school support and the sharing of good practice and resources
 - Monitoring housing developments as part of the local plan and ensuring they include school provision or developer contributions where appropriate to ensure that sufficient spaces are available to meet demand
- 13.1.2 Medway will meet these challenges through continued robust forecasting and analysis of the data to highlight emerging need. We will propose expansions and new schools in a timely manner and work collaboratively with schools and academy trusts to ensure a sufficiency of school places against a backdrop of school improvement and partnership.