

CABINET

5 JULY 2011

SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2011-2016

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Les Wicks, Children's Services

Report from: Rose Collinson, Director of Children and Adults

Author: Paul Clarke, School Organisation Officer and
Chris McKenzie, Head of School Organisation and
Student Services.

Summary

This report introduces the School Organisation Plan 2011-2016 to Cabinet for comment, and for Cabinet to give approval for wider consultation.

The plan makes proposals for the development of additional school provision based on an analysis of need, including actual and forecast pupil numbers.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 Although there is no longer a statutory requirement for local authorities to have a School Organisation Plan, having such a plan will enable the Council to establish a framework for school organisation decisions to ensure an appropriate supply of good quality school places. The new plan will be consistent with the provisions of the Children and Young People's Plan, therefore, this is a matter for Cabinet

2. Background and aims

- 2.1 In January 2008 Cabinet approved the School Organisation Plan Principles, which contained a set of guidelines to be used when considering school organisational issues, thereby ensuring that decision-making is clear and consistent. The core of these principles ensures that any changes to schools are based upon improving schools and raising standards.
- 2.2 Medway Council's school organisation principles, alongside other strategies, have provided a framework for significant organisational change in Medway in recent years.

2.3 The School Organisation plan sets out Medway's plans for the implementation of the principles in Medway schools over the next 5 years, ensuring that the council meets its statutory responsibility to provide sufficient good school places, and includes priorities for capital investment based on an analysis of need.

3. Options

3.1 The options are:

- a) To approve the School Organisation Plan 2011-2016, which gives focus and direction to school reorganisation in Medway for the next 5 years to help drive up standards, or
- b) Not to approve the plan, which would lead to the school organisation principles in place without a clear strategy for implementation.

4. Advice and analysis

4.1 The School Organisation Plan analyses the impact of the school organisation principles, alongside other strategies in developing Medway's school provision in recent years.

4.2 The plan includes a detailed analysis of current and forecast pupil numbers and therefore need across the early years, primary and secondary phases, as well as the council's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

4.3 The plan uses this baseline analysis of need as the basis to propose a number of specific organisational solutions, principally the need to create additional primary age provision in Gillingham West, Chatham, Rochester and Wainscott and the need to create additional SEN provision, which will be based on the recommendations of a detailed masterplan, incorporating the development and analysis of pupil forecasts.

4.4 These proposals are made in the context of changing government legislation, which includes a presumption that when local authorities set up new schools they will be Academies or Free schools.

4.5 As well as legislative changes the overall level of funding to support strategic educational and school organisation priorities has been greatly reduced and will need to be focussed on school condition and addressing basic need for places.

4.6 Medway's school organisation plan principles were agreed following extensive consultation, and these have provided an effective framework for organisational change within Medway schools over recent years and remain relevant.

4.7 Because of changes in government legislation and greater financial constraints since the principles were developed, they need to be interpreted and implemented in a way that reflects the current policy and financial context. For example, because of changes to government policy the triggers for addressing

viability issues and low standards have changed, as floor targets become more challenging.

4.8 National policy changes also affect the action that may be taken to address such issues, for example, the Academy Act 2010 granted new powers to allow the Secretary of State to convert schools with standards issues into an Academy.

4.9 The principles will therefore continue to be used as the framework for organisational change, although the triggers for action, and the ways in which they will be implemented will, in practice, reflect the wider policy and financial context.

5. Risk Management

5.1 The following risks arise if the recommendations in this report are not implemented. These are principally:

- that the School Organisation Principles, approved by Cabinet in January 2008, could lose effectiveness without a structured and planned approach to the next 5 years and beyond.
- the absence of a plan could undermine the council's need to ensure the most effective use of resources, and in turn raise standards across all schools.
- by not exploring and implementing the recommendations within this report could undermine the council's statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available.
- not taking the actions proposed within the plan could mean that the viability of some schools could be endangered.

5.2 The council has both a moral and statutory duty to promote high standards in school provision and to ensure the sustained viability of its schools.

6. Consultation

6.1 We will consult with interested stakeholders on the School Organisation Plan as a whole, although the specific proposals within the action plan may require separate consultation at the appropriate times. Therefore the projected timeframe is as follows;

- a) Cabinet approval to proceed to consultation 5 July 2011.
- b) Consultation period 13 July - 21 September 2011 (this allows for 4 weeks consultation outside of school holiday periods)
- c) Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee with outcome of consultation 27 September 2011
- d) Cabinet with outcome of consultation and final approval on 1 November 2011

7. Financial and legal implications

7.1 All proposals brought forward as a result of the new school organisation plan, and implemented by the council, will need to be funded via the Children's Services Capital programme. The programme is mainly funded by Government and targeted grants. In 2009/10 and 2010/11, Medway received capital funding

to support the Primary Strategy for Change but no national funding has been allocated for this programme in 2011/12 or beyond.

- 7.2 The School Organisation plan includes a detailed section, which explains how the proposals will be funded.
- 7.3 In implementing the School Organisation Plan, proposals to change arrangements for any individual school may well need to follow a statutory process. In the case of changing a planned admission number, consultation must take place on each proposed change over a year before the implementation date.
- 7.4 Separate statutory processes exist for:
- Planning and developing special educational provision
 - Duty to respond to parental representations about the provision of schools
 - Making changes to a mainstream school
 - Establishing a new maintained school
 - Closing a maintained mainstream school.
- 7.5 The Education Bill proposes changes to the arrangements for the establishment of new schools by introducing a presumption that when local authorities set up new schools they will be Academies or Free schools.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 Cabinet are asked to comment upon the School Organisation Plan 2011-2016, and to give officers authorisation to proceed with the proposed consultation.

9. Suggested reasons for decision

- 9.1 This will enable the Council to put in place a planned and structured approach to school organisation over the next 5 years to address the risks in section 5.

Lead officer contact

Chris McKenzie, Head of School Organisation and Student Services, 01634 334013, e-mail chris.mckenzie@medway.gov.uk

Background Papers

- Making changes to a Maintained Mainstream School, A guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies
- Closing a Maintained Mainstream School, A guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies.
- Establishing a new Maintained Mainstream School, A guide for Local Authorities

Appendices

The School Organisation Plan 2011- 2016

Draft for consultation July 2011

Medway's School Organisation Plan 2011-2016



*Raising achievement through quality
learning environments*

Draft for Consultation July 2011

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Section 1: Setting the scene

Introduction

Our School Organisation plan is designed to underpin our strong, strategic role as champion of parents and families, of vulnerable pupils and of educational excellence.

Medway Council's Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Cllr Les Wicks

- 1.1 The purpose of school organisation is to contribute to raising achievement through the provision of quality learning environments. 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.
- 1.2 Effective school organisation is about ensuring the right number of good schools, which are educationally and financially viable, of the right size and in the right locations. It is also about ensuring that school buildings are high quality and fit for purpose.
- 1.3 This plan sets out Medway's plans for the development of schools in Medway over the next 5 years, including priorities for capital investment.
- 1.4 Medway Council's Education Capital Programme, which includes grant funding from central government alongside other sources of funding, such as developer contributions, will be used to support the implementation of the plan.

Relationship with other local plans and strategies

- 1.5 A range of local plans and strategies relating to children and young people underpin the priorities outlined in Medway's School Organisation Plan.
- 1.6 Medway Council's key corporate objectives are set out in the Council plan. The Council plan includes six strategic priorities, one of which is "Children and Young People having the best start in life". The School Organisation Plan supports that priority.
- 1.7 In 2005 and early 2006, Medway Council consulted children, families and carers extensively about the priorities and vision for children. This resulted in the completion of Medway's first Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). This is currently being updated to set out the targets for action going forward to 2014 but the vision from the original plan remains the same.
- 1.8 The implementation of the CYPP, is overseen by the Medway Children's Trust, which brings together representatives of statutory and voluntary agencies to inform key decisions on the commissioning and provision of services to local children and their families.
- 1.9 Improving outcomes for young people in Medway is at the heart of our CYPP.
- 1.10 The key aims of the plan are to ensure that children in Medway will:
 - be safe and cared for;
 - succeed in learning;
 - thrive.
- 1.11 In terms of the aim to ensure all children in Medway succeed in learning the CYPP expands on the need to ensure that children enjoy learning and leave school with the qualifications, personal achievements, skills and motivation to succeed in their adult and working lives. Increasing children's achievements is a key priority. In the case of underperforming groups of pupils, we aim to narrow the gap between their achievement and that of the Medway average.
- 1.12 Medway's "Special Educational Needs – An Inclusive policy and strategy for Medway 2009 – 2014" provides a framework which sets out to enable the council to ensure good local provision is available.
- 1.13 In April 2011, Medway Council, Headteachers and Governors jointly agreed a School Improvement Strategy (2011-2014). This strategy contains a range of actions the council and Medway schools will undertake to improve performance. This strategy sets out the important role of the School Organisation Plan in supporting the drive to raise standards of achievement:

A clear School Organisation Plan will support Medway's vision of schools performing strongly in the 21st Century as set out in our School Improvement Strategy.

Medway Council's Director of Children and Adult Services, Rose Collinson

National context

- 1.14 The Children Act 2004 removed the legal requirement to produce a School Organisation Plan from March 2005 and proposed that strategic school planning information was included in the new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). The Coalition Government has also signalled its intention to remove the statutory requirement to have a CYPP although the Medway Children's Trust has agreed to maintain the plan. The Education and Inspection Act 2006 abolished School Organisation Committees with effect from May 2007 and most powers to determine school organisation proposals transferred to the Local Authority. Whilst a School Organisation Plan is no longer a statutory requirement, the council has agreed that having this plan will ensure a clear framework for school place planning linked to school improvement.
- 1.15 In the Coalition Governments recent white paper "The importance of teaching" it states that the local authority has a key role to support parents and families through promoting a good supply of strong schools and should focus on supplying enough good spaces rather than reducing surplus places.
- 1.16 The Academies Act 2010 enabled more schools to become Academies. The Education Bill, which is currently progressing through parliament, expands the programme to allow the establishment of 16 to 19 Academies and alternative provision Academies. The Government's white paper also sets out the aim for all schools to convert to Academy status over time.
- 1.17 The Education Bill makes changes to the arrangements for the establishment of new schools by introducing a presumption that when local authorities set up new schools they will be Academies or Free schools.
- 1.18 This legislation will have a significant impact on the role of the local authority as the strategic commissioner of school places. The local authority will need to work in partnership with existing and new providers to secure a wide range of education options for parents and families, whilst ensuring that there are sufficient good school places.
- 1.19 The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review indicated that School's Capital allocations would be reduced by 60% over the next 3 years. The funding to support the Primary Strategy for Change has been cut from the Council's recent capital settlement. This alone represents a reduction in School capital funding for Medway Council of £2m for 2011/12 and each subsequent year until 2014.
- 1.20 In addition, the government announced the end of the Building Schools for the Future programme, which was intended to invest significant funding in improving all Secondary School buildings. At the same time the government announced a review of the way in which capital funding is allocated and managed called "The James Review". This review has proposed a number of changes, although it is not yet clear what the Government's response to the proposals will be.
- 1.21 What is clear is that the overall level of funding to support strategic educational and school organisation priorities will be greatly reduced and will need to be focussed on condition and addressing basic need for places.

Our priorities are to use that money to ensure that we address the poor condition of the existing school estate and ensure there are enough places for the predicted increase in the number of school age children, particularly at primary level.

From the schools white paper, "The importance of teaching".

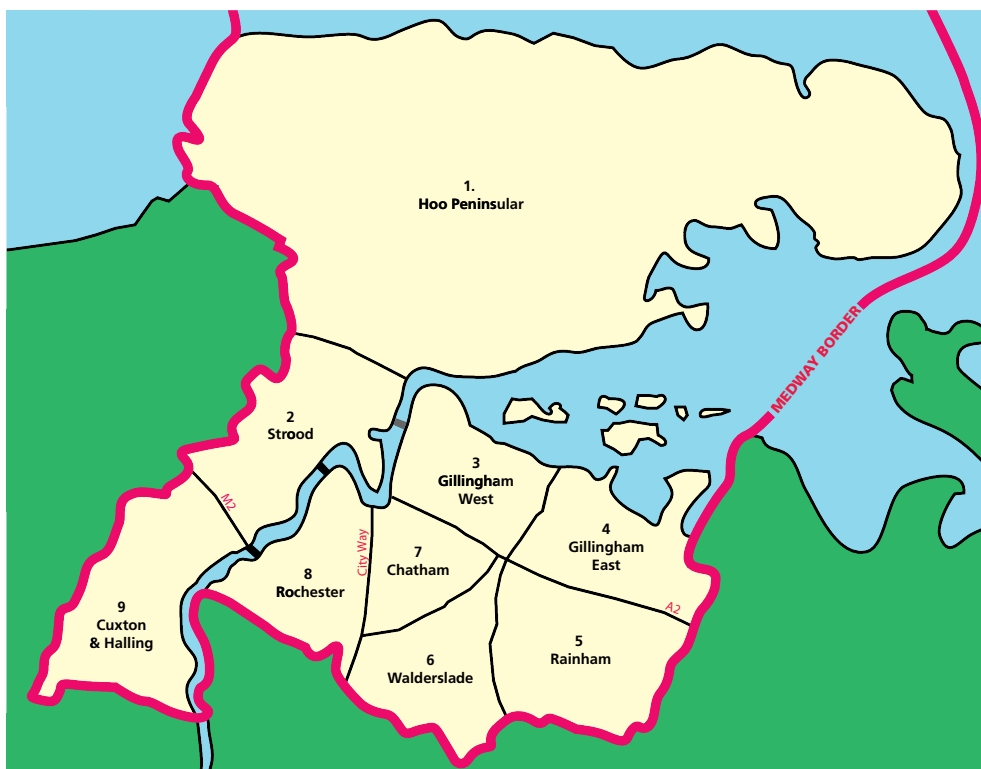
Medway the area

- 1.22 Medway came into existence as a unitary authority in 1998, located on the southern bank of the River Thames, bordered by Kent in the east, south and west and bounded by the river to the north.
- 1.23 Medway has substantial infrastructure in place and immediate access to green open space and areas of outstanding natural beauty. It also forms part of the largest regeneration project in Western Europe, the Thames Gateway.

- 1.24 In recent years, as part of the Thames Gateway regeneration area, Medway has undergone extensive regeneration that will continue as set out in the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-26. This will include the only new settlement in the Thames Gateway at Lodge Hill, Chattenden, which will accommodate approximately 5000 homes. This development will include new school provision.
- 1.25 Overall Medway is not a deprived area and is ranked 150th most deprived local authority area out of 354 in England, but it has higher levels of deprivation than neighbouring local authorities in Kent and the South East and at ward level pockets of deprivation co-exist with affluent neighbourhoods. We have some heavily populated urban and residential areas, but these are never more than half an hour away from rural farmland and village communities.
- 1.26 Medway's mid 2007 to mid 2008 population estimates has predicted a population of 253,500. Of those approximately 66,200 are children and young people (aged between 0 - 19 years). It is forecast that Medway's overall population will increase by nearly 5% by the year 2020.

Schools in Medway

- 1.27 Within Medway there are 111 schools (96 maintained, 8 Academies, and 7 Private), educating in excess of 36,000 children.
- 1.28 As at June 2011 there are 83 primary phase schools educating 20,856 children and 2 special schools with primary phase. These include 38 infant and junior, 10 voluntary aided schools - 2 Church of England and 8 Roman Catholic and 7 Church of England voluntary controlled schools. There are currently no primary age Academies in Medway, although the first primary conversion is due to take place on 1 July 2011 and several other primary schools have expressed an interest in applying.
- 1.29 As at June 2011 there are 17 secondary phase schools, which include 6 grammar schools educating 19,477 children, and 3 special schools with secondary phase. The secondary sector has undergone significant change in recent years with a number having converted to Academy status. There are currently one voluntary aided, 6 foundation, 2 community and 8 Academy secondary schools.
- 1.30 For the purposes of school place planning, schools are divided into 9 areas shown on the map below, based on distinct geographical areas. These planning areas are: 1: Hoo Peninsula, 2: Strood, 3: Gillingham West, 4: Gillingham East, 5: Rainham, 6: Walderslade, 7: Chatham, 8: Rochester, 9: Cuxton & Halling.



¹Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-26

² CYPP Needs Assessment, 2010

Medway's School Organisation Principles

- 1.31 In 2008 Medway's School Organisation Plan Principles were established following extensive consultation, which contained a set of guidelines to be used when considering school organisational issues, thereby ensuring that decision-making is clear and consistent, enabling the Council to comply with its statutory duty to provide sufficient good school places. The core of these principles ensures that any changes to schools are based upon improving schools and raising standards.
- 1.32 Within the primary phase Medway's School Organisation Plan principles are:
- to review the future of schools with low standards;
 - all Infant and Junior schools should be amalgamated over time;
 - to review the future of schools that are at risk of becoming unviable;
 - to enable popular and successful schools to expand
- 1.33 Within the secondary phase Medway's School Organisation Plan principles are:
- Address issues of low standards;
 - Address viability issues;
 - Extend co-educational places when new schools are established;
 - Within Medway's selective system, enable all secondary schools, including special schools, to achieve specialist status to create a network of complementary specialist schools across Medway;
 - Delivery of vocational education through consortium working;
 - Promote learning and work based learning to the age of 19;
 - Respond to parental preference;
 - Ensure a reasonable geographical spread of schools.
- 1.34 In the secondary education sector, the Council is committed to achieving these through a selective system.
- 1.35 Medway Council's school organisation principles, alongside other strategies, have provided a framework for significant organisational change in Medway in recent years, with the aim of offering good local provision to meet the needs of the vast majority of Medway's children and young people including those with special educational needs.

Our achievements in school planning - Early Years Foundation Stage and Sure Start

- 1.36 Medway's Sure Start strategy – an integral part of the CYPP - seeks to improve the current wellbeing, and the future life chances, of children through a planned roll-out of evidence-based programmes and practices, and the delivery of coherent integrated early childhood services for local communities. Two strands of capital activity have been at the heart of this strategy and support the school organisation principles:
- development of a network of 19 Sure Start children's centres, co-located at primary schools that host a range of health, learning, care and guidance services for very young children and their parents and carers;
 - expansion of the proportion of schools offering an integrated Foundation Stage of learning from the age of 3 years, starting first with those serving areas of greatest disadvantage and thereby helping to raise standards at Foundation Stage and ultimately Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- 1.37 Medway began with 4 children's centres in the most disadvantaged areas – and built on the lessons from the pilot Sure Start project in the All Saints area of Chatham. We now have 19 centres built, staffed and delivering services to local families, which serve all of Medway's communities as shown on the map below:



- 1.38 A total of 32 infant and primary schools offer some or all of their children the full Foundation Stage of learning from the age of 3 years, and 33 do not, which means that we have almost met our target for more than half of all schools in Medway to offer the full Foundation Stage by 2010 compared with less than 20% in 2000. This development supports the school organisation principles to reduce the number of transition points for children.
- 1.39 At foundation stage the gap is narrowing between the poorest performing quintile, and the median for the cohort, and this progress reflects the quality of teaching and learning complimented by the early years strategy of investment in high quality teaching and learning environments and targeted support for disadvantaged communities and individual children.

Our achievements in school planning - Primary Phase

We want our children and young people to have the best possible start in life, to succeed in learning and do well. Medway's Primary Capital Programme gives us the opportunity to make our primary schools suitable for providing a first class education.

Medway Council's Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Cllr Les Wicks

- 1.40 The approval of the Council's Primary Strategy for Change in 2009 by the government attracted over £9m of investment for Medway Primary Schools. The Council combined this investment with other sources of funding to develop a Primary Capital Programme, which planned significant investment in Medway Primary Schools.
- 1.41 The strategy used the approved school organisation principles as a framework to propose a strategic re-organisation of primary school provision in Medway supported by the programme of capital investment.
- 1.42 The council consulted extensively on the specific proposals and as a result the following proposals were approved;
- the closure of Ridge Meadow Primary School which had a high proportion of surplus places and was therefore at risk of becoming unviable;

- the amalgamations of Barnsole, Lordswood, Oaklands, Thames View and Twydall Infant and Junior Schools,
- significant capital projects at the amalgamated Lordswood, Oaklands, Thames View and Twydall schools;
- the improvement of accommodation and external play space for Napier Primary School incorporating the part demolition and remodelling of the old sixth form block of Robert Napier secondary school, which was based on the same site prior to its relocation into a new purpose built facility on the Robert Napier site;
- the extension of All Faiths' Children's Community Primary School to provide suitable accommodation and a permanent Sure Start children's centre to replace the provision in temporary buildings;
- the complete re-build of Walderslade Primary School, which is due for completion by September 2011, that was based entirely in temporary accommodation, some dating back to 1908.

It's exciting for everyone at the school to see the diggers moving in and changes starting to take place.

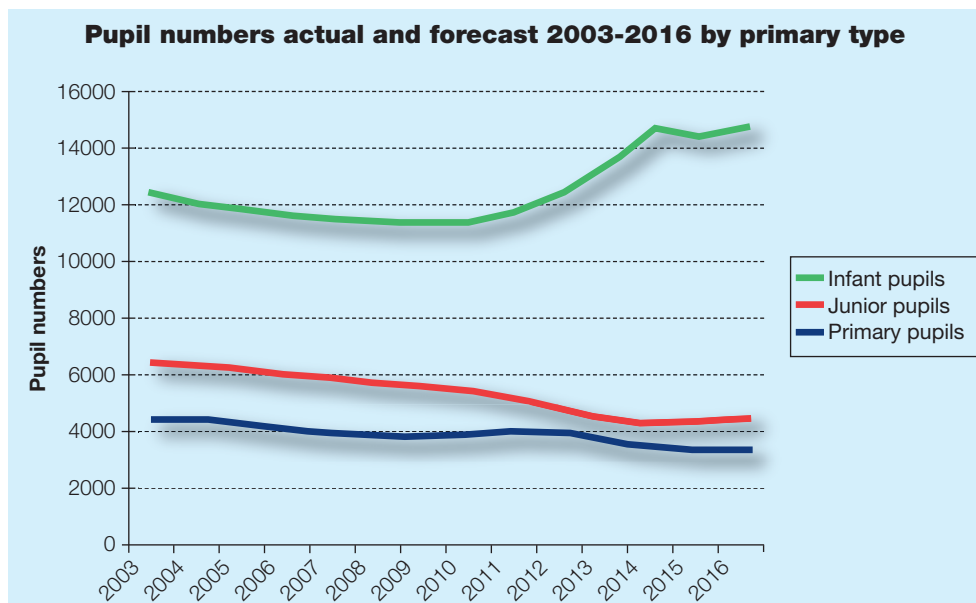
Executive Headteacher at Thames View Infant and Junior Schools, Pauline Milton



Children helping out at Thames View Junior School

- 1.43 In order to secure the investment the Primary Strategy for Change had to set out proposed building projects over a 6-year period, from 2008 to 2014. This programme allowed the local authority to be ambitious and strategic in planning our capital expenditure for Schools, and projects were phased based on the expected availability of funding. Due to the withdrawal of any further funding after only two years of the programme, it has not been possible to deliver all of the projects originally planned.
- 1.44 Medway has altogether 83 schools for primary aged children comprising of:
- | | |
|--------------|----|
| Infant only | 20 |
| Junior only | 18 |
| 4-11 Primary | 45 |
- 1.45 Since 2000, 6 separate pairs of infant and junior schools have been amalgamated to form aged 3 to 11 primary schools. 4 additional amalgamations have been approved which will take place between September 2011 and September 2013. Currently, we have 3 similar pairs of schools in federations.

The graph below shows the increase in the proportion of pupils attending all through Primary schools over time, which includes the expected impact of agreed amalgamations up to September 2013.



- 1.46 The main reason for moving to all through primary schools is to provide smoother transitions between the primary phases of education. An amalgamated school provides for:
- A fully integrated curriculum;
 - Fully integrated arrangements for assessment for learning, including recording of progress and planning future provision;
 - A smooth transition for pupils transferring from infant to junior departments;
 - A robust senior leadership team drawing on experience from early years and foundation stage, key stages one and two.
- 1.47 Contextualised Value Added (CVA), measures the progress made by pupils in the school from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2. To calculate CVA, the pupils' key stage 1 results are used to predict the key stage 2 result, and the prediction is then adjusted to take account of pupils characteristics, e.g. gender, special educational needs. The difference between the actual results and the predicted value for each pupil is used to calculate a CVA score for the school cohort.
- 1.48 Analysis of CVA at school level for 2010, shows that, in Medway, 19% of primary school pupils achieve a CVA score which is significantly better than expected (good progress taking account of context) compared with 6% of junior school pupils. Similarly, 19% of primary school pupils achieved a CVA score significantly below expected, compared with 35% of junior school pupils. This is in spite of the fact that CVA calculations are weighted slightly in favour of junior schools, so that junior school pupils need to make slightly less progress than those in primary schools to achieve the same CVA score. This is because DfE and OfSTED recognise that pupils who change schools at the beginning of key stage two generally make slightly less progress than those who do not (see OfSTED Schools and Inspection, an information service for inspectors of schools, Issue 1 November 2007).
- 1.49 In addition, 33% of primary schools meet or exceed the national average for expected progress in both English and mathematics, compared to 17% of junior schools. Expected progress measures the percentage of pupils making 2 levels of progress in English and 2 levels of progress in mathematics between KS1 and KS2. The measure doesn't include context in its calculation but measures simply the number of levels progress made.
- 1.50 New government minimum standards known as floor targets mean a school will be below the floor if fewer than 60 per cent of pupils achieve the 'basics' standard of level four in both English and mathematics and fewer pupils than average make the expected levels of progress between key stage one and key stage two. Where schools fall below the floor we will use our School Organisation principles in tandem with our School Improvement strategy to support a rise in standards and performance.
- 1.51 The amalgamation of schools is therefore proving to be a successful aspect of our School Organisation Plan principles and is set to continue. Medway Council will always review the options including the potential for federation or amalgamation following the resignation or retirement of a head teacher at an infant or junior school.

Our achievements in school planning - Secondary Phase

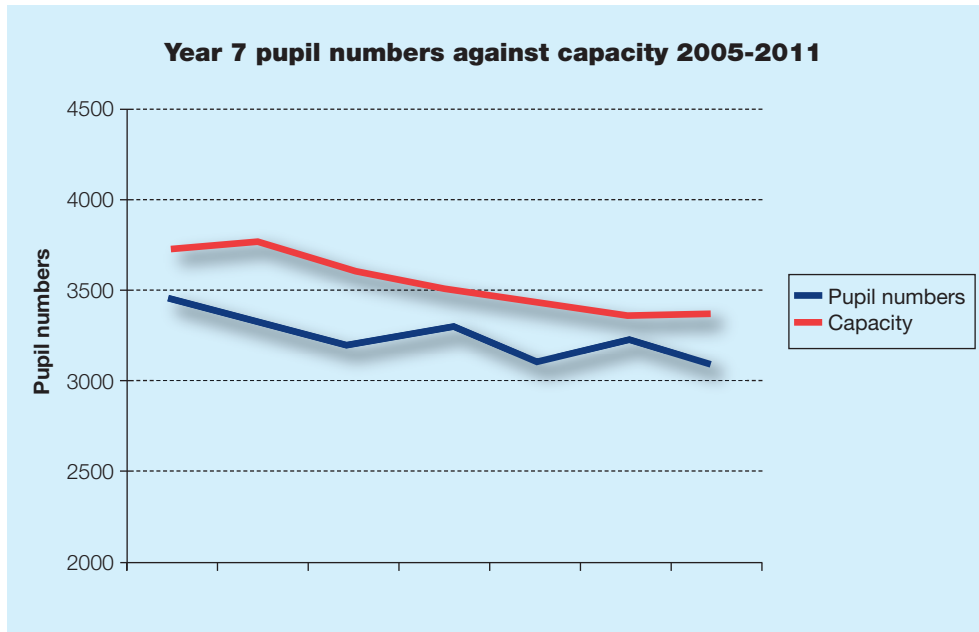
- 1.52 The Government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme was launched in 2003 with the aim of rebuilding or refurbishing all the secondary schools in England by 2020. Local authorities were ranked in waves of planned investment based on a range of criteria. As part of this initial ranking, Medway Council were scheduled to join the programme and receive investment in the year 2015.
- 1.53 In recent years, Medway's secondary schools have seen falling numbers of children overall, and as a result there have been concerns about the ongoing and continued viability of all schools in Medway.
- 1.54 Due to the council's low ranking for BSF investment, Medway pursued another route to secure capital funding through the government's Academy programme. This was originally intended as a programme to provide greater support to schools in disadvantaged areas and in many cases to support improvements for poorly performing schools. In Medway it also allowed us to address issues of viability for some of the predecessor schools and reduce the overall level of surplus capacity.
- 1.55 There are three of these Academies now open in Medway, which were replacements for five predecessor schools as follows:
- Strood Academy – Temple Boys School and Chapter Girls School
 - Bishop of Rochester Academy – Medway Community College and Chatham South School
 - Brompton Academy – New Brompton College
- 1.56 A sponsor, or group of sponsors, established these academies and Medway Council is a co-sponsor for all three. The other sponsors in each case are:
- Strood Academy – University for the Creative Arts (lead sponsor)
 - Bishop of Rochester Academy – Diocese of Rochester (lead sponsor) and Christ Church Canterbury University (co-sponsor)
 - Brompton Academy – University of Kent (lead sponsor)
- 1.57 It has been confirmed that each of these Academies will receive significant capital investment from central government for rebuilt schools. The total investment of over £75m includes a significant contribution from Medway Council's capital programme to provide enhanced SEN facilities and a £2m Inspiration Centre at Strood Academy supporting the development of teaching and learning. The completion of Strood Academy buildings, pictured below, is expected by September 2012 and Bishop of Rochester Academy and Brompton Academy in early to mid 2013.



Pupils, staff, parents and the community will have an exciting building that will help us raise standards and engage the local community

Principal of Strood Academy, Richard Hart

- 1.58 The establishment of these 3 Academies replacing 5 predecessor schools has had a positive impact by reducing the overall level of surplus capacity from Medway secondary schools. Overall capacity has reduced by 3.3% between 2008 and 2011 and the graph below shows how capacity has reduced as the actual number of year 7 pupils has reduced year on year.



- 1.59 As well as our success in brokering strong sponsorship for our new Academies, Medway has successfully brokered support for other secondary schools where standards have been a concern, using school organisation legislation as a tool to bring about changes in governance as appropriate.
- 1.60 We have established a Trust under the National Challenge framework for the Hundred of Hoo School with one of our most successful schools, Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School providing executive leadership as a partner school. As a result, the school has moved from Special Measures in June 2009 to satisfactory with good capacity for sustained improvement in October 2010. This demonstrates how the council's School Organisation Principles are being used in practice to address issues of viability and low standards. The school intends to become an Academy sponsored by Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School from September 2011.
- 1.61 As well as securing capital investment for secondary schools through our Academy programme we have also secured investment to develop the quality of provision at other Medway Secondary schools.
- 1.62 Over £2m has been invested to create a new, modern building for Robert Napier School, which has enabled the relocation of the school's 6th form from accommodation on a different site.
- 1.63 Over £3m has been allocated for investment in new purpose built DT and Art accommodation and the relocation of English accommodation into remodelled space at Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School to improve the delivery of the curriculum in all subjects. The DT/ Art building, represented in the picture below, was conceived with collaboration in mind, to provide opportunities for partnerships with other secondary and primary schools, as well as providing a resource for community use.



Representation of DT/Art block at Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School

- 1.64 Medway has seen year on year improvement in the performance of its secondary school pupils in recent years. There have been improvements in the number of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades including English and maths and 5+ A*-C grades or equivalent across all subjects. There has also been a reduction in the number of schools achieving below 30% (5+ A*-C GCSE inc English and maths) from 7 to 2 in the last 2 years. Attainment at level 5 for Medway pupils is below the national average.
- 1.65 In the Governments recent white paper 'The importance of teaching' it sets out the new minimum performance standards, known as floor targets, for secondary schools, which will be below the 'floor' if fewer than 35 per cent of pupils achieve the 'basics' standard of 5 A*-C grade GCSEs including English and mathematics, and fewer pupils make good progress between key stage two and key stage four than the national average.
- 1.66 Medway will continue to use organisational change and broker partnerships to address issues of standards and viability in Secondary Schools where required as described in Medway's School Improvement Strategy.

Our achievements in school planning - Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

- 1.67 Medway has 2 special schools with primary phase, 3 special schools with secondary phase and a range of additionally resourced mainstream provision.
- 1.68 Following consultation Medway Council published "Special Educational Needs – An Inclusive policy and strategy for Medway 2009 – 2014". Generally, provision for children with SEN in Medway is good and children with SEN make good progress. However, the number of children from Medway educated outside mainstream schools is too high, which includes a number of children educated outside the Medway area or in independent provision.
- 1.69 Medway has agreed to reverse this trend and aims to educate as many children as possible close to where they live and to reduce the number of children and young people being educated outside of mainstream schools. A key part of our approach has been to ensure that sufficient places and suitable support sites are available locally to increase the proportion of children placed in local mainstream schools. In addition we have ensured that provision should be provided in buildings that are fit for purpose and all provision should give good value for money.
- 1.70 As a result the council has invested significant capital sums in developing additional SEN provision within Medway and has established, or has confirmed plans to establish:
- primary aural/oral provision for hearing impaired students – particularly for those with cochlear implants – at Twydall Infant and Junior Schools;
 - an integrated foundation stage at Abbey Court school (profound, multiple and severe learning difficulties);
 - specialist hubs (specialist centres within mainstream schools across Medway to develop and promote best practice) at mainstream schools, specifically 3 at Medway primary schools, and 2 secondary hubs at Bishop of Rochester Academy and Strood Academy as part of the Academy building programme
 - enhanced SEN provision at Brompton Academy which will add additional provision for vulnerable pupils as well as providing capacity for existing provision based in the current building
 - resourced provision for pupils with a diagnosis of autism at Riverside Primary (Primary phase) and the Hundred of Hoo (Secondary phase).
 - the relocation of Bradfields 6th form to Ridge Meadow buildings and development of additional provision for up to 40 pupils with a diagnosis of autism and ASD provision in the same buildings, with additional investment of £1.5m
- 1.71 The SEN strategy and these initiatives have already contributed to savings in excess of £1million on the 'school time' costs of pupils where we have been able to find local solutions instead of parental requests for independent special provision and increased the number of pupils educated in local provision, however there is still more that needs to be done.

Section 2: Baseline analysis of need for school places

Forecasting pupil numbers

- 2.1 Pupil place planning describes the use of data and information to plan future school places. This is a vital part of school organisation as it enables the local authority to meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient good school places.
- 2.2 In addition, effective pupil place planning allows the local authority to identify potential viability issues, through the identification of schools, or areas, which are likely to have too much surplus capacity.
- 2.3 Forecasts of pupil numbers are set out for the next five years for primary school places and ten years for secondary school places and conclusions are drawn about the key place planning issues over the life of this plan and the options for addressing them.
- 2.4 Empty school places are a serious problem because it can lead to the wasting of scarce resources that could otherwise be invested in teaching and learning facilities. This impacts differentially on schools' viability, so that those that are seen as unpopular, decline in numbers and their budgets reduce accordingly. This in turn, may affect their ability to raise standards and effectively manage resources.
- 2.5 Medway Council aims to minimise the number of surplus or empty places by keeping the level of places as close as possible to the current and forecast number of pupils. Some spare capacity may be retained where we expect to see a rise in pupil numbers in the medium term.
- 2.6 To retain an efficient balance between the demand and supply of school places Medway has adopted the Audit Commission's recommendations and aims to fill at least 90% of the overall number of places in Medway and 90% of places within each planning area. Where there are 25% or more surplus places in any school this problem should be addressed.

We will aim to keep surplus places in Medway schools below 10% overall, and below 25% in each school to support the viability of all schools

- 2.7 The problem of pupil numbers on roll that exceed capacity by 110% or more is one many schools would be only too pleased to have. Some schools welcome the additional funding these extra pupils bring and the reputation of being popular. It can however lead to large class sizes, overused specialist spaces and dissatisfied parents. Overcrowding does not tend to arise at Infant or key stage one level because Infant Class Size legislation (Standards and Framework Act 1998) has capped their class sizes at no more than 30 pupils.
- 2.8 The adverse effects of overcrowding will be more acutely felt in schools with undersized classrooms and more challenging pupils. One result of schools filling to or beyond capacity is the pressure this places on the space at the school, which disproportionately impacts on the ability to provide designated quiet zones for children with additional needs. This however can be balanced by greater budget flexibility to meet need.
- 2.9 The Audit Commission considers a small primary school is one with less than 100 pupils and a small secondary has fewer than 600 pupils or fewer than 700 if it has a sixth form. Smaller schools tend to be more expensive to run than larger ones as they generally have higher unit costs. Only one primary school in Medway has less than 100 pupils, which is St John's CEVC Infant School, Chatham, which has a maximum roll of 90 pupils. No secondary schools in Medway are small using these criteria.

Early Years places

- 2.10 Section 6 and 11 of the Childcare Act 2006 placed a duty on local authorities (from April 2008) to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the provision of childcare is sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in their area; to enable them to work or undertake education or training leading to work. Local authorities were also mandated to update the assessments annually and undertake a fully comprehensive assessment every three years to show trends and progress being made.

- 2.11 Medway Early Years and Childcare Service undertook its first Childcare Sufficiency Assessment to fulfil this duty and published its first report in March 2008. The assessment mapped and matched the provision of childcare to the current and emerging demand for childcare across Medway at the time and has been updated annually since then.
- 2.12 Medway Council's Sufficiency Action Plan 2010/11 details how we intend to work toward filling the gaps identified between supply and demand for childcare in the local area.
- 2.13 The action plan describes how the number of childcare places on offer in Medway has increased from 8,551 in February 2008 to 13,338 in September 2010, an increase of 56%. In addition the number of providers in Medway has grown with an increase of 8% since the last Assessment in 2009/10.
- 2.14 The overall picture is currently one of over-supply of places with too many individual settings, which has created an oversupply of places and made it difficult to assure quality.

We will aim to have fewer individual nursery settings, and concentrate on the provision of better quality places to meet local demand.

- 2.15 Due to overall reductions in capital funding, there will be less investment in the development of integrated foundation stages at existing schools, although any new build primary provision, for example on new housing developments, will include an integrated foundation stage.
- 2.16 Subject to Parliamentary approval, the government has committed to extending free early education to all 2 year-olds living in poverty (equivalent to entitlement to free school meals) from 2013. In Medway, we expect around 500 children to be eligible, and are planning to establish sufficient high quality, graduate-led provision for these youngest children at Sure Start Children's Centres and within local pre-school settings over the period from 2011-2013. It is not planned to provide places for 2 year-olds within primary schools.

Primary phase places

- 2.17 The number of children of primary school age overall has been falling locally and nationally in recent years.

The overall number of pupils attending Medway primary schools has reduced by almost 10% between January 2003 and January 2011, from 23,061 to 20,792.

- 2.18 The overall proportion of surplus places in Medway primary schools as at January 2011 is 12.6%, above the target of 10% for the local authority area. There is variation in the proportion of surplus places by planning area with the highest surplus in the Rochester and Hoo areas as shown in the table below.

Planning area	% surplus places at January 2011
Hoo (rural area)	16.1%
Strood	10.8%
Gillingham West	13.5%
Gillingham East	13.9%
Rainham	10.4%
Walderslade	9.1%
Chatham	11.8%
Rochester	21.1%
Cuxton (rural area)	11.5%
Medway Total	12.6%

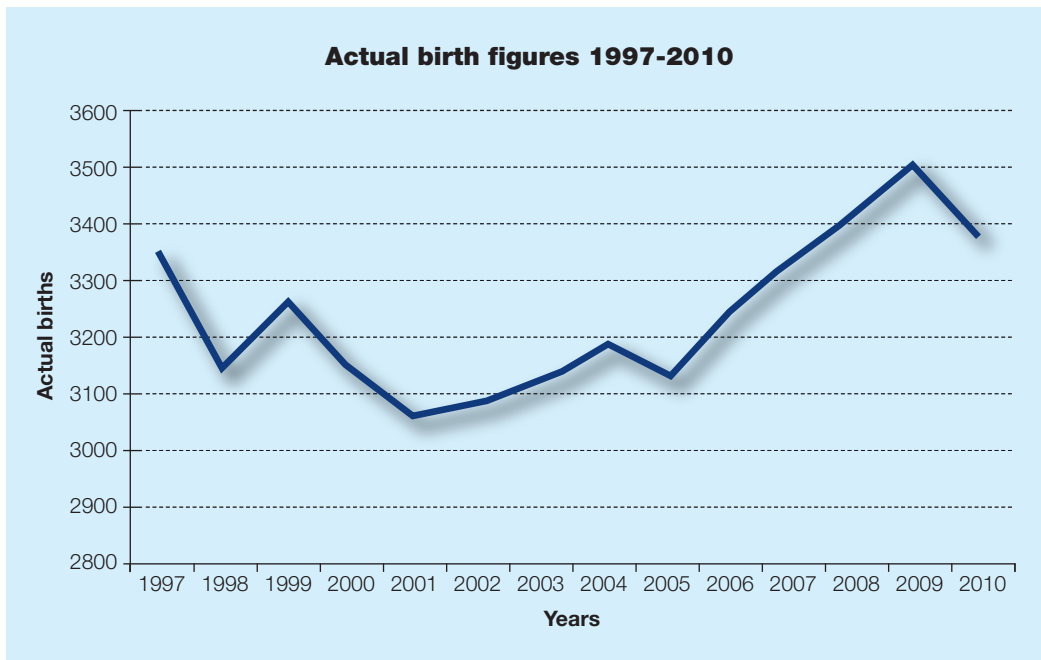
- 2.19 In addition, there can be significant differences between individual schools and groups of schools within individual planning areas which can mean that an area showing surplus capacity may hide a need for additional places in particular schools or parts of the area, this is more likely to occur where a planning area is spread over a larger geographical area and reducing facilities would result in prohibitive travel to school distances for children.
- 2.20 20.5% of Medway Primary Schools have more than 25% surplus places and a further 25% of primary schools had between 11 and 24% surplus places. The ten schools with the highest surplus capacity are shown below:

School	% surplus places at January 2011
St James CoE PS (rural)	43.8%
Allhallows PS (rural)	43.3%
Warren Wood PS	40.8%
Riverside PS	39.5%
Spinnens Acre Junior	34.4%
Luton Junior	34.0%
Glencoe Junior	32.9%
Skinner Street PS	32.9%
Deanwood PS	32.9%
Delce Junior	29.4%

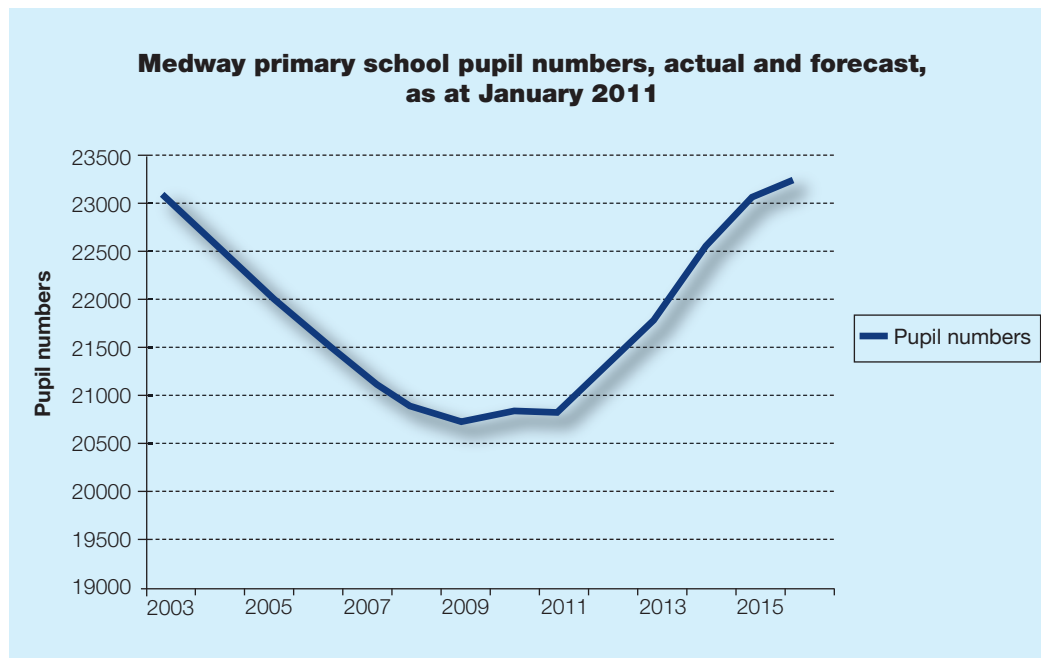
- 2.21 Medway has a number of rural farmland and village communities and we are committed to providing easily accessible schools to these areas (in line with DfE guidance), particularly on the Hoo Peninsula. We therefore expect to sustain a higher number of surplus places in these schools. However, Medway will endeavour to keep the number of schools in these areas with surplus places to a minimum through, for example, designating surplus space for extended school facilities.
- 2.22 During the life of this plan we expect primary school numbers to rise, initially in key stage 1 as a result of recent increases in the number of births across Medway.

**The birth rate in Medway increased by over 10% between 2005 and 2009
from 3122 births to 3375 births**

2.23 The following graph shows the actual birth figures in Medway between 1997 and 2010. This shows a significant increase in the number of births to a level in 2009 higher than at any other point in the last 13 years.

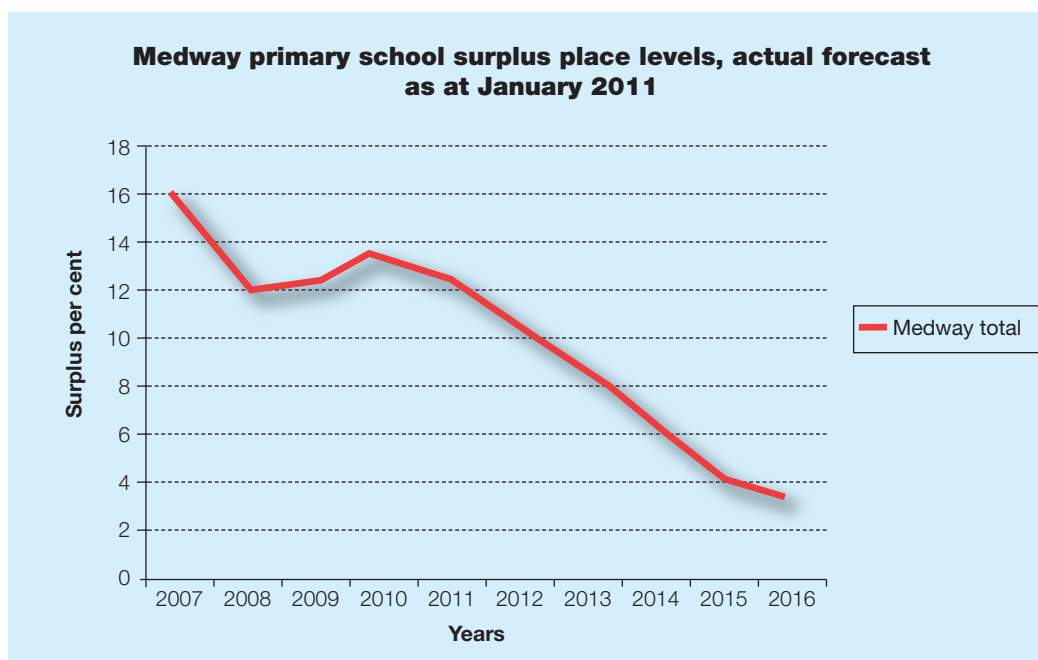


2.24 The impact of this increase on overall primary school numbers can be seen in the following graph, which shows the actual and forecast number of primary age pupils between 2003 and 2016. This shows the reduction in numbers between 2003 and 2011 and the expected increase up to 2016.



We expect the overall number of pupils attending Medway primary schools to increase by over 10% between January 2011 and January 2016, from 20,792 to 23,241

- 2.25 As a result of an increase in the birth rate and inward migration, supported by proposed housing developments, we forecast that by 2016, surplus places across all Medway primary schools will fall below 10% and the number of primary schools with surplus places above 25% will reduce overall.



- 2.26 The impact of the increase in the birth rate will initially be seen as an increase in year R pupils, corresponding to the increase in the birth rate.
- 2.27 Forecasts for year R places only show the likely impact of the increase in the birth rate for Medway, with a likely deficiency of spaces in Gillingham West, Chatham and Rochester within the next 3 years as shown in the table below:

Planning area	Forecast % surplus places in year R at Jan 2012	Forecast % surplus places in year R at Jan 2013	Forecast % surplus places in year R at Jan 2014
Hoo (rural area)	10.5%	5.4%	-0.7%
Strood	10.1%	13.5%	0.8%
Gillingham West	-6.1%	-5.6%	-11.8%
Gillingham East	8.4%	8.0%	1.4%
Rainham	7.3%	6.8%	0.2%
Walderslade	8.8%	12.9%	15.1%
Chatham	-2.8%	-15.3%	-17.7%
Rochester	9.4%	-5.4%	-9.8%
Cuxton (rural area)	22.2%	35.5%	22.2%
Medway Total	6.2%	4.3%	2.0%

- 2.28 Year R forecasts are based upon actual birth numbers from within each planning area and whilst they also take into account migration, it is often difficult to accurately predict year R numbers within each planning area, particularly in neighbouring urban areas where migration is more fluid, and it is possible to travel to schools in neighbouring areas.
- 2.29 The areas of Gillingham East and Walderslade, which neighbour Gillingham West and Chatham respectively have shown pupil numbers higher than forecast in recent years, which may be a result of parents deciding to transport their child to a preferred school, as well as more permanent aspirational moves to those areas. So it is wise to consider the impact on neighbouring planning areas when looking at surplus and deficit pupil places.

- 2.30 Beyond 2013 however forecasts indicate that recent higher birth numbers across Medway will mean that those areas previously utilised to cater for excess demand from neighbouring areas, will themselves see pupil numbers increasing, and it is from 2014 that it will be likely that demand could outweigh supply in these areas, and solutions will be required to address this.
- 2.31 One of Medway's School Organisation Principles is to allow popular and successful schools to expand. The following table shows the ten most oversubscribed primary schools in Medway based on the latest admissions offer data:

School	PAN	% oversubscribed by first preferences
Pilgrim PS	30	60.0
Wainscott PS	30	53.3
Saxon Way PS	30	43.3
All Saints CoE PS	45	26.6
High Halstow PS	30	23.3
St Thomas More RCP	60	21.6
Maudene PS	60	20.0
Brompton Westbrook PS	45	17.8
Balfour Infant	90	17.8
St Mary's RCP	60	16.7

- 2.32 By 2016 demand for denominational places is expected to rise in line with the trend for all primary schools, which may result in the demand for denominational places exceeding supply.
- 2.33 Whilst the council will continue to support the development of federations and amalgamations as a successful strategy in support of school improvement this is unlikely to come with any capital investment following ending of the Primary Capital Programme.

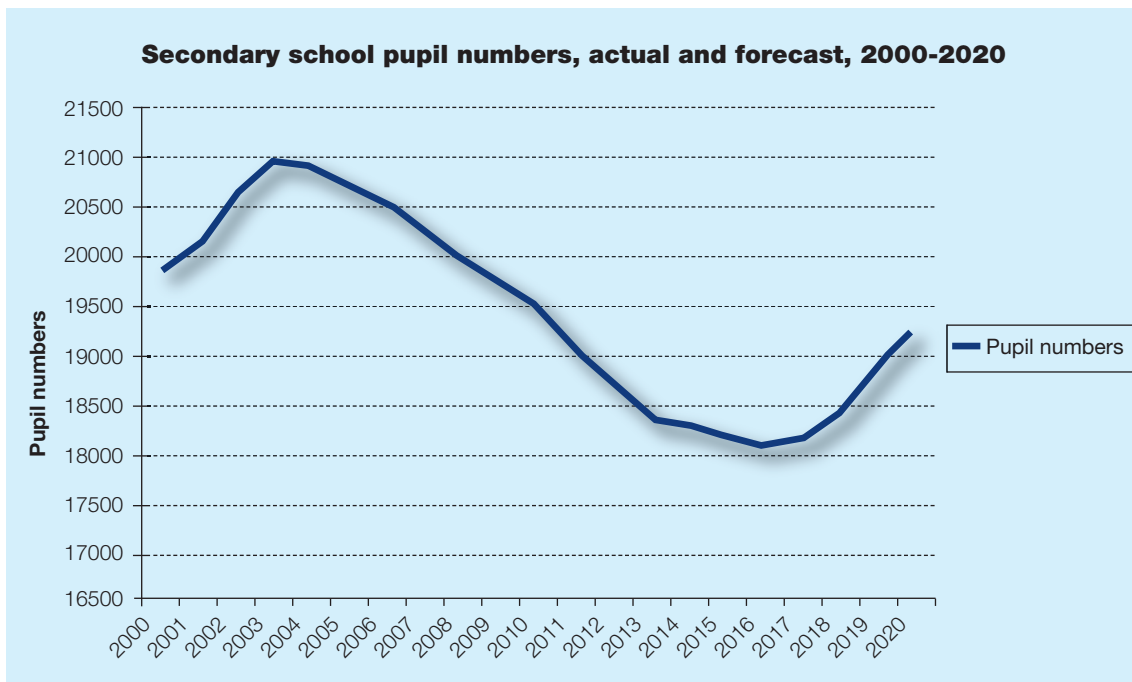
There is an overall need for additional primary age provision in some parts of Medway which will be met by expanding good schools or establishing new Academy or Free Schools.

Secondary phase places

Pupil numbers in the Secondary phase are forecast to fall by over 10% from their highest point in 2003 to 2015. They will then increase by 6% to 2020.

- 2.34 Since 2003 there has been a trend of falling secondary rolls with an overall decrease of 2.2% to 2010. This trend is forecast to continue over the life of this plan by a further 8%. From 2015 onwards, as the larger primary cohorts move into the secondary phase, rolls will start to steadily increase through to 2020 by almost 6%. This combined with inward migration due to the extent of housing developments across Medway, and the raising of the participation age initiative are likely to mean that surplus capacity will fall below 10% by 2020 and beyond.

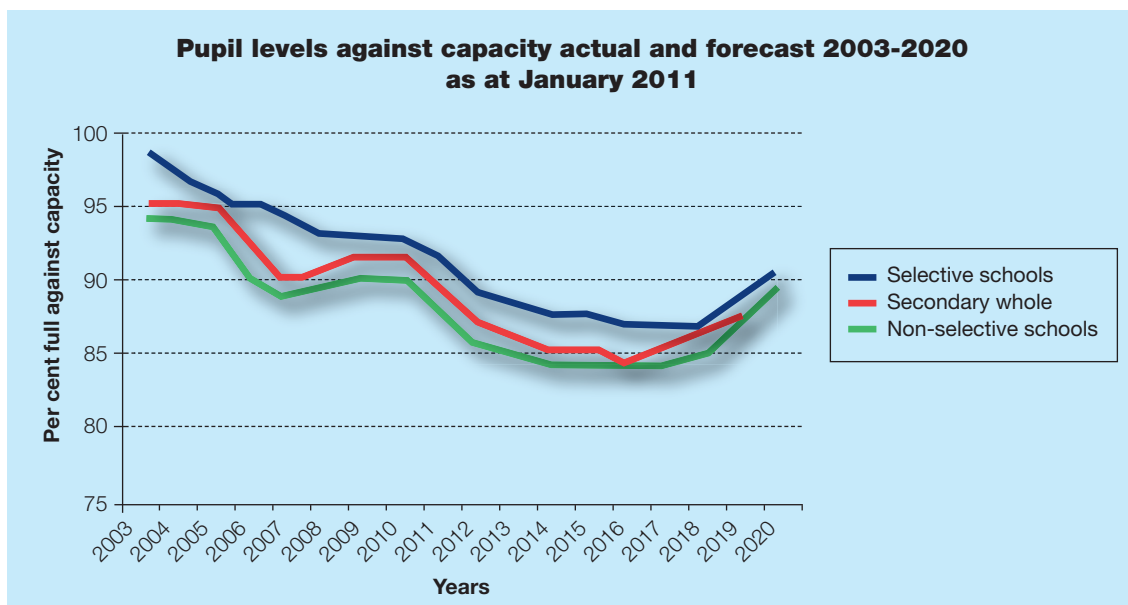
2.35 These changes in roll numbers are shown in the graph below:



- 2.36 The secondary sector is divided into four distinct types of provision for school place planning purposes: Selective, non-selective, denominational Catholic, and Academies. Within the selective provision there will be preferences for grammar or bilateral places and among both grammar and non-selective schools, there will be preferences for single sex or mixed places.
- 2.37 Within the selective sector, as at October 2010, there were 6198 children attending the six Grammar Schools, which equates to 31% of the total number of secondary pupils. Five of the schools are single sex, 3 girls and 2 boys, and there is one mixed school. In line with the overall secondary picture forecasts indicate a reduction in numbers of pupils attending Grammar Schools over the next 5 years, with a steady increase following, through to 2020. This pattern mirrors the pattern for overall places shown in the graph above.
- 2.38 As at October 2010 there were 13,279 pupils attending non-selective schools, which are a mixture of foundation, voluntary aided, and community schools as well as new and converting academies. They are filled to 90% of capacity, this is forecast to fall to 83% by 2016, but will return to 89% against capacity in 2020. This pattern mirrors the pattern for overall places shown in the graph above.

Despite the significant reduction in pupil numbers over recent years we have been able to minimize the overall proportion of surplus places as a result of the Academy programme.

- 2.39 The following graph shows pupil numbers as a proportion of the overall capacity available in Medway secondary schools since 2003 and forecast to 2020.



- 2.40 This shows that although surplus capacity is forecast to remain over 10% for the next few years, pupil numbers will begin to rise again from around 2015 removing some of this surplus capacity.
- 2.41 Until recently St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive has been the only denominational secondary school in Medway, however in September 2010 the Bishop of Rochester Academy, sponsored by the Church of England diocese was opened in Chatham. This has increased choice for Medway parents.
- 2.42 We therefore do not intend to undertake any further changes in the secondary sector during the life of this plan to add or remove places, however we will continue to broker and support organisation solutions to address viability or standards issues if required, by encouraging partnership working with successful schools supporting those which are under-performing or failing to meet the floor targets.
- 2.43 During the life of this plan the statutory raising of the participation age comes into effect. From 2013, pupils will be required to continue in education or training until the age of 17, and from 2015 until the age of 18. Pupils will be able to choose to continue to attend school, transfer to a further education college or train while working or through an apprenticeship. Local authorities are responsible for securing sufficient suitable education and training opportunities for all 16- to 18-year-olds.
- 2.44 Nationally the proportion of 16-18 learners participating in education or work based learning increased from 74% in 2002 to 89% in 2009. In Medway, during the same period the proportion of 16-18 learners in education or work based learning increased from 68% to 89%. Of these 44% of Medway pupils are educated in maintained schools or Academies, compared to the national average of 31%, and so whilst we have the same proportion of pupils in education or work based learning, a much higher proportion of Medway pupils receive their education in a school setting.
- 2.45 We expect that the increase in pupil numbers resulting from the raising of the participation age will not require significant additional capacity to be created in Medway Secondary Schools as we would expect other education and work based learning providers to meet some of the additional need. The Government is developing new work-based learning opportunities to address some of the expected demand and we are also working in partnership with work-based learning providers and colleges to influence the provision of sufficient range and quantity of provision to meet the expected need.
- 2.46 In addition, because of the current levels of surplus capacity in Medway Secondary Schools, we believe there will be sufficient physical space to meet any short-term need, however as schools develop their own provision, particularly in some non-selective schools which currently have low staying on rates to the sixth form, there may be a need to support the development of additional capacity for some individual schools. This needs to be kept under review and any need for additional physical capacity would need to be based on a robust business case.

We will maintain the current level of secondary places to meet expected future demand whilst seeking to broker school organisation solutions to viability issues if required.

Places for pupils with special educational needs

- 2.47 Planning pupil places for pupils with special educational needs is much more difficult than predicting mainstream numbers, due to the statistically small number of pupils overall, the range of factors influencing pupil numbers, the multiple needs of many pupils and the related challenge of categorising pupils which often means that pupils will be categorised according to the type of provision they access and not their need.
- 2.48 There is a need for the local authority to improve its ability to forecast pupil numbers for children with special educational needs, and so one of the key actions in this plan is to improve the systems for forecasting places for children with SEN and we intend to address this through the development of an SEN masterplan.
- 2.49 Without accurate forecast figures we are able to use the current pupil numbers and recent trends to draw conclusions about the main priorities for future development that will not be addressed by projects already underway. The priorities identified on this basis can be summarised as:
- a lack of provision for a small number of pupils with significant physical difficulties at secondary age (but without learning difficulties), e.g. Cerebral Palsy and Muscular Dystrophy. There are currently 2 school age pupils whose needs are being met in non-maintained schools, including one in a residential setting at an annual cost of over £100,000 per annum;
 - we are seeing increasing numbers of children, currently around 5 pupils per year group, with physical and severe learning difficulties being pushed up the system to Bradfields or Danecourt, or out of county at significant cost;
 - there is a lack of flexible provision for children moving with their families into Medway from outside the area with challenging behaviour to assess and prepare for mainstream or entry to employment. This can result in children missing education, or being placed in inappropriate mainstream provision;
 - insufficient EBD provision to cater for almost 50 pupils currently sent out of area or to independent provision, including 6 attending residential settings at an average cost of over £80,000 per annum;
 - no secondary HI provision, meaning all pupils have to attend schools out of county. Some attend Kent schools but 11 currently attend independent residential secondary schools at an average cost of over £40,000.
- 2.50 The local authority has new responsibilities to arrange provision for FE pupils, which was previously managed by LSC. This includes a number with significant needs, many of who may need education up to 25 years of age and who require very high cost placement. There are currently 15 pupils who fall into this group in Medway although it is likely, given the increase in the complexity of need among younger children that this number will increase.

We will develop an SEN masterplan setting out clear proposals for the development of additional provision, based on the forecast need.

Section 3: Organisation and Investment priorities

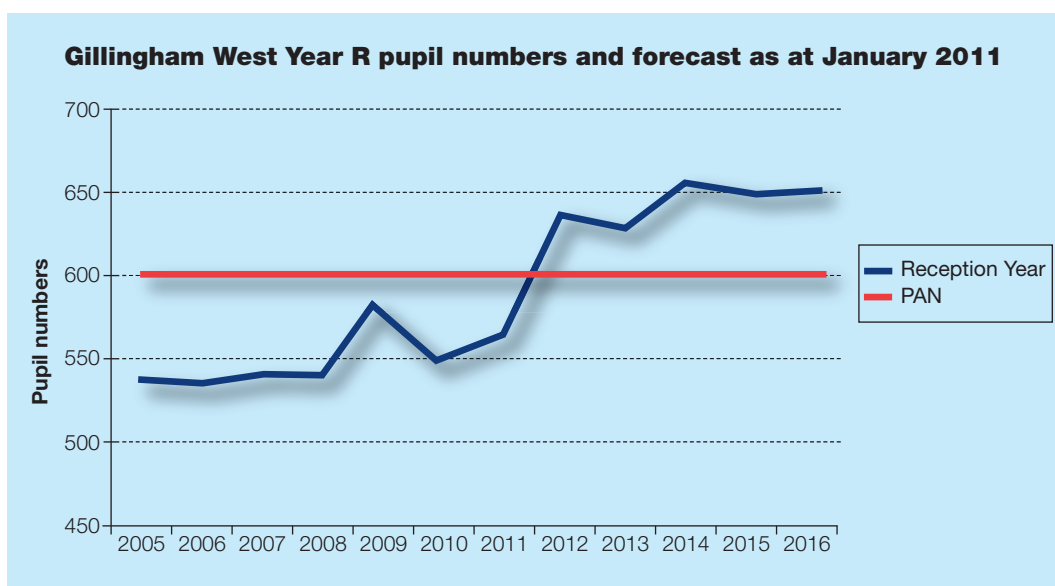
- 4.1 The following section sets out the school organisation and investment priorities over the life of this plan based on detailed analysis of actual and forecast pupil numbers.

New school provision in Medway will be established either through the expansion of existing “good” schools, or through the establishment of new Academies or Free schools.

Priorities in the Primary Phase and Early Years

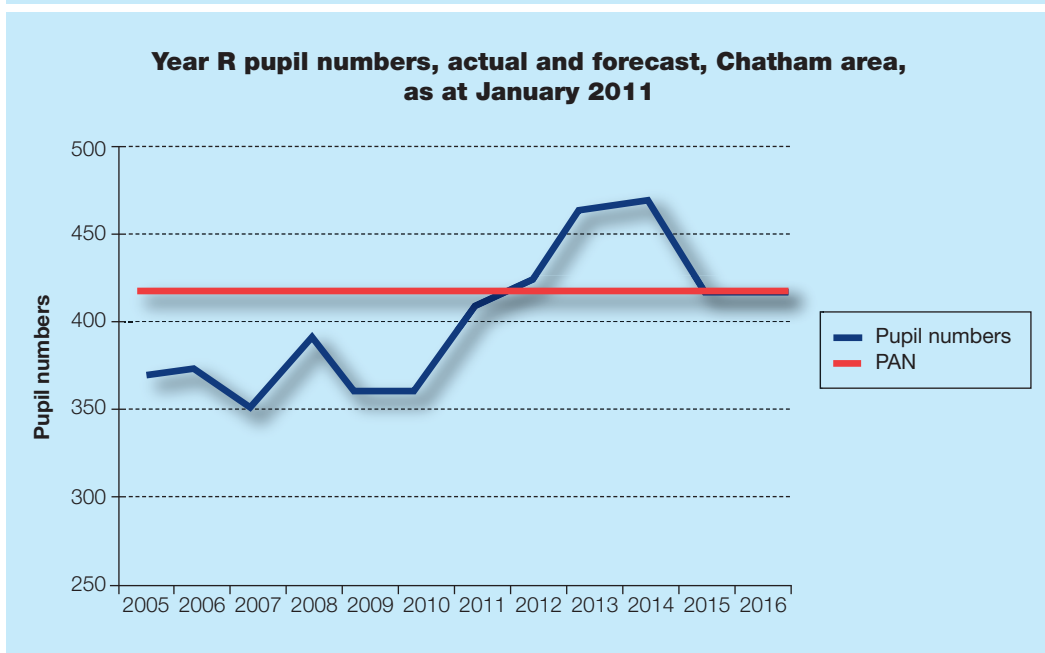
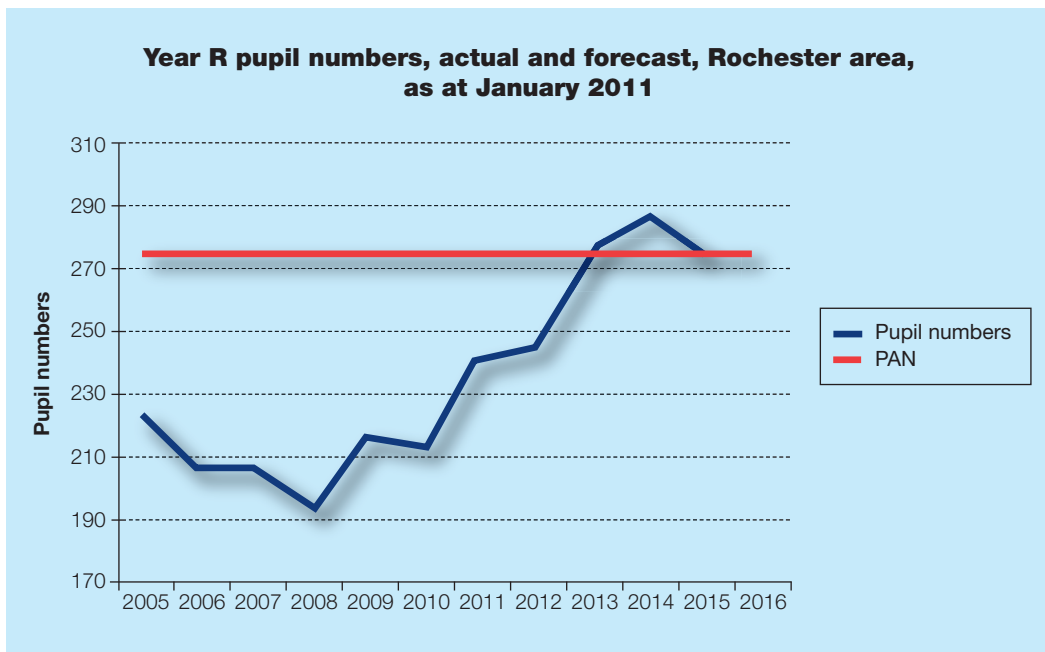
- 4.2 Analysis of the actual and forecast pupil numbers in the primary phase show an expected increase in numbers over the life of this plan, with some planning areas forecasting insufficient places to meet the demand for year R places based on current capacity.
- 4.3 Forecasting year R pupil numbers is, however, difficult to accurately predict. The forecasts are based on birth numbers and migration figures relating to each planning area, but until pupils actually take up places in schools, it is not possible to say with any certainty whether the expected take up will be realised and whether pupil numbers will increase in the predicted planning areas.
- 4.4 It is also not possible to predict with any certainty whether year R numbers will continue to rise beyond 2015, or will level off, or even reduce, as the children who will start school beyond 2015 have not yet been born.
- 4.5 The year R forecasts should therefore be seen as an indication of the likely future trend, but new pupil places and investment in new provision should be planned cautiously. Any expected growth in pupil numbers would be addressed in the first instance by providing additional places at popular and successful schools closest to the growth areas and where possible using capacity which already exists, for example where a school has previously reduced its admission number in response to falling pupil numbers.
- 4.6 In some cases, as pupil numbers have fallen schools have used surplus classroom spaces for alternative purposes, for example to create library space, IT suites, provision for pupils with special educational needs, or extended school facilities. As pupil numbers rise again in a school, the expectation will be that where possible, these spaces will be returned to core classroom space before any investment is committed to extend accommodation.
- 4.7 We will also consider, the use of surplus classroom space previously utilised for older year groups to provide short-term capacity for additional primary pupils, in advance of establishing permanent additional capacity at significant cost.
- 4.8 Where additional physical capacity is needed then this will normally be provided through the use of modular or temporary classrooms in the first instance. This will allow us to understand whether any increase in pupil numbers represents a short-term bulge, or a long-term rise.
- 4.9 If the rise represents a long-term trend then the council will plan to replace any temporary provision within 5 years in line with the council’s planning policy.
- 4.10 Where an increase in demand cannot be met by expanding the size of existing schools, for example where schools are in dense urban areas on restricted sites such as Chatham, it may be necessary to create completely new school provision.
- 4.11 In addition where new housing developments are planned, new schools may be necessary to meet the demand from that development. In these cases, the agreement with the housing developer may include a requirement to build new school provision.
- 4.12 We will continue to work with the Regeneration, Community and Culture directorate in securing appropriate developer contributions to fund additional pupil places, ensuring that contributions are being made at latest levels and are being maximised in the context of less central funding.
- 4.13 In the Coalition Governments recent white paper “The importance of teaching” it states that local authorities will be able to use their wider position in local regeneration, employment and community development, and their knowledge of existing schools, to seek sponsors and partners who will fit with the character of the local community – and help raise aspirations.

- 4.14 The white paper goes on to explain that Academy sponsors may include existing Academy Schools, which are rated by Ofsted as outstanding or good with outstanding features, and Medway Council will encourage our schools that meet these criteria to put forward proposals to sponsor new provision.
- 4.15 Medway Council will champion the following key principles for any existing or new providers wishing to establish new educational provision for Medway's young people. For sponsors and partners:
- to support the vision of Medway Children's Trust as set out in our "children and young people's plan";
 - to support the School Improvement Strategy and Medway schools vision for partnership working which includes a shared commitment to improving opportunities for all children and young people;
 - to respect the local authority's responsibility to co-ordinate the admission of children to all schools in Medway and to sign up for Medway's fair access protocols;
 - to publish clear and fair criteria for admission which meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code;
 - to respect the local authority's strategic role as champion for parents and families, for vulnerable pupils and of educational excellence;
 - to plan schools that fit with the character of the local community, and help raise aspirations.
- 4.16 The increase in primary age pupils forecast during the life of this plan shows three areas where we are forecasting a demand for school places in the rising year R higher than the available supply. The three areas most affected will be Gillingham West, Chatham and Rochester, although there will also be some need within some planning areas which overall have sufficient spaces.
- 4.17 We will be taking strategic School Organisation action to address these needs in line with new government policy that allows good schools to expand and new schools to be created as either an Academy or Free school.
- 4.18 Gillingham West: The following graph details the expected year R pupil numbers against the current total planned admission number (PAN) for the Gillingham West area:



- 4.19 This shows a forecast shortfall of 32 year R places from January 2012, however we expect that due to parental choice and willingness to travel to secure a preferred school place, migration to more affluent areas, and an expected over supply of places in neighbouring areas, principally Gillingham East, that additional places will not be required until September 2013.
- 4.20 Napier Primary, which is located in Gillingham West, has the potential to increase its intake from the current level of 60 (2 forms of entry) to 90 (3 forms of entry). The admission number for the school reduced from 90 to 60 in 2009 following a reduction in pupil numbers in the area. In addition a building project currently underway through the council's Primary Capital Programme will increase internal space and external play space at the school. Therefore the school has the required physical capacity to admit additional pupils.

- 4.21 We therefore intend to undertake consultation on an increase to the school’s admission number as part of the admissions consultation planned for 2011, to take effect from September 2013. At the same time officers will work with the school to ensure that the impact of the increase is manageable within the current school capacity.
- 4.22 In addition, in order to ensure sufficient provision in the area, we will need to complete building work at Woodlands Primary School to provide capacity for them to retain their planned admission number at the current level of 60 (2 forms of entry). A loss of capacity at Woodlands would result in a need to provide equivalent additional provision elsewhere in Medway across all year groups, whilst the works at Woodlands will only need to provide additional capacity for one year group. A detailed feasibility study will be undertaken to plan these works for completion by September 2012.
- 4.23 Alongside this we will continue to monitor actual pupil numbers and if required, consult with other schools in the area about the possibility of increasing pupil numbers, if necessary by providing temporary classroom accommodation in the first instance. In line with the aims of our school organisation principles we would first consider schools that are popular and successful. In the Gillingham West area Saxon Way was one of the most oversubscribed schools in Medway for year R places this year and has a large enough site to accommodate additional buildings and pupils.
- 4.24 Chatham and Rochester: The following graphs show the expected year R pupil numbers against the current total planned admission number (PAN) for the Chatham and Rochester areas:



- 4.25 Both of these areas show a forecast shortfall of places from January 2013 of 15 for Rochester and 64 for Chatham. Chatham and Rochester are neighbouring planning areas and both areas can therefore be considered together when considering possible solutions.
- 4.26 We expect that some of the excess demand will be met by an oversupply of places in neighbouring areas, particularly in Chatham where the ward of Luton and Wayfield overlap the Chatham and Walderslade planning areas.
- 4.27 Despite this, additional capacity is likely to be needed in the Chatham and Rochester areas during the life of this plan.
- 4.28 An analysis of schools in the area show limited opportunities for expansion on current sites, particularly in the Chatham area where most of the current primary school provision is based on constricted sites.
- 4.29 We plan to expand provision therefore by creating at least one new primary school in the Chatham and Rochester areas, which will need to be either an Academy or Free school. Where funding is required we will utilise developer contributions secured from local development sites as appropriate, as well as available funds from the capital allocation.
- 4.30 We will invite expressions of interest from potential sponsors to meet this need. These sponsors could include existing outstanding schools and good schools with outstanding features, or new providers.
- 4.31 Strood and Hoo: Overall in the Strood area we expect there to be sufficient primary school places, however our forecasts shown some pressure in the east around Wainscott Primary School. Wainscott has been one of the most popular choices for parents in recent years, and was the second most oversubscribed school in Medway for reception places for September 2011. The popularity of the school is enhanced by the ongoing adjacent housing development at Liberty Park. We therefore intend to expand the provision from a one-form entry to two by way of a phased increase year by year starting with reception from 2013. Building works will be part funded using developer contributions from the Liberty Park development.
- 4.32 The western part of Strood is expected to continue to have sufficient primary school places, although the surplus is expected to reduce as pupil numbers increase in the main from local developments such as Medway Gate and Temple Marsh.
- 4.33 The proposed large scale development at Lodge Hill (Chattenden) is intended to be self-sufficient in providing school places for its residents, and two new primary schools are planned to meet this need, both will be 3 form entry with an integrated foundation stage, and an expansion to 2 form entry at the present Chattenden Primary School. The phasing of these schools is all-important to ensure the schools are available when required so as not to put undue pressure on other local schools, and we are working with the developers to plan the phased delivery of the additional provision.
- 4.34 As the schools on the Lodge Hill development will be new school provision, it will need to be either an Academy or Free school and we will invite expressions of interest from potential sponsors to meet this need.
- 4.35 In general the peninsula is forecast to have sufficient places overall to cater for the expected demand, however in Hoo St Werburgh village we expect to see some pressure on places due to inward migration. Whilst there is no immediate need to expand we will continue to monitor this situation carefully.
- 4.36 Rainham: In Rainham there are some schools with significant surpluses, although our forecasts show a likely increase in pupil numbers. In order to support the viability of schools in this area in the short term we have reduced the admission number for Fairview Primary School, from 90 to 60 for 2012. This is intended to be a temporary arrangement and the PAN will revert to 90 as pupil numbers increase in the area.
- 4.37 Other planning areas: We will continue to monitor all other areas and seek to expand provision as required in line with the principles outlined in this section. We will analyse the reception intake data as early as possible to ensure that any sudden or unexpected bulge in pupil numbers can be addressed, and where appropriate we will propose in-year variations to a schools planned admission number to accommodate additional pupils.
- 4.38 Any additional new school provision which is required over the life of this plan will need to be either an Academy or Free school.

- 4.39 **Denominational places:** As pupil numbers increase across Medway in general there will be a possible shortfall in the proportion of faith school places. Where practical and appropriate we will look to expand popular and successful denominational schools to maintain a suitable balance of places, and in line with government policy the Church of England and Catholic diocese will be invited to submit proposals for new Academy or Free school provision.

Priorities in the Secondary Phase

- 4.40 Due to recent organisational changes in the secondary phase, overall capacity has been reduced to better meet demand. Whilst pupil numbers overall are expected to continue to fall until 2015, we will then start to see an increase due to the impact of the rising birth rate.
- 4.41 As part of the Lodge Hill development mentioned earlier, a new secondary Academy or Free school will be built as part of the development to address the need for additional places created by this development.
- 4.42 Based on actual conversions and expected conversions, we anticipate that the majority of Medway Secondary Schools will be Academies by September 2011, although a small number may continue to be maintained by the local authority. This has a significant impact on the ability of the local authority to plan and control the supply of pupil numbers in the secondary phase. The ability of new Academies to expand or contract, without input from the local authority, may create additional capacity where it is not needed, or reduce capacity where it is required. We will therefore continue to monitor pupil places carefully in the secondary phase, and seek to broker solutions to school organisation issues if and when they arise.
- 4.43 In 2011 the government announced its intention to establish up to 24 University Technical Colleges across the UK. These offer 14-19 year olds the opportunity to take a highly regarded, full time, technically oriented course of study. They are sponsored by a university, and offer clear progression routes into higher education or further learning in work. Local employers are involved from the start in shaping the curriculum. The council intends to develop a business case for the development of a University Technical College in Medway that will include the identification of an appropriate site and buildings for development.
- 4.44 A University Technical College will provide education for between 500-800 pupils, and therefore careful consideration will need to be given to current level of surplus places in Medway Secondary schools and the potential impact of the creation of a University Technical College on the viability of other Medway schools.
- 4.45 The colleges would be established as a sponsored Academy and capital funding is available nationally to remodel and refurbish existing buildings to create appropriate accommodation.

Priorities for pupils with special educational needs

- 4.46 There will be a continuing need for additional Medway based SEN provision to be developed to reduce costly out of area and independent placements. In particular we will need to:
- consider the relocation of Rivermead School to appropriate accommodation which allows the school to expand its provision to provide for pupils with physical difficulties and some additional supported FE provision to enable pupils currently attending independent special schools to be brought back into the local system;
 - to provide additional EBD provision to cater for some of the pupils currently sent out of area, this could be based in the buildings currently occupied by Rivermead;
- 4.47 We plan to undertake a detailed SEN masterplan by September 2011 which will:
- produce robust pupil forecast data to show the likely number of pupils with special educational needs by type of need for the next 5 years and enable the local authority to maintain and update those forecasts so that we retain an up to date picture;
 - assess the current SEN school building estate against the forecast need;
 - show how the accommodation could be best developed and SEN provision organised to make the best use of the accommodation available;
 - identify further opportunities for provision to be developed in mainstream schools;

- to explore the opportunities for all of Abbey Court provision to be based on a single site and to increase the amount of overall accommodation available to the school;
- consider the opportunities to develop additional SEN provision in the buildings previously occupied by Chatham South School and currently occupied by Bishop of Rochester Academy until they move into new buildings in September 2013.

Section 4: Delivery plan

Capital Funding

5.1 The council's education capital budget for 2011/12 is just under £12m and includes over £9m of grant funding and over £2.5m of confirmed developer contributions. This funding has been allocated to the following priorities:

Condition Programme	4,990,660.00
Basic Need Programme	3,626,404.00
SEN Programme	2,676,872.00
Academy technical advisors and programme management	347,000.00
Accessibility	50,000.00
Total	11,690,936.00

- 5.2 In addition £1.5m from the sale of part of the old Temple School site has been approved for the development of additional provision for up to 40 pupils with a diagnosis of autism and ASD provision in the Ridge Meadow Buildings.
- 5.3 Rolled forward capital funding from the 2010/11 programme is being used to deliver the projects which have already been committed to, for example the approved Primary Capital Programme and the project at Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School
- 5.4 The latest school capital settlements significantly reduced the level of devolved capital funding that goes directly to schools to address school condition and suitability priorities, by around 80%. This is because of previous criticism by The Audit Commission of the large amount of funding to schools that was not targeted to building need.
- 5.5 In order to ensure that buildings are maintained to a condition which allows them to remain operational, we have allocated a much greater proportion of our overall funding to condition works, and the works this year will cover a number of other areas in addition to roof and boiler works, for example, electrical works, window improvements, fire safety issues, security e.t.c.
- 5.6 The allocation of capital funding to condition works of almost £5m is therefore significantly higher than in recent years. The condition programme for 2010/11 for example was £1.5m and included a roof and boiler improvement programme only
- 5.7 The complete programme of condition surveys has been commissioned and the data from these surveys will be used to prioritise the works undertaken within the condition programme.
- 5.8 This means that just over £3.6m is available as shown in the basic need programme to start to address the priorities for additional primary school places highlighted in the section above.
- 5.9 Just over £2.6m has been approved to start to address the priorities for additional SEN provision highlighted in the section above.
- 5.10 In the written ministerial statement by the Secretary of State for Education accompanying the education financial settlement for 2011/12 it was confirmed that the headline annual amounts of funding for basic need and for maintenance will for 2012/13 until 2014/15 be in line with the amounts announced for 2011/12.
- 5.11 We can therefore reasonably expect a grant settlement of approximately £9m in each of the financial years from 2012/13 to 2014/15
- 5.12 Depending on the governments response to the James review it is possible that the mechanisms for allocation and funding could change, although current indications are that this will not be until at least 2013/14.
- 5.13 In addition, approximately £4m of developer contributions have already been included in section 106 agreements for developments due to be undertaken in Medway which have not yet been received or

included in the 2011/12 capital programme. There is a risk that some section 106 contributions will not be realised, for example if the timeframe for developments changes, a developer goes bust, or if a development doesn't go ahead, however this gives a reasonable indication of potential income.

- 5.14 On the basis therefore of a similar level of funding being received and a similar breakdown agreed by the council, we can plan on the basis of approximately £14m to address basic need priority for additional pupil places and approximately £10m to address SEN priorities over the next 4 financial years. This allows specific projects to be prioritised and developed, although specific projects will only be approved once funding in future years is confirmed.

Summary of need

- 5.15 During the life of this plan Medway Council will use school organisation solutions to address the following need:
- Additional primary age provision will be established in Gillingham West, initially through the expansion of Napier Primary school, and the possible expansion of other existing provision;
 - Additional primary age provision will be established in Chatham and Rochester through the creation of new Academy or Free school provision in line with government policy and where possible using existing sites;
 - Additional primary age provision will be established in Wainscott by expanding Wainscott Primary school utilising developer contributions from the adjacent housing development;
 - Additional SEN provision will be established based on the recommendations of a detailed masterplan, incorporating the development and analysis of pupil forecasts with available sites and properties.
- 5.16 Detailed timings for these specific interventions and other proposed actions are shown in the following action plan.

Item No.	Subject	Action	Due date	Commentary
1	Approval of School Organisation Plan	Cabinet approval to consult on plan	July 2011	The School Organisation Plan will be presented to Cabinet in July 2011 for approval to consult.
		School Organisation Plan Consultation	July to Sept 2011	Following Cabinet approval we will undertake non-statutory consultation on the School Organisation plan recommendations with all key stakeholders, and present the outcome of consultation to Overview and Scrutiny before Cabinet. We will undertake statutory consultation on specific proposals arising from the recommendations as required for each project.
		Cabinet to approve plan following consultation	Autumn 2011	Cabinet approval of plan
2	Address issue of likely shortfall of places in Gillingham West	Consult on increased PAN for Napier Primary	Nov 2011	Consultation will be undertaken as part of normal admissions arrangements consultation starting in November 2011, to be approved by Cabinet in spring 2012 to take effect from September 2013
		Undertake project to complete building works at Woodlands Primary School to allow them to remain at 2 forms of entry	By Sept 2012	Cabinet approval will be required to undertake further works which will be funded from the 2011/12 Capital Programme, to be completed by September 2012. A detailed feasibility study will be undertaken before seeking Cabinet approval to undertake works.
		Monitor year R applications and offer data, and if necessary increase provision in another school to meet demand	Ongoing	An in-year variation to a schools planned admission number and the provision of temporary accommodation in the first instance may be necessary to address immediate need.
3	Address issue of likely shortfall of places in Chatham and Rochester	Invite expressions of interest from current and new providers for additional provision in the Chatham and Rochester area	Autumn 2011	In line with government policy for new provision to be established as an Academy or Free school we will first seek expressions of interest to establish provision. This will include the need to identify a site/buildings for provision. Detailed feasibility on the preferred option will be developed alongside a preferred sponsor.
4	Increase capacity at Wainscott Primary School	Consult on an increased PAN for Wainscott Primary School	Nov 2011	Consultation will be undertaken as part of normal admissions arrangements consultation starting in November 2011, to be approved by Cabinet in spring 2012 to take effect from September 2013

4	Increase capacity at Wainscott Primary School	Develop a feasibility study to increase accommodation at Wainscott Primary to accommodate an additional form of entry	Early 2012	A feasibility study will be undertaken which will phase the delivery of accommodation at the school from September 2013 as pupil numbers increase
5	Undertake SEN masterplan	Undertake an SEN masterplan	By Sept 2011	We will commission an SEN masterplan which will produce robust pupil forecast data, assess the current SEN school building estate against future need and consider opportunities to develop additional provision
6	Develop plans for the future use of Chatham South site	We will undertake a feasibility study regarding the future use of the Chatham South buildings and site which will be vacated by Bishop of Rochester Academy in 2012	By Oct 2011	Initial business case setting out options for development to be approved by Cabinet
7	Develop new school provision for Lodge Hill development	We will work with the developer to plan the delivery of additional school provision set out in the Section 106 agreement	2013 onwards	In line with government policy for new provision to be established as an Academy or Free school we will need to identify appropriate sponsors for any new school provision
8	Ongoing programme of federations and amalgamations	We will continue to consider opportunities for federation and amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools	Ongoing	A review will be undertaken whenever a headteacher of a separate infant or junior school plans to leave
9	Ongoing monitoring of surplus places and place pressure	We will continue to monitor pupil numbers and admission applications against school capacity	Ongoing	We will propose changes in line with the School Organisation Principles to ensure the continued viability of all schools in Medway
10	Investigate options for a UTC	We will investigate the opportunities for the establishment of a UTC in Medway	Autumn 2011	We will develop a business case for consideration by Cabinet