

# Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent

2026 -2030



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## 2. Foreword

As the newly appointed Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I am pleased to introduce this year's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent. This document sets out how Kent County Council will meet its statutory duty to ensure sufficient, high-quality school places are available across the county.

I bring to this role not only a commitment to public service, but also personal experience from my time teaching in a further education college. That experience has shaped my understanding of the challenges faced by educators and the importance of inclusive, well-planned provision that meets the diverse needs of learners.

I take on this role at a time of significant change. While the fundamentals of our responsibility remain constant, our approach must evolve to reflect the needs of Kent's communities, the pressures on public services, and the aspirations of our children and young people.

We recognise the challenges ahead: demographic shifts, rising demand for specialist provision, and the need to ensure that every child can access a good local school.

The scale of the challenge is clear, it is forecast that over the next four years primary school rolls will reduce by more than two thousand pupils and secondary rolls will rise by over four thousand pupils. The profile of change in school rolls will vary across the County, with some local areas requiring additional places to meet demand.

To meet need in specific localities, and to reflect demand generated by housing development, we are seeking to commission 7.6 forms of entry (FE) of permanent Year R primary provision and 19 FE of secondary provision and 810 temporary Year 7 places for the academic years 2026-27 to 2029-30. The County Council will continue to monitor the impact of any displacement of children into state maintained schools arising from the Government's decision to apply VAT to independent school fees.

This Plan is not just a technical document - it is a statement of intent. It reflects our commitment to advocate for Kent's children through working collaboratively with schools, trusts, communities, and central government to deliver provision that is responsive, equitable, and future-proofed. We will continue to monitor delivery closely and adapt where necessary, ensuring that decisions are evidence-led and in the best interests of Kent's children.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all school and education staff across Kent—teachers, support staff, leaders, governors, and officers—for their continued dedication. Your work is vital, and deeply appreciated.

Beverley Fordham - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

## **3. Introduction and Executive Summary**

### **3.1 Purpose**

The County Council is the Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision in Kent. This Commissioning Plan sets out how we will carry out our responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient high quality places, in the right places for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and promote parental preference. The Plan details the expected future need for education provision, thereby enabling parents and education providers to put forward proposals as to how these needs might best be met.

This Plan reflects the dynamic and ongoing process of ensuring there are sufficient places for Kent children in schools, and other provisions. It is subject to regular discussion and consultation with schools, district/borough councils, KCC (Kent County Council) Elected Members, the diocesan authorities, and others. The content of this Plan reflects those discussions and consultations.

### **3.2 The Kent Context**

Kent is a diverse County. It is largely rural with a collection of small towns. Economically our communities differ, with economic advantage generally in the West, and disadvantage concentrated in our coastal communities in the South and East. Early Years education and childcare are predominantly provided by the private and voluntary sectors. Our schools are a mix of maintained and academies and include infant, junior, primary, grammar, wide ability comprehensive, all-through, single sex and faith based. Post-16 opportunities are available through schools, colleges and private training organisations.

### **3.3 What We Are Seeking to Achieve**

Our vision is that every child and young person should go to a good or outstanding early years setting and school, have access to the best teaching, and benefit from schools and other providers working in partnership with each other to share the best practice as they continue to improve. Commissioning education provision from good or better providers can assist in securing this vision. To address the commissioning needs outlined in this Plan we welcome proposals from existing schools, trusts, the three dioceses and new providers; those proposals should be aligned to the commissioning requirements set out in the Plan.

### **3.4 Principles and Guidelines**

The role of the Local Authority is set within a legal framework of statutory duties which are outlined in the relevant sections of the Plan. We also have a set of principles and planning guidelines to help us in our role as the Commissioner of Education Provision (Section 5). It is important that the Local Authority is transparent and clear when making commissioning decisions or assessing the relative merits of any proposals it might receive.

### **3.5 Kent's Demographic Trends**

Information from the Office for National Statistics shows that in 2005 there were 15,613 live births in Kent (excluding Medway). The number of births rose each year up to 2012 when there was a peak in births of 18,147 children. Since this time, birth numbers have fallen to 15,791 in 2024. KCC will continue to monitor this data and forecast its impact over time.

The number of children on the rolls of Kent schools is driven by the size of the school-aged population in the county but is also influenced by the number of children resident outside of Kent on the rolls of the county's schools, the take-up of state funded school places and other factors such as the pace and type of new housing. One further factor to monitor during the lifetime of this KCP is the level of displacement of children from independent schools into the maintained sector arising from the Government's decision to impose VAT on independent school fees. Due to these additional factors, a change in the overall school-aged population in the county does not on its own necessarily translate into the same change in the number of children on the rolls of schools in

Kent. Additionally, changes in the overall school age population at County or district level do not necessarily mirror changes in population at smaller geographic levels, such as planning groups, these are explored in Section 7.

### **3.6 Capital Funding**

The pressure on the County's Capital Budget continues, particularly as demand for secondary and specialist places grows. The cost of delivering school places is currently met from Basic Need grant from the Government, prudential borrowing by the County Council, Section 106 property developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Government funding for 'Basic Need' is allocated on a formula based upon information provided by local authorities concerning forecast numbers of pupils and school capacity.

The Department for Education's (DfE) Free Schools Programme is another way to deliver some of the school provision Kent needs. We have encouraged promoters to submit bids to Waves 13 and 14, with some success, but this programme is not a significant contributor to places overall and does have financial risks.

KCC also secures developer contributions to the capital programme. The budget gap between what is needed for KCC to meet its statutory duties as school place commissioner and what is available is significant. All avenues are being explored to reduce the risks, but inevitably difficult decisions will have to be made to prioritise KCC's investment of the capital budget. The cost of construction has risen considerably since 2020 and is likely to continue during the Plan period. We will continue to manage and mitigate this as far as we are able to, however, pressure from inflation may become a constraint to our commissioning strategy.

### **3.7 Kent's Forward Plan – Commissioning Summary**

Detailed analysis, at district level, of the future need for primary and secondary school places is contained in Section 7 of this Plan. Figures 3a to 3e provide a summary of the need for additional places, both permanent and temporary, identified within the Commissioning Plan:

**Figure 3a: Summary of the commissioning proposals for primary schools by district/borough**

District	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Ashford				0.3 FE	4 FE	
Canterbury			1 FE		1 FE	3 FE
Dartford and Swanley		1 FE		2 FE	2 FE	
Dover				0.3 FE	1 FE	4 FE
Folkestone and Hythe						2 FE
Gravesham		1 FE				
Maidstone					2 FE	
Sevenoaks						
Swale			1 FE		2 FE	
Thanet						2 FE
Tonbridge and Malling					2 FE	
Tunbridge Wells			1 FE		Up to 10 Year 7 temp places	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0 FE</b>	<b>2 FE</b>	<b>3 FE</b>	<b>2.6 FE</b>	<b>14 FE 10 Year R temp places</b>	<b>11 FE</b>

**Total of 32.6 FE of additional provision across the forecast period and up to 10 temporary Year R places**

**Figure 3b: Summary of the commissioning proposals for secondary schools by planning group**

<b>Non-Selective Planning Group</b>	<b>By 2026-27</b>	<b>By 2027-28</b>	<b>By 2028-29</b>	<b>By 2029-30</b>	<b>Between 2030-33</b>	<b>Post 2033</b>
Ashford South						2 FE
Ashford North	1 FE		Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places		2 FE
Canterbury City		Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places		
Dartford and Swanley						
Dover						2 FE
Faversham					1 FE	
Gravesham and Longfield				3 FE		
Isle of Sheppey	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	2 FE				
Maidstone District	Up to 90 Year 7 temp places	Up to 90 Year 7 temp places	Up to 120 Year 7 temp places	6 FE		
Sevenoaks and Borough Green						
Sittingbourne	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	2 FE			6 FE	
Thanet	Up to 60 Year 7 temp places	Up to 90 Year 7 temp places	Up to 45 Year 7 temp places	Up to 45 Year 7 temp places		
<b>Selective Planning Group</b>	<b>By 2026-27</b>	<b>By 2027-28</b>	<b>By 2028-29</b>	<b>By 2029-30</b>	<b>Between 2030-33</b>	<b>Post 2033</b>
Canterbury and Faversham		0.5 FE				
Maidstone and Malling				1 FE		
Gravesham and Longfield and North West Kent			6 FE			
West Kent	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places				
<b>Total secondary commissioning</b>	<b>1 FE 240 Year 7 temp places</b>	<b>2 FE 240 Year 7 temp places</b>	<b>6 FE 225 Year 7 temp places</b>	<b>10 FE 105 Year 7 temp places</b>	<b>7 FE</b>	<b>6 FE</b>

**Total of 32 FE across the forecast period and 810 temporary Year 7 places**

**Figure 3c: Summary of commissioning intentions for Additional Special School Provision in Kent**

District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Canterbury	120	0	0	48	28	44
Sevenoaks/ Tunbridge Wells	172	112	30	30	0	0
Sevenoaks	322	32	8	122	74	86
Swale	50	18	18	14	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>130</b>

**Figure 3d: Summary of Planned New/Expanded Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) in Kent**

District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Ashford	116	34	42	34	6	0
Dover	69	23	27	19	0	0
Folkestone & Hythe	20	10	10		0	0
Swale	130	21	44	41	24	0
Thanet	140	30	46	46	18	0
Canterbury	70	0	23	23	24	0
Gravesham	45	6	15	14	10	0
Sevenoaks	85	20	27	28	10	0
Dartford	40	8	8	9	10	5
Maidstone	102	34	39	29	0	0
Tunbridge Wells	72	26	27	19	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>5</b>

**Figure 3e: Agreed and Planned Alternative Provision in Kent**

District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Canterbury	30	30	0	0	0	0
Swale	40	0	40	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### 3.8 Special Educational Needs

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Sufficiency Plan sits under the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent and its purpose is to strategically inform SEN educational place planning in the medium to long term. The Sufficiency Plan has been updated for 2025 and is appended to the KCP (See Appendix 11.3 in separate document).

Kent is part of the DfE Safety Valve programme which began in 2022-23 and it is set to run for five years. This financial agreement, which provides £140 million of additional funding aims to support us, as a local authority, to reform our High Needs systems and SEND services for children and young people whilst ensuring those services are sustainable. We have also contributed £82 million for this work.

The Kent Local Area received an Improvement Notice following its inspection in 2019. Significant transformation continues as the Local Area works to address the weaknesses and improve the provision and support for children with SEND. A summary of some of the key headline which influence our future actions are listed in 8.2 of the Commissioning SEN section to follow.

The impact of these key headlines is significant for families, schools, the authority and the taxpayer. There remains a systemic need to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. Kent's [Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities](#) sets out the key areas of transformation.

A significant educational change programme is ongoing with the aim of improving the capacity of mainstream school SEND inclusion in Kent. This will enable staff to be increasingly skilled, confident and able to educate and support more children with EHCPs in mainstream provisions. This realignment will be supported by the inclusive practices included in the Countywide Approach To Inclusive Education (CATIE), the Accessibility Strategy, Services to Schools, the Section 19 Framework, Co-Production Charter and Transition Charter.

We acknowledge that special schools play an important role in our continuum of education provision. However, we have to address the imbalance we have in Kent regarding the proportion of children and young people with EHCPs in mainstream education, when comparing to the rates for England. One focus will be increasing places in SRPs to successfully support more children and young people with SEND. This is likely to mean the overall size of Kent's maintained special schools (including the new schools agreed with the Department for Education) remains stable, whilst we reduce our reliance on independent and non-maintained special schools. The sizes of individual schools will change over time to reflect the local demographics and policy changes.

From the data, we are seeing the impact of our transformation:

- In England in between January 2024 and January 2025 there was a 10.8% rise in the number of EHCPs amongst the 0-25 year old cohort. In Kent the rise was 6.8%.
- Kent accounted for 3.23% of England's EHCPs in 2024/25, down from 3.37% in 2023/24.
- In 2023/24 35% of pupils with EHCPs were in mainstream schools in Kent; this increased to 36% in 2024/25. Correspondingly, the percentages in special schools reduced from 41% to 39%.

### 3.9 Early Education and Childcare

Early Education and Childcare in Kent is available through a large, diverse and constantly shifting market of maintained, private, voluntary, independent and school-run providers, childminders and academies, all of which operate as individual businesses and are therefore subject to market forces.

The local authority is required to produce an 'Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency', showing the supply of, and demand for, early years and childcare provision across the County, including where there might be over supply and particularly a deficit in provision. The Annual Report on

Childcare Sufficiency for the 2025-2026 academic year makes use of the DfE analysis by using its estimated demand for childcare for 9 month to 36 month-olds combined with the population forecast based demand for childcare for 3 and 4 year olds. The supply of childcare places in Kent is derived from the number of available places that early education and childcare providers state in the annual childcare sufficiency audit.

Across the county as a whole, there are forecast to be sufficient childcare places for 0-4 year olds. However, the Sufficiency Report indicates that there are deficits of places in specific planning groups. The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service will work with providers and potential providers to encourage the establishment of additional provision where it is required.

The supply of Free Entitlement places for 9 months to four year olds will be kept under review as planned new housing developments are built and potentially increase the demand for places. Where housing developments are proposed in school planning areas where there is an indicative deficit of places or where the size of a development means that it will require new provision, KCC will engage in discussions with developers to either seek funding to provide nursery provision which may include securing community rental or leasehold accommodation availability for private, voluntary or independent sector providers of 0-4 year old childcare.

When a new school is delivered according to the ESFA Baseline Design, a nursery space is now included in the design. As new schools are planned, KCC will work with the sponsor to identify early years provision and the most appropriate way to deliver this.

### **3.10 Post-16 Education and Training in Kent**

The academic year 2024/25 has been a difficult one for young people progressing into post-16 education with more young people than ever not achieving the entry criteria for their own 6<sup>th</sup> forms, consequently the number of students in 6<sup>th</sup> forms shrank for the first time.

The 16-18 cohort grew by over 2,000, with provision for young people needing to study at L2 and below or in specialist settings filling very quickly despite the colleges offering an additional 1,500 places. Consequently, the weeks after GCSE results day were very difficult for learners as many did not have viable alternatives. Our NEET numbers are also significantly higher than previous years. In June 2025 1,625 young people were NEET compared to 1,355 in June 2024, an increase of 20%.

The choice of lower level qualifications for learners outside college has continued to shrink. The number of providers decreased from 18 in 2023/24 to 16 in 2024/25. The number of places shrank slightly from 733 to 720 over the same period.

The work of Pathways for All, the county's 16-19 review, has continued to move on. The board and the local Collaborative Partnership Areas are very aware of the situation for those transitioning onto post-16 and there has been a focus on improving this. This was the first year of the 2024 priority document "No young person left behind" and the focus was on identifying the cold spots in provision and support for young people. The Focus in 2025/26 will be to develop plans to resolve these cold spots.

Notable successes on 2024/25 have been:

- The development of a clearing system on the KentChoices website for learners to see which courses still have places available after GCSE results day.
- Collaborative events in some areas for young people to explore all the post-16 options available to them.
- Collaborative approaches across education providers to support vulnerable learners in the post-16 transition.

## 4. Principles and Planning Guidelines

### 4.1 What We Are Seeking to Achieve

Our Principles and Planning Guidelines underpin our commissioning decisions. This is further supported by a suite of key strategies including, but not limited to:

- Kent SEND Strategy 2025–2028
- Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (CATIE) 2023 – 2028
- Kent 16 to 19 Review - Pathways For All

In the national policy context, the Local Authority is the Commissioner of Education Provision and providers come from the private, voluntary, charitable and maintained sectors. The role of the Local Authority is set within a legal framework of statutory duties; the duties for each phase or type of education in Kent are shown under the relevant section in this Plan. Within this framework, the Local Authority continues to be the major provider of education by maintaining most Kent schools and it also fulfils the function of “provider of last resort” to ensure new provision is made if no other acceptable new provider comes forward.

Education in Kent is divided into three phases, although there is some overlap between these. These three phases are:

- Early Years: primarily delivered by private, voluntary and independent pre-school providers, accredited child-minders, and schools with maintained nursery classes.
- 4-16 years: “compulsory school age” during which schools are the main providers.
- Post-16: colleges and schools both offer substantial provision, with colleges as the sole provider for young people aged 19-25 years.

The Local Authority also has specific duties in relation to provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs, pupils excluded from school or pupils unable to attend school due to ill health.

### 4.2 Principles and Guidelines

It is important that the Local Authority is open and transparent in its role as the Strategic Commissioner of Education. To help guide us in this role we abide by clear principles and consider school organisation proposals against our planning guidelines. We stress that planning guidelines are not absolutes, but a starting point for the consideration of proposals.

### 4.3 Over-Arching Principles

- Every child should have access to a local, good or outstanding school, which is appropriate to their needs.
- All education provision in Kent should be financially efficient and viable.
- We will consider the needs and aspirations of the local community.
- We will recognise parental preference.
- We recognise perceptions may differ as to benefits and detrimental impacts of future proposals. We will ensure our consultation processes capture the voice of all communities, but to be supported proposals must demonstrate overall benefit to the whole community.
- The needs of Children in Care and those with SEN and disabilities will be given enhanced consideration in any commissioning decision.
- We will also give priority to organisational changes that create environments better able to meet the needs of other vulnerable children, including those from minority ethnic communities and/or from low income families.
- Any educational provision facing difficulties will be supported and challenged to recover in an efficient and timely manner. Where sufficient progress is not achieved, we will seek to commission alternative provision or another provider.
- If a provision is considered or found to be inadequate by Ofsted, we will seek to support the DfE with the commissioning of an alternative provider.

- In areas of housing growth, we will require developer contributions to fund or part fund new and additional school provision.
- In areas of high surplus capacity, we will take actions where possible to reduce the surplus and will seek to work with schools and own admission authorities to minimise the impact of surplus.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4.4 Planning Guidelines – Primary**

- The curriculum is generally delivered in Key Stage specific classes. Therefore, for curriculum viability, primary schools should be able to operate at least four classes.
- We will actively promote opportunities for small primary schools to work together.
- Where possible, planned Published Admission Numbers (PANs) will be multiples of 30, but where this is not possible, multiples of 15 are used.
- We believe all-through primary schools deliver better continuity of learning as the model for primary phase education in Kent. When the opportunity arises, we will seek to amalgamate separate infant and junior schools into a single primary school. However, we will have regard to existing local arrangements and seek to avoid leaving existing schools without links on which they have previously depended.
- At present primary school provision is co-educational, and we anticipate that future arrangements will conform to this pattern.
- Over time we have concluded that a minimum of 2FE provision (420 places) is preferred in terms of the efficient deployment of resources.

#### **4.5 Planning Guidelines – Secondary**

- PANs for secondary schools will not normally be less than 120 or greater than 360. PANs for secondary schools will normally be multiples of 30.
- Over time we have concluded that the ideal size for the efficient deployment of resources is between 6FE and 8FE.
- Proposals for additional secondary places need to demonstrate a balance between selective and non-selective school places.
- We will encourage the formation of all-aged schools (primary through to secondary) if this is in the interests of the local community.

#### **4.6 Planning Guidelines - Special Educational Needs**

- We aim to build capacity in mainstream schools by broadening the skills and special arrangements that can be made within this sector to ensure compliance with the relevant duties under SEN and disability legislation.
- For children and young people for whom mainstream provision is assessed not to be appropriate, we seek to make provision through Kent based, state funded special schools. For young people aged 16-19 years, provision may be at school or college. For young people who are aged 19-25 years, provision is likely to be college based.
- We will support children and young people to benefit from living within their local community where possible and we will seek to provide them with day places unless residential provision is specifically needed for social care or health reasons. In such cases, agreement to joint placement and support will be sought from the relevant KCC teams or the Health Service. This agreement will be preceded by the relevant health or social care assessments.
- We will aim to reduce the need for children to be transported to schools far away from their local communities by developing local provision to meet need.

#### **4.7 Planning Guidelines - Expansion of Popular Schools and New Provision**

- We support diversity in the range of education provision available to children and young people. We recognise that new providers are entering the market, and that parents and communities are able to make free school applications.

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<sup>1</sup> Actions might include re-classifying accommodation, removing temporary or unsuitable accommodation, leasing spaces to other users and promoting closures or amalgamations. We recognise that, increasingly, providers will be responsible for making such decisions about the use of their buildings, but we believe we all recognise the economic imperatives for such actions.

- As the Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision, we welcome proposals from existing schools and new providers that address the needs identified in this Plan, this includes new provision to meet increased demand.
- In order for us to support any such proposal, they must meet an identified need and should adhere to the planning principles and guidelines set out above.

#### **4.8 Small Schools**

KCC defines small schools as ‘those schools with fewer than 150 pupils on roll and/or a measured capacity of fewer than 150 places’. We have over 100 primary schools that fit this criterion.

We value the work of our small schools and recognise the challenges faced. We continue to work with partners to maximise the resilience of small schools to deal with the challenges they face in terms of leadership and management, teaching and learning, and governance and finance so that they can enable their pupils to grow up, learn, develop and achieve, and continue to play a valued role in their communities.

KCC and its partners, in particular the dioceses, will ensure that:

- Support is given to small schools seeking to join appropriate multi-academy trusts, or take other steps on such a pathway.
- All such partners will work closely together to support the protection and maintenance of the distinctive character and ethos of small Church of England schools in future collaborative arrangements.

#### **4.9 Families of Schools**

KCC has encouraged schools to work collaboratively together for many years. Such collaborations take many forms in the current education landscape, such as being a church school within Canterbury, Rochester or Southwark’s purview, forming a collaboration with neighbouring schools to work jointly on shared school improvement objectives, formally federating or joining a shared schools trust, or academising within a MAT. All these options are important in ensuring no school becomes isolated.

The national direction of travel, through successive Governments, has been towards high quality, inclusive education to be provided through families of schools within strong multi-academy trusts. This is underpinned by the ability of strong trusts to deliver rapid and sustainable school improvement, excellent support for teachers and teaching, strategic leadership and governance, and effective financial management. We support these principles and encourage those Kent schools not currently benefitting from such collaborative arrangements to explore their options to join or form a multi-academy trust.

## **5. Capital Funding**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The Local Authority as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision has a key role in securing funding to provide sufficient education provision in the County, particularly in schools.

The cost of providing additional school places is met from Government Basic Need Grant, prudential borrowing by KCC and developer contributions. It continues to be clear through the County Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan that KCC is not in a position to undertake prudential borrowing to support new provision. To do so would place undue pressure on the revenue budget in what are already challenging times for the Authority. The prospect of having to meet the growth in demand for places through additional borrowing confronts the County Council with a dilemma between delivering its statutory duty on school places and maintaining its financial soundness. Members and officers continue to lobby Ministers and officials within the DfE over this critical issue. Delivery of the additional school places needed in the County will rely more than ever on an appropriate level of funding from Government and securing the maximum possible contribution from housing developers.

### **5.2 Basic Need**

Basic Need funding is allocated by Government on the basis of a comparison of school capacity (not pupil admission numbers) against forecast mainstream pupil numbers from reception year to year 11 uplifted to provide a 2 per cent operating margin. Where capacity is lower than forecast, the DfE provides funding towards the gap.

The combined allocation for the 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 financial years are based upon the projected need for new places by September 2028 (the start of academic year 2028/29); Kent has been allocated £60,759,977.66. The 'lumpy' nature of establishing new school provision means that the County Council incurs the majority of the capital costs at the outset of mitigating a forecast place deficit, e.g. expanding a school by a whole FE; whereas the Basic Need formula does not account for this and provides the Council with funding for places in an incremental way over a longer period of time.

### **5.3 Free Schools Programme**

One funding option which can assist with or overcome the challenges of forward funding new schools is the Free Schools programme. We encouraged promoters to submit bids to Waves 13 and 14, with some success. However, as the free school programme has become more restrictive, being targeted to certain geographical areas of the Country in relation to mainstream schools, and of limited number for special schools and alternative provisions, it will not be the answer to all our needs. Additionally, it is not risk free for the Local Authority. Delays in delivery can require the Authority to put in place temporary provision with the resultant unplanned expense.

### **5.4 Developer Contributions**

Each of the 12 districts in Kent are planning significant housing growth, it is essential that this growth is supported by sufficient education provision that is well integrated within the areas of growth and established at the right time. The cost of providing school places in response to housing growth is significant, the County Council seeks developer contributions towards mitigating this cost. Developer contributions for education are secured either through Section 106 (s106) agreements or through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

S106 agreements are secured from housing developers at the time that planning permission is granted, they are intended to ensure development proposals are acceptable in planning terms. When securing a s106 agreement KCC will outline the additional impact the development would have on local schools, where we would need to add additional provision in response and the cost of doing so. Whilst district authorities, as the relevant Local Planning Authority, are the decision

maker on whether contributions towards education provision should be made or not, once a s106 agreement is in place the housing developer becomes legally obligated to pay KCC contributions at specified points.

We will continue to seek developer contributions at every opportunity allowed through legislation and apply funding secured to the most appropriate project in order to mitigate development. Where additional secondary school places are required in order to mitigate development we will seek to secure funding towards both selective and non-selective places on the basis of 25% of the additional demand being within the selective sector; this will not preclude future residents of the development being able to apply for and access a school place in the same way as all other residents in Kent and does not impact the commissioning approach in an area which is based on the forecast need.

Five districts in Kent have adopted CIL, which has largely replaced s106 agreements in those areas. The levy is a tariff-based system where developers are charged a set rate per square metre of development. There is no direct link between the development's impact on local infrastructure and the amount it pays. All CIL funding is paid to the relevant district or borough, which then determines how it will be spent once it is received; there is no funding ring-fenced for education provision and KCC will usually be required to 'bid' to the Borough for a share of the funding. This provides KCC with no security that development charged under CIL will contribute to the cost of new school provision at the time planning permission is granted. Under CIL the amounts collected for community infrastructure are typically lower than could be secured through s106 and the spending of CIL is entirely at the discretion of the District Authority and not KCC, which places the County Council at significant risk moving forward.

The County Council is keen to work with the Government to ensure that reforms to developer contributions are effective in securing the necessary infrastructure to support growth. The new Government has confirmed that they do not intend to implement the introduction of the Infrastructure Levy within the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023; whilst this may be positive in some ways, there still remains a significant level of uncertainty.

## **5.5 Value for Money**

In drawing up options for providing additional places, in addition to the Principles and Planning Guidelines set out in Section 5, the Local Authority consider a range of practical issues, such as:

- The condition and suitability of existing premises.
- The ability to expand or alter the premises (including arrangements whilst works progress).
- The works required to expand or alter the premises.
- The estimated capital costs.
- The size and topography of the site.
- Environmental considerations.
- Future proofing.
- Road access to the site, including transport and safety issues.

Kent is committed to securing value for money when providing additional school accommodation, in line with the DfE's baseline designs, and output performance specification. The construction method for new accommodation will be that which is the most appropriate to meet the needs of provision, e.g. temporary or permanent provision and that which represents good value for money.

One of the key benchmarks against which we will be monitoring all Basic Need projects is the 'cost per pupil'. This benchmark divides the construction cost of the project by the number of pupils that the facility will accommodate to provide a project cost per pupil.

This table provides high level findings of a comparison between KCC costs on major capital projects delivered between 2020 and 2024 and the DfE Scorecard. The DfE Scorecard shows the national average for England and the average cost rebased for the South East with the South East being traditionally more expensive to build in. KCC’s average cost of delivering additional places is higher than the national average which is to be expected as the DfE Scorecard for the South East is also higher. KCC has delivered additional pupil places in the primary below the average for the South East. Primary new build and secondary expansions are higher are both slightly above the regional averages and are driven by a greater degree of abnormal costs.

**Figure 5a: Average costs - National and Kent**

**Primary Education Phase:**

Type	National DfE School Delivery Average Costs	South East DfE School Delivery Average Costs	KCC Average Costs
Expansion and Refurbishment	£20,450	£23,340	£20,699
New Build	£24,416	£28,230	£28,688

**Secondary Education Phase:**

Type	National DfE School Delivery Average Costs	South East DfE School Delivery Average Costs	KCC Average Costs
Expansion and Refurbishment	£28,127	£31,783	£31,131
New Build	£29,579	£33,424	No data

## **6. Commissioning Statutory School Provision**

### **6.1 Duties to Provide for Ages 4-16 Years**

The law requires local authorities to make provision for the education of children from the September following their fourth birthday to the end of the academic year in which their sixteenth birthday falls. Most Kent parents choose to send their children to Kent schools. Some parents choose to educate their children independently, either at independent schools or otherwise than at school (i.e. at home); others will send their children to maintained schools outside Kent (Kent maintained schools also admit some children from other areas). Kent will offer a school place to any resident child aged between 4-16 years.

A minority of young people aged 14-16 years old are offered college placements or alternative curriculum provision, usually through school links. Some children are educated in special schools or non-school forms of special education provision because of their special educational needs.

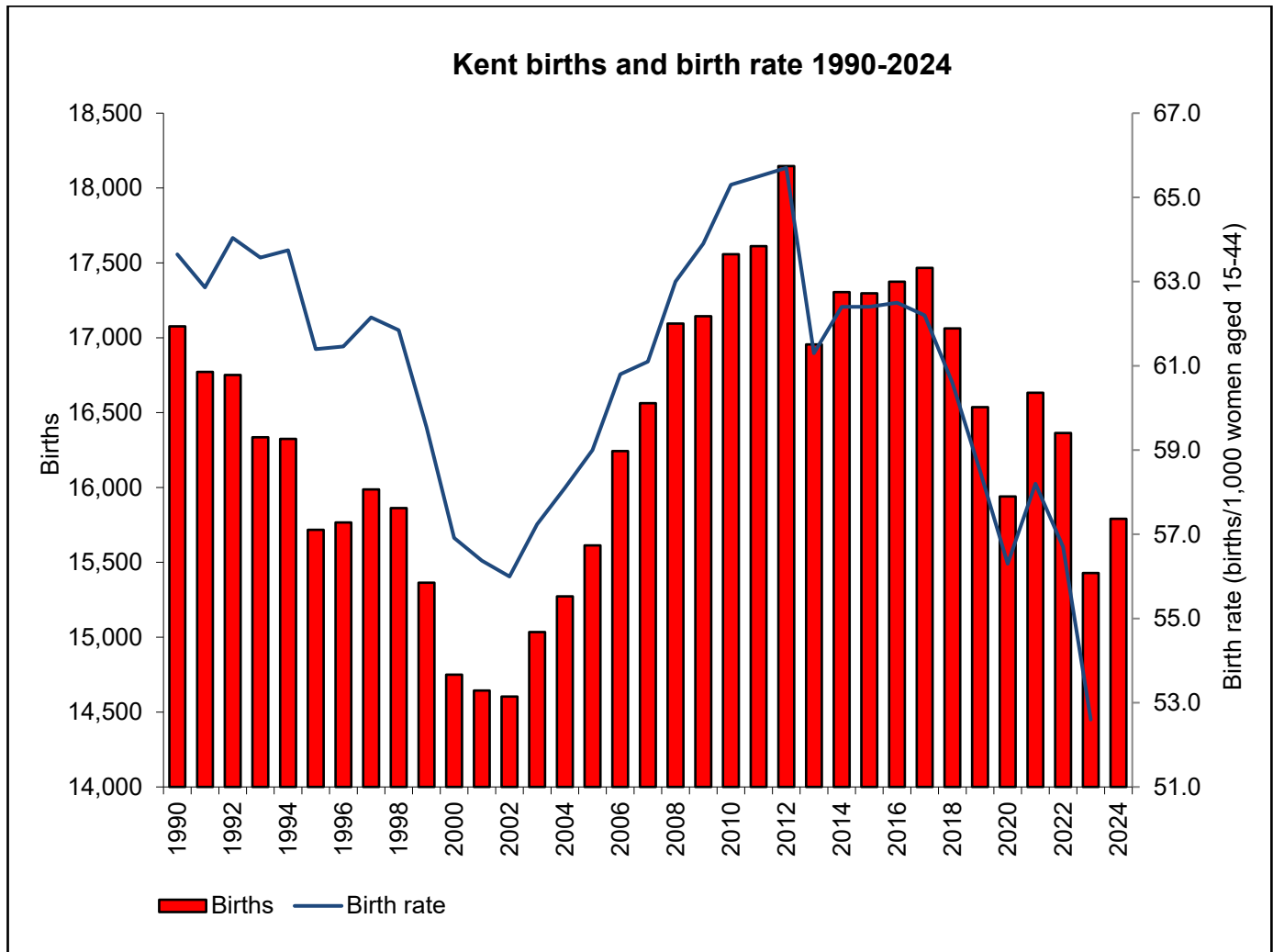
The local authority has a statutory duty to provide full time education for pupils “not in education by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise” which is appropriate to individual pupil needs. This duty is discharged through pupil referral units, alternative provision commissioned by secondary schools and the Rosewood School.

### **6.2 Kent-Wide Summary**

Detail on the requirement for additional school places is contained in the district/borough commentaries which follow. For 2026-27 and 2027-28 many projects are already in progress. For later years, the need for expansion in planning groups has been noted, but specific schools may not have been identified. For projects beyond 2027-28 the commissioning proposals may be dependent on the pace of planned housing development being realised. A Countywide summary of the proposals for primary, secondary and SEN school places in each district/borough are set out in Section 3.7.

Figure 6a shows the Kent birth rate and the number of recorded births as published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). Births recorded by the ONS provide a consistent way of measuring and demonstrating changes in births over the last 30 years; it should be noted that the quantum of school places needed is not solely driven by the number of births and our forecasting takes into account those children resident in the county that were born elsewhere, and the forecast inward migration led by housing growth and other factors. Overall, Kent birth figures indicate a significant fall in the number of births from 2017 to 2020, with a slight upturn in 2021 before dropping back again in recent years.

**Figure 6a: Kent births and birth rates 1990-2024**



\*Source: Office for National Statistics, 2022

**Figure 6b: Housing completions and future housing supply 2001-26**

District	Completions*				Period 2024-29			Grand total 2004-29
	2004-09	2009-14	2014-19	2019-24	Extant	Allocations	Total	
Maidstone	3,742	3,177	5,196	6,463	1,630	2,842	4,472	23,050
Dartford	2,688	1,861	4,742	3,055	774	4,289	5,063	17,409
Swale	3,359	2,166	3,116	4,183	4,334	0	4,334	17,158
Canterbury	4,218	2,299	1,840	2,961	1,646	4,166	5,812	17,130
Ashford	3,028	2,110	3,580	3,936	2,858	849	3,707	16,361
Tonbridge & Malling	4,306	2,164	3,709	2,300	3,742	73	3,815	16,294
Thanet	2,876	2,234	1,656	2,908	3,946	1,569	5,515	15,189
Tunbridge Wells	2,129	608	2,342	2,925	2,483	240	2,723	10,727
Dover	1,715	1,140	2,389	2,781	1,359	1,098	2,457	10,482
Folkestone & Hythe	2,250	890	1,888	2,208	1,842	917	2,759	9,995
Gravesham	1,739	1,085	1,100	2,106	2,279	0	2,279	8,309
Sevenoaks	1,437	1,033	1,558	1,358	2,484	196	2,680	8,066
<b>Kent</b>	<b>33,487</b>	<b>20,767</b>	<b>33,116</b>	<b>37,184</b>	<b>29,377</b>	<b>16,239</b>	<b>45,616</b>	<b>170,170</b>

Source: Housing Information Audit (HIA) 2023-24, Kent Analytics, KCC

**Notes:**

- (1) Housing data relates to financial year (i.e. 2023-24 is the year up to 31st March 2024)
- (2) Housing data is shown net of losses i.e. gains - losses = net
- (3) The first four 5-year time periods between 2004-24 show actual housing completions
- (4) The period 2024-29 shows expected housing completions (extant permisisions and allocations)

\*Completions - Dwellings completed; Extant- Dwellings with planning permission but construction not yet completed; Allocations - Dwellings within an area designated for future housing development but not yet with planning permission

Figure 6b outlines the historic and forecast house building by district/borough. All districts/boroughs are planning for significant house building, each district/borough is at a different stage of adopting their Local Plan. The figures above incorporate housing numbers from adopted Local Plans, not every district currently has a Local Plan covering the period 2024-29, however our school-based forecasts incorporate all consented housing whether that housing was allocated within a Local Plan or not.

On average 5,425 dwellings were built annually in the ten-year period up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. This increased significantly to 7,030 dwellings per year in period 2014-24. A long-term yearly average of around 9,100 dwellings per year is anticipated for the period 2024-29.

We need to ensure we are planning for the education infrastructure required. How we plan to provide for new housing is outlined in the individual district/borough sections. It is important to note that additional demand for school places from proposed housing plans that do not yet have planning permission or form part of a Borough's adopted Local Plan are not incorporated within the forecasts presented in Figures 6c to 6h. It is equally important to recognise that while surplus places might exist in districts, these will not always be in the right place to support demand generated by new housing.

### **6.3 Forecast Pupils in Mainstream Primary/Secondary Schools**

For Kent primary schools we have seen a steady rise in the overall number of pupils since 2009-10 to 2019-20, rising from 106,097 to 126,251. However, in 2020-21 the total primary roll saw a slight drop to 125,939, before increasing again 2021-22 to 126,768. In recent years, the total has fluctuated, but has been relatively stable, with 127,081 in 2024-25.

Figure 6c provides a breakdown of expected surplus or deficit capacity in Year R by district/borough across the ten-year period to 2033-34. The forecast indicates that there will be surplus places across the county for the Plan Period. However, in the individual district/borough sections we break down the expected surplus/deficit into smaller planning groups. This enables us to identify in more detail where and when provision may need to be added or removed at more local geography.

**Figure 6c: School-based surplus/deficit capacity summary (Year R) if No Further Action is Taken**

District	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/24 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Ashford	1,715	225	210	192	297	226	224	228	233	233	233	237	1,646
Canterbury	1,559	227	146	135	207	214	186	199	218	240	261	279	1,500
Dartford	1,785	202	152	133	184	242	220	231	242	259	281	302	1,815
Dover	1,332	269	256	197	260	335	274	273	276	285	295	305	1,330
Folkestone & Hythe	1,288	291	199	209	268	264	246	249	251	249	246	247	1,248
Gravesham	1,506	152	109	60	98	100	74	64	51	39	28	18	1,456
Maidstone	2,184	147	153	71	113	197	131	132	137	156	187	219	2,154
Sevenoaks	1,467	296	186	174	263	227	181	161	131	111	99	94	1,392
Swale	2,015	297	246	180	202	234	201	175	146	122	111	99	1,965
Thanet	1,635	219	239	156	202	205	170	171	165	155	150	151	1,515
Tonbridge & Malling	1,743	260	158	130	223	205	119	86	62	48	42	41	1,653
Tunbridge Wells	1,301	122	164	175	190	183	157	142	131	128	139	152	1,321
<b>Kent</b>	<b>19,530</b>	<b>2,707</b>	<b>2,219</b>	<b>1,813</b>	<b>2,506</b>	<b>2,632</b>	<b>2,181</b>	<b>2,112</b>	<b>2,044</b>	<b>2,026</b>	<b>2,072</b>	<b>2,144</b>	<b>18,995</b>

Source: Management Information, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

The overall number of pupils in Kent secondary schools has risen since 2014-15, from 77,931 pupils to 93,883 in 2024-25, an increase in excess of 20% over a ten-year period. This has been driven by larger Year 6 cohorts entering the secondary sector and demand generated by housing development. We anticipate that the Year 7 rolls will continue to increase during the Plan Period. This level of need for Year 7 places will require significant further investment in the secondary estate to maintain sufficiency of places and will continue to represent a major challenge to the Council and its commissioning partners in the years to come.

Figures 6d and 6e provide a breakdown of expected surplus or deficit capacity in Year 7 by non-selective and selective planning groups, across the 10-year period to 2034-35. Many districts/boroughs are showing a need for additional non-selective Year 7 places at some point in the forecast period. Within the selective sector we forecast (Figure 6e) a similar pattern of deficits of Year 7 places throughout the forecast period for the many of planning groups. In part this has been due to selective schools accepting over PAN for a number of years rather than cohorts growing significantly.

The need for additional places can in-part be managed through existing schools increasing the number of places offered on a temporary or permanent bases, but not all of the pressure can be managed this way, consequentially there will be a need for new schools or satellites of existing schools. The individual district/borough sections break down the expected surplus/deficit of places into smaller planning for both selective and non-selective.

**Figure 6d: Non-selective school-based surplus/deficit capacity summary (Year 7) if No Further Action is Taken**

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Ashford North	965	965	-10	8	-37	-60	-87	-94	59	-42	0	-11	70
Canterbury City	680	680	4	10	-5	-55	-61	-57	-69	-52	-77	-84	-59
Canterbury Coastal	618	618	61	56	41	25	66	35	36	100	78	85	123
Tenterden and Cranbrook	360	360	95	72	5	2	-1	-5	8	4	-5	4	15
Dartford and Swanley	1,260	1,260	10	123	175	132	154	176	174	211	184	146	205
Dover	450	450	57	18	-1	-20	-11	12	32	52	44	7	32
Deal and Sandwich	435	435	95	69	25	15	5	0	39	21	29	2	37
Folkestone and Hythe	625	625	10	-26	-9	-57	-37	0	-54	43	-9	-5	39
Faversham	210	210	9	32	20	-3	6	5	-9	4	-11	-16	-40
Gravesham and Longfield	1,370	1,370	32	-3	-34	-78	-113	-74	-71	-75	-97	-126	-103
Maidstone District	1,530	1,530	-25	-80	-93	-124	-179	-237	-173	-164	-144	-221	-175
Malling	543	543	28	57	68	21	24	21	50	29	57	39	50
Romney Marsh	180	180	6	-7	15	15	1	10	13	23	20	26	39
Sevenoaks and Borough Green	610	610	-3	29	6	13	27	19	30	74	32	52	118
Isle of Sheppey	360	360	11	3	-1	-12	-3	-12	-9	17	31	30	29
Sittingbourne	765	765	-3	-37	-8	-97	-69	-66	-90	-21	-29	-57	5
Thanet District	1,099	1,099	-36	-75	-68	-82	-38	-127	-14	-22	27	26	65
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells	1,645	1,645	197	169	91	95	88	56	117	126	129	147	178
<b>Kent</b>	<b>13,705</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>-270</b>	<b>-227</b>	<b>-337</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>13,798</b>

Source: Management Information, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

**Figure 6e: Selective school-based surplus/deficit capacity summary (Year 7) if No Further Action is Taken**

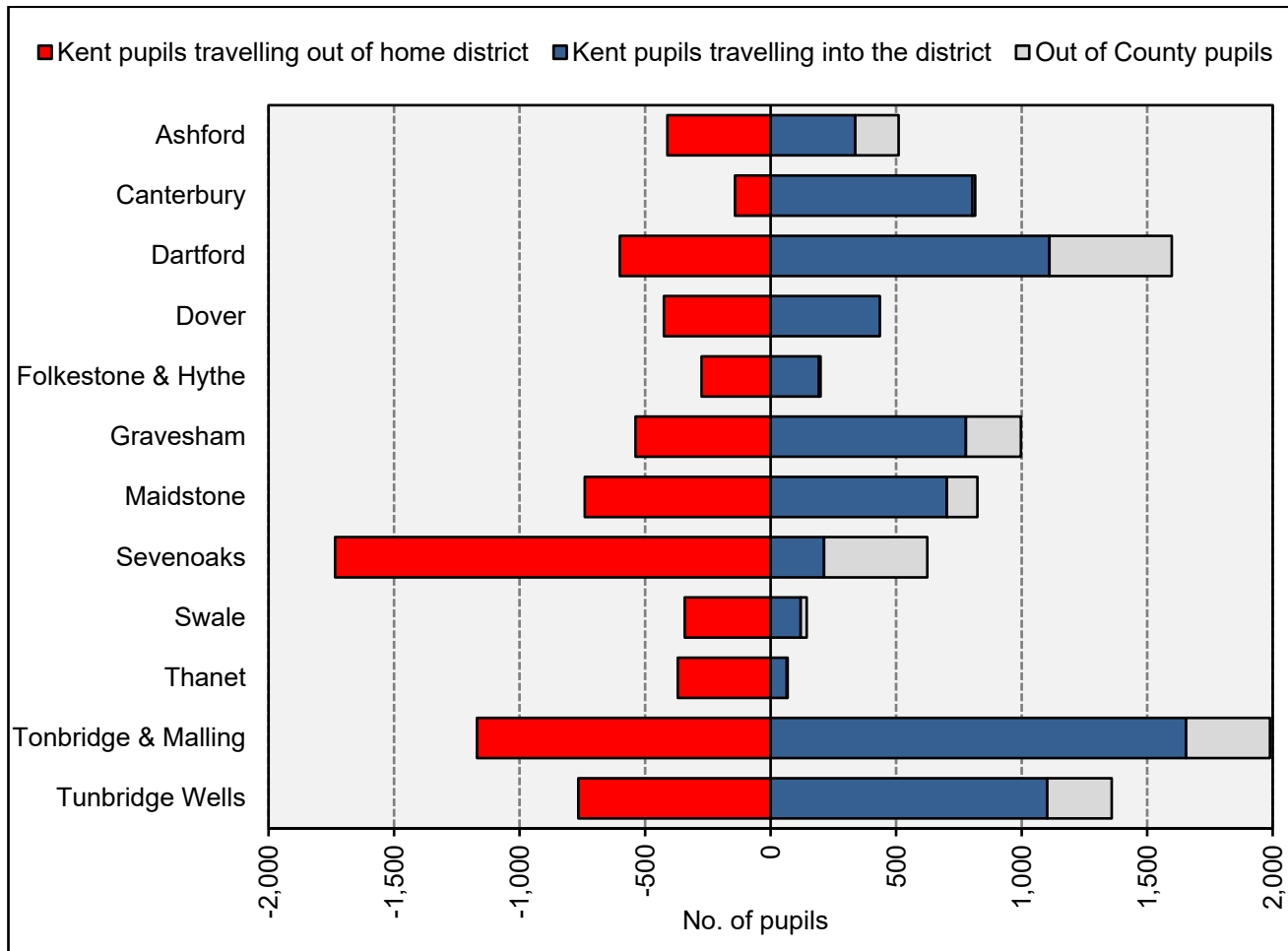
Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Ashford	420	-3	15	-4	-13	-22	-29	21	-11	-2	-2	18	420
Canterbury and Faversham	645	-8	15	0	-47	-28	-30	-42	-7	-30	-34	-28	645
North West Kent	720	-7	-23	-32	-48	-57	-53	-52	-24	-21	-43	-5	720
Dover District	440	4	20	0	6	5	4	19	22	17	9	11	440
Folkestone & Hythe District	330	-15	20	18	23	18	19	21	20	22	25	25	330
Gravesham and Longfield	420	-13	-29	-41	-58	-70	-59	-59	-66	-73	-87	-84	420
Sittingbourne and Sheppey	300	6	24	32	5	19	12	8	33	32	24	44	300
Thanet District	345	-1	21	23	21	25	9	23	25	26	30	37	345
Maidstone and Malling	815	-15	17	16	-8	-32	-56	-27	-32	-20	-52	-21	815
West Kent	1,264	-41	-2	-14	-13	11	10	39	75	84	99	165	1,294
Cranbrook	90	0	19	12	5	7	5	4	10	2	8	11	90
<b>Kent</b>	<b>5,789</b>	<b>-93</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-126</b>	<b>-123</b>	<b>-169</b>	<b>-44</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>-24</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>5,819</b>

Source: Management Information, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

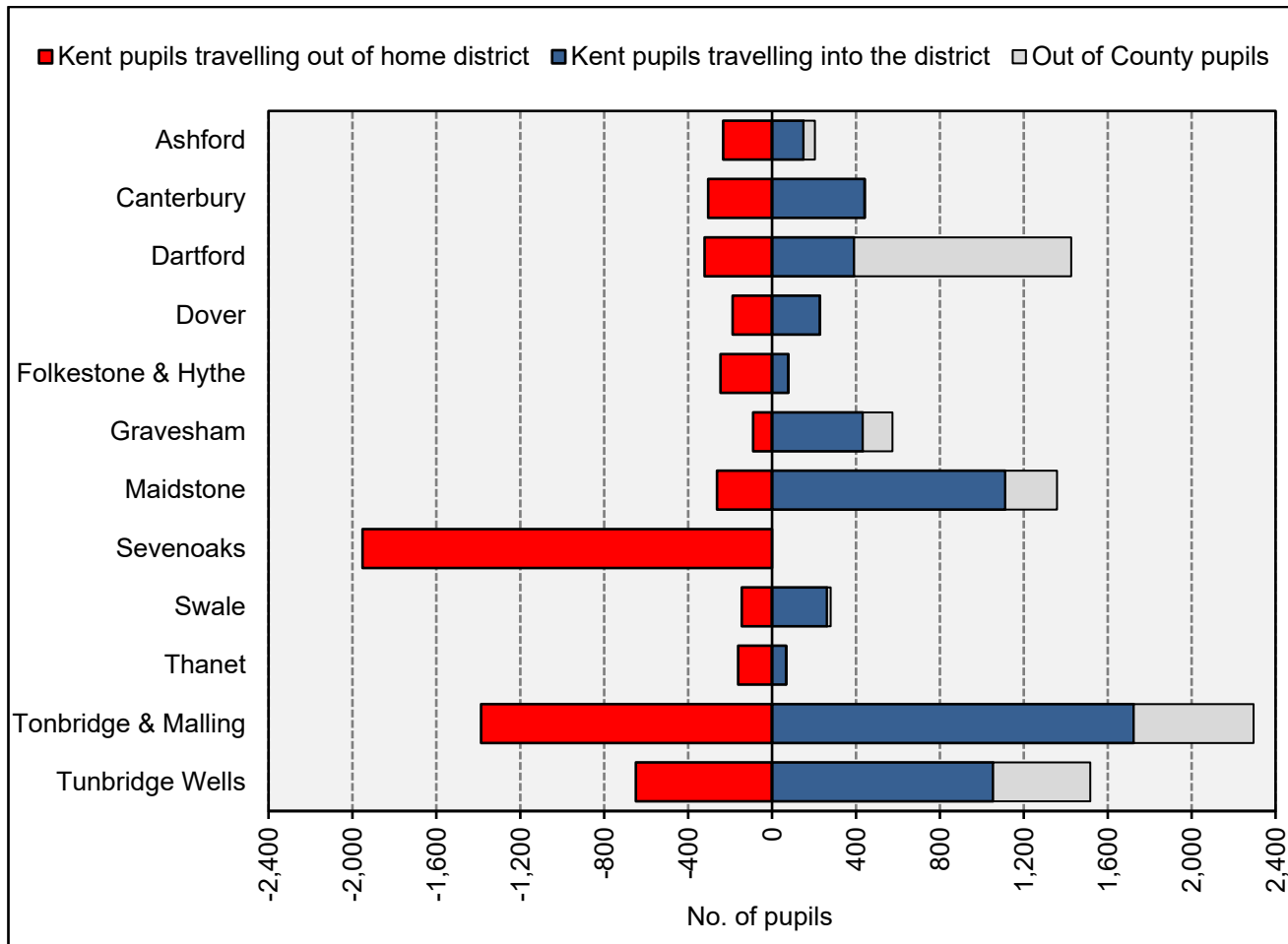
### 6.4 Travel to School Flows

Figures 6f and 6g outline the travel to school flows for selective and non-selective provision in Kent districts. There are big differences between both the scale of travel to school flows and the direction of flows between districts; for example, Sevenoaks has a net outflow of circa 3,500 pupils across the selective and non-selective sectors combined (excluding out of county pupils), whereas Maidstone has a net inflow of over 800 pupils. Dartford had the highest number of out of county pupils with over 1,500 traveling from adjacent boroughs. Tunbridge Wells has a high flow of pupils into the District particularly to access both non-selective denominational provision and selective provision. Tonbridge and Malling has high flows into and out of the District for both selective and non-selective provision.

**Figure 6f: Travel to school flows for non-selective pupils (years 7-11) in Kent mainstream schools (Autumn 2024)**



**Figure 6g: Travel to school flows for selective grammar pupils (years 7-11) in Kent mainstream schools (Autumn 2024)**



Source: Management Information, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

**Notes:**

- (1) Actual roll data 2024/25 - Schools Census, Autumn 2024
- (2) Data excludes Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover
- (3) The Sevenoaks Annex of Weald of Kent Grammar School is treated as being located in Tonbridge & Malling
- (4) The Sevenoaks Annex of Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys is treated as being located in Tunbridge Wells

## 6.6 Migration into Kent

Figure 6h, 6i and 6j set out the net migration by pre-school, primary school and secondary school ages for 2023 and 2024. This table indicates a reduction in the annual inwards migration for the pre-school, but a notable increase in both primary and secondary migration.

**Figure 6h: Pre-school (0-3 year olds) net migration year ending 30th June 2024**

District	2023					2024				
	Kent districts	Medway	London	Elsewhere in the UK	Total	Kent districts	Medway	London	Elsewhere in the UK	Total
Ashford	-8	6	109	6	112	-3	-4	41	-34	0
Canterbury	50	10	82	-9	134	40	9	82	-24	107
Dartford	-111	-47	192	-103	-70	-107	-25	203	-71	1
Dover	26	-1	9	-10	25	13	5	27	-5	40
Folkestone & Hythe	17	3	54	-13	62	38	-3	55	0	91
Gravesham	18	-28	124	-40	74	-39	-13	87	-43	-8
Maidstone	30	27	110	-51	116	8	37	136	-40	141
Sevenoaks	-17	9	207	-21	178	-38	-4	162	-61	59
Swale	-40	36	91	-9	78	40	61	94	0	196
Thanet	-3	1	61	-16	43	25	0	92	-11	105
Tonbridge & Malling	41	27	134	-34	168	18	27	116	-14	147
Tunbridge Wells	-3	7	162	-23	143	5	6	123	-35	99
<b>Kent</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>1,336</b>	<b>-323</b>	<b>1,063</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1,219</b>	<b>-338</b>	<b>978</b>

\*Source: Office for National Statistics, Table IM2022-24

**Figure 6i: Primary (4-10 year olds) net migration year ending 30th June 2024**

District	2023					2024				
	Kent districts	Medway	London	Elsewhere	Total	Kent districts	Medway	London	Elsewhere	Total
Ashford	44	7	95	32	178	-9	11	60	-56	6
Canterbury	73	17	81	-36	135	50	23	118	-22	168
Dartford	-166	-60	369	-85	58	-114	-73	464	-61	216
Dover	60	-3	42	27	126	53	3	50	-18	88
Folkestone & Hythe	-5	1	74	-10	60	32	0	56	23	111
Gravesham	5	-41	216	-34	146	-20	-46	223	-81	75
Maidstone	41	38	234	-53	260	35	69	191	-19	276
Sevenoaks	-103	-7	217	-58	49	-30	1	267	-44	195
Swale	16	50	172	10	248	29	26	147	-25	177
Thanet	-44	7	111	-51	22	-55	8	77	-29	1
Tonbridge & Malling	74	34	168	-7	269	-61	5	134	-15	63
Tunbridge Wells	7	7	197	-21	189	90	5	157	1	254
<b>Kent</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1,976</b>	<b>-287</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1,945</b>	<b>-347</b>	<b>1,630</b>

\*Source: Office for National Statistics, Table IM2022-24

**Figure 6j: Secondary aged (11-15 year olds) net migration year ending 30th June 2024**

District	2023					2024				
	Kent districts	Medway	London	Elsewhere	Total	Kent districts	Medway	London	Elsewhere	Total
Ashford	22	4	30	13	69	3	10	32	-32	12
Canterbury	66	19	77	0	162	36	13	78	-11	116
Dartford	-86	-27	185	-37	35	-71	-37	205	-7	90
Dover	33	1	69	39	142	1	1	47	8	57
Folkestone & Hythe	-3	1	15	-32	-19	-18	3	13	-26	-28
Gravesham	18	-18	99	-32	68	1	-22	107	-47	38
Maidstone	37	23	106	-14	152	65	41	97	7	209
Sevenoaks	-68	3	108	-32	11	-61	-7	122	-21	33
Swale	-23	35	82	-34	60	27	57	92	-36	139
Thanet	-24	-10	10	-40	-64	-9	12	41	-29	16
Tonbridge & Malling	31	-11	93	-28	85	-8	16	91	22	121
Tunbridge Wells	-4	3	117	31	147	35	3	106	19	163
<b>Kent</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>-167</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>1,029</b>	<b>-154</b>	<b>966</b>

Across the County as a whole, any fluctuation in migration may only have a small proportional impact on pupil numbers. However, at a district/borough level the fluctuation from one year to the next can be significant requiring the LA to respond swiftly to ensure sufficient school places.

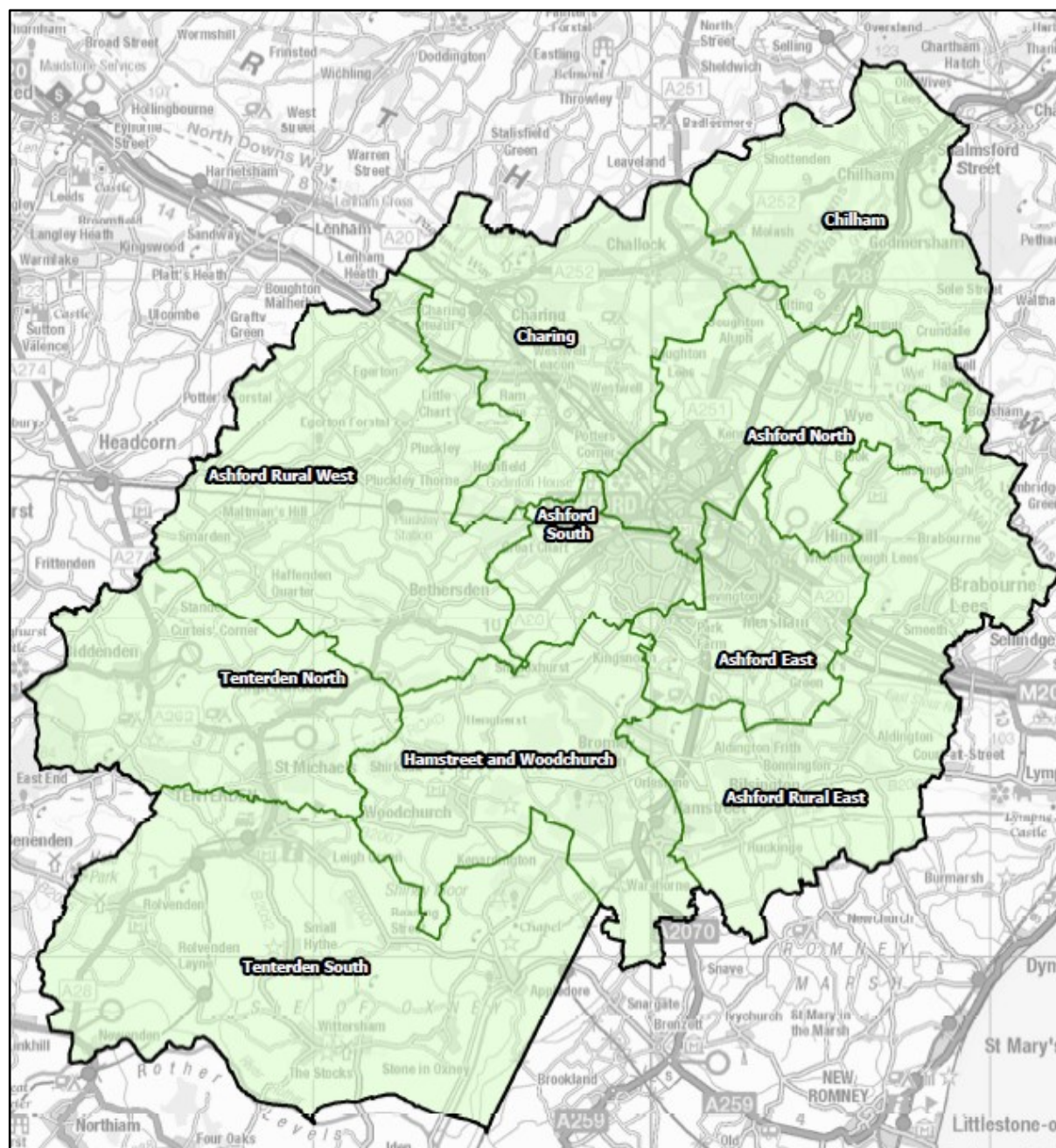
## 7. Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts

### 7.1 Ashford

#### Borough Commentary

- Birth rates nationally have fallen by 25% between 2011 and 2023. The trends in Ashford mirrors this, although the birth rate of the Borough continues to exceed both Kent and National rates. Indications are the downwards trend reversed in England, Kent and Ashford in 2024 with increases in birth rates. Comparable published data is awaited.
- Despite the falling birth rate, birth numbers in Ashford have not consistently declined in recent years. Future Year R cohorts (births in 2020 and on) vary in size from 1350 births to 1435 (a 3 FE difference). 2024 saw 33 additional births to 2023.
- Primary school rolls are expected to stabilise over the forecast period, as Year R cohorts of broadly comparable size join schools. In the short term rolls still continue falling as larger cohorts move through to secondary school. There will be localised pressures as house building resumes following delays in sites coming forwards due to 'nutrient neutrality' planning issues.
- Forecasts suggest a deficit of Year 7 places from 2026/27 and throughout the Plan period with the exception of 2030/31 and 2034/35. The addition of 30 places per year at Wye Free School (NS – Ashford North) will address the deficit in part.
- The Local Plan (up to 2030) was adopted in the first quarter of 2019. Within the Plan, the Borough Council have identified that up to 13,544 new homes could be delivered by 2030. This equates to an average of 1,129 new homes per annum. During the period 2014/15 to 2023/24 an average of 752 homes were completed per annum (Kent Analytics Statistical Bulletin April 2024).

## Map of the Ashford Borough primary planning groups



## Ashford primary schools by planning group

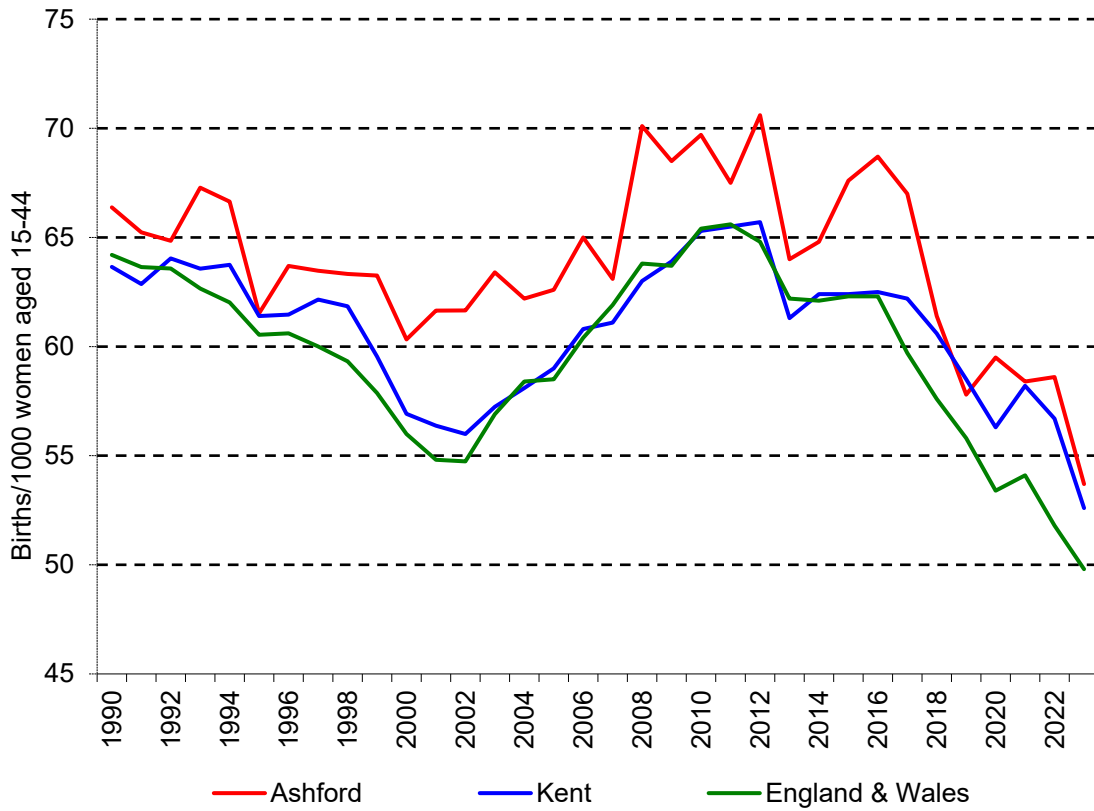
Planning Groups	School	Status
Chilham	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Chilham)	Voluntary Controlled
Charing	Challock Primary School	Foundation
	Charing CE Primary School	Academy
Ashford North	Downs View Infant School	Community
	Goat Lees Primary School	Foundation
	Godinton Primary School	Academy
	Kennington CE Academy	Academy
	Lady Joanna Thornhill Endowed Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Phoenix Community Primary School	Foundation
	Repton Manor Primary School	Foundation
	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Ashford)	Voluntary Aided
	St. Teresa's RC Primary School	Academy

Planning Groups	School	Status
	Victoria Road Primary School	Community
Ashford Rural East	Aldington Primary School	Foundation
	Brabourne CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Brook Community Primary School	Foundation
	Smeeth Community Primary School	Foundation
Ashford East	East Stour Primary School	Academy
	Finberry Primary School	Academy
	Furley Park Primary Academy	Academy
	Kingsnorth CE Primary School	Academy
	Mersham Primary School	Foundation
	Willesborough Infant School	Foundation
	Willesborough Junior School	Foundation
Ashford South	Ashford Oaks Primary School	Community
	Beaver Green Primary School	Academy
	Chilmington Green Primary School	Free
	Great Chart Primary School	Community
	John Wallis CE Academy	Academy
	John Wesley CE and Methodist Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Simon of England RC Primary School	Academy
Ashford Rural West	Bethersden School	Community
	Egerton CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Pluckley CE Primary School	Academy
	Smarden Primary School	Academy
Hamstreet and Woodchurch	Hamstreet Primary Academy	Academy
	Woodchurch CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Tenterden North	High Halden CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	John Mayne CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Michael's CE Primary School	Academy
Tenterden South	Rolvenden Primary School	Academy
	Tenterden CE Junior School	Academy
	Tenterden Infant School	Academy
	Wittersham CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided

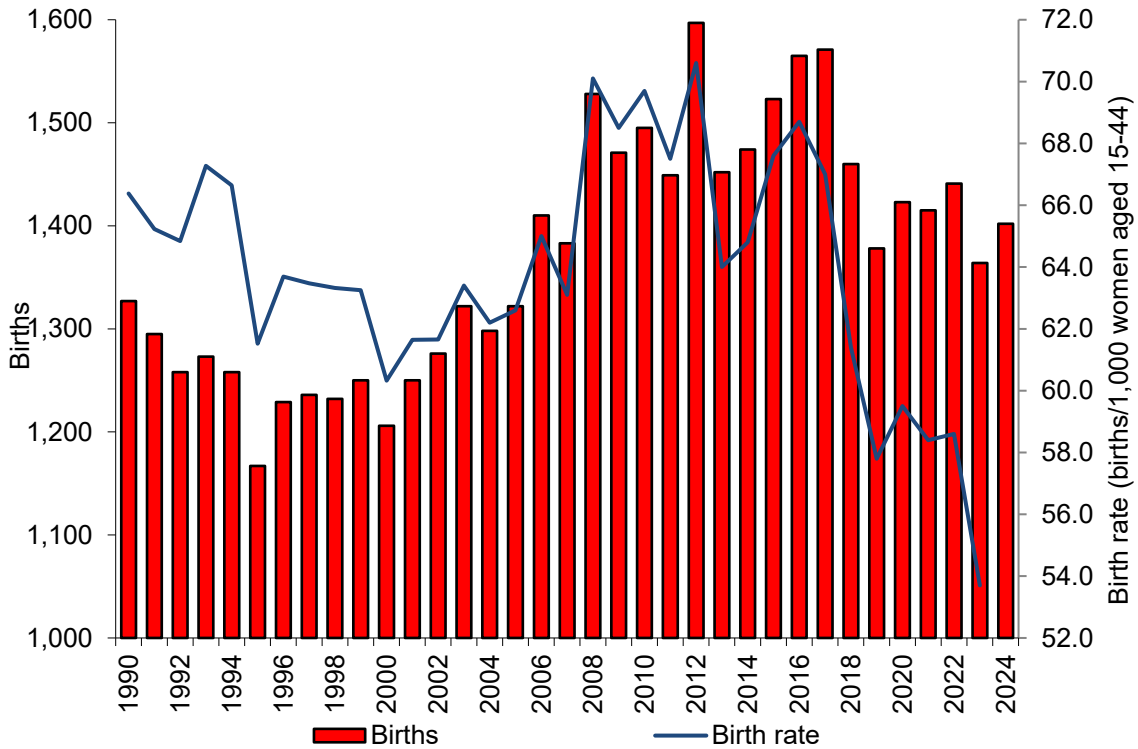
## Birth rate and births analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.

### Ashford, Kent and England & Wales birth rates 1990-2023



### Ashford births and birth rate 1990-2024



## Ashford Forecasts

### Primary - Year R surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Chilham	15	3	5	3	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	15
Challock and Charing	50	0	-2	4	2	6	-3	-4	-5	-6	-8	-10	50
Ashford North	450	23	3	37	57	49	34	33	34	35	34	34	420
Ashford Rural East	80	12	13	6	21	11	13	13	13	12	12	12	80
Ashford East	420	54	76	10	34	15	32	36	39	39	38	39	380
Ashford South	390	62	74	70	113	78	86	90	93	98	103	108	390
Ashford Rural West	80	17	3	7	6	5	3	2	1	0	0	-1	80
Hamstreet and Woodchurch	71	15	13	13	19	16	15	14	14	14	13	14	71
Tenterden North	65	13	8	7	14	9	11	10	10	9	9	9	65
Tenterden South	94	26	18	36	27	31	29	28	28	27	26	27	95
<b>Ashford</b>	<b>1,715</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>1,646</b>

### Secondary - Forecast Year 7 surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
NS - Ashford North	965	-10	8	-37	-60	-87	-94	59	-42	0	-11	70	938
NS - Tenterden and Cranbrook	360	95	72	5	2	-1	-5	8	4	-5	4	15	300
SG - Ashford	420	-3	15	-4	-13	-22	-29	21	-11	-2	-2	18	420

## **Primary Borough Commentary**

Across the District we forecast 14.4% surplus Year R places by the end of the forecast period. Across the whole primary cohort, forecasts predict 6.6% surplus capacity growing to 9.8%. In the short to medium term, we will collaborate with schools to manage the levels of surplus Year R places to help maintain high quality, sustainable provision. In line with Government policy, surplus may also be used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, or to provide more specialist SEN places.

### **Charing and Challock Planning Group**

Forecasts suggest a small deficit of primary school places throughout the forecast period.

The expansion of Charing CE Primary School continues to be the strategic solution for additional primary school places. The expansion of the school will be driven by local consented housing developments. Those developments have as yet not been able to progress, therefore it is not expected school places will be required until the end of the decade or later.

### **Ashford North Planning Group**

Forecasts suggest surplus places throughout the forecast period. In the longer term, planned new developments north of the M20 between Kennington, Willesborough and Eureka Park will increase demand. To address the need for primary school places to support new housing in and around the planning group, the Local Plan makes provision for a new 2FE primary school to be incorporated into the 'Conningbrook Park' development. This development has only just started. The primary school land is expected to be available from 2027 at the earliest. The school is likely to be required in the next decade.

### **Ashford East Planning Group**

Although forecasts suggest a level of surplus Year R places across the forecast period additional provision may be required to support housing development as this comes forward. This includes: Finberry, Waterbrook, Park Farm, Court Lodge, Pound Lane and Willesborough Lees.

The Local Plan makes provision for a new 2FE primary school to be incorporated into the 'Court Lodge' development area, to meet the longer-term primary education needs driven by that development. We would not expect the new primary school to be available until the 2030's.

### **Ashford South Planning Group**

Forecasts suggest increasing surplus Year R places across the forecast period from 2027 onwards. The surplus capacity will reduce when delivery of consented houses within Chilmington Green increases.

## **Secondary Borough Commentary**

There are three planning groups which are within Ashford Borough or which cross the Borough boundary (See appendix 13.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). Two planning groups are non-selective (Ashford North, Tenterden and Cranbrook), one selective. The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

### **Ashford North Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are five existing schools in the Ashford North non-selective planning group: John Wallis Church of England Academy, The North School, The Towers School and Sixth Form Centre, Wye School and Chilmington Green Secondary School.

Forecasts suggest a deficit of Year 7 places from 2026/27 in all but two years of the forecast period. The addition of 30 places per year at Wye Free School will address the deficit in part and in the short to medium term, we will collaborate with existing schools to ensure that there are

sufficient Year 7 places for all who require one. In addition, developer contribution sought to expand Chilmington Geen Secondary School by 2FE, will support planned housing development.

### **Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective Planning Group**

Forecasts indicate a fluctuation between a very small surplus of and a very small deficit of Year 7 places annually through the forecast period. This can be managed via admissions criteria.

### **Ashford Selective Planning Group**

There are two selective schools in the Borough: Highworth Grammar School and The Norton Knatchbull Grammar School. Forecasts suggest that there will be a small deficit of Year 7 places throughout the forecast period with the exception of 2030/31 and 2034/35. We will work with the existing schools to manage this, with temporary expansions if necessary.

### **Planned Commissioning – Ashford**

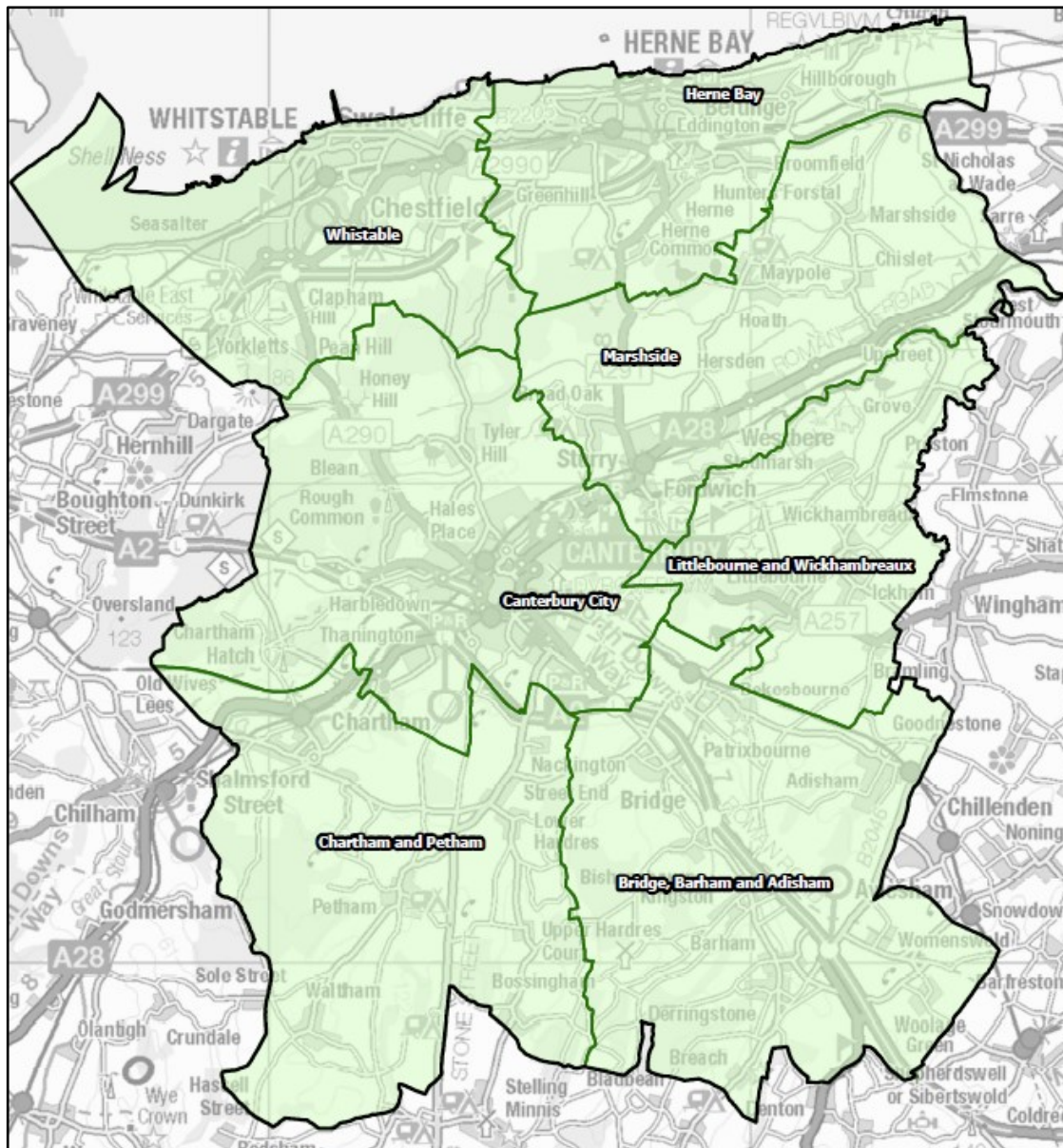
<b>Planning Group</b>	<b>By 2026-27</b>	<b>By 2027-28</b>	<b>By 2028-29</b>	<b>By 2029-30</b>	<b>Between 2030-33</b>	<b>Post 2033</b>
<b>Ashford East</b>					2FE of new provision at Court Lodge	
<b>Ashford North</b>					2FE New provision at Conningbrook Park	
<b>Charing</b>				0.3FE Charing CEPS		
<b>Ashford South</b>						2FE of new provision at Chilmington Green
<b>Ashford North Non-Selective</b>	1 FE Wye Free School		30 Year 7 places	30 Year 7 places		2FE Expansion of Chilmington Green

## 7.2 Canterbury

### District commentary

- The Canterbury district birth rate differs to Kent and the national picture as it is significantly lower, reflecting the large student population. The birth rate has had a downward trend since the 1990s. However, following a sharp fall in 2020, Canterbury's birth rate and the number of births rose again in 2021, before falling back slightly in 2022, 2023 and 2024.
- We forecast surplus primary school places across the District throughout the forecast period, however there are significant differences in the planning groups.
- Within the secondary sector, we forecast pressures on capacity for non-selective Year 7 places in Canterbury City planning group but capacity in the Canterbury Coastal planning group. For selective places there is surplus capacity until 2027/28. After this date, a pressure on places is forecast.
- Canterbury City Council's current Local Plan, adopted on 13 July 2017, proposed a total of just over 16,000 new homes during the Plan period up to 2031. This equates to an average of 925 dwellings per annum. During the 2014/15 to 2023/24 a total of 4919 houses were completed (NET) with an average of 492 per year.
- Canterbury City Council (CCC) is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for the district which will set out the blueprint for development up to 2042/43. Following previous consultations in 2020, 2021 and 2022, CCC consulted on a revised Regulation 18 draft Local Plan in Spring 2024. CCC is currently reviewing the representations received to the consultation and will be running a focused Regulation 18 consultation on specific policies in 2025. A Regulation 19 Local Plan will be prepared for consultation in 2026, before the plan is examined by an inspector and a final decision is made.

## Map of the Canterbury Primary Planning Groups



## Canterbury Primary Schools by Planning Group

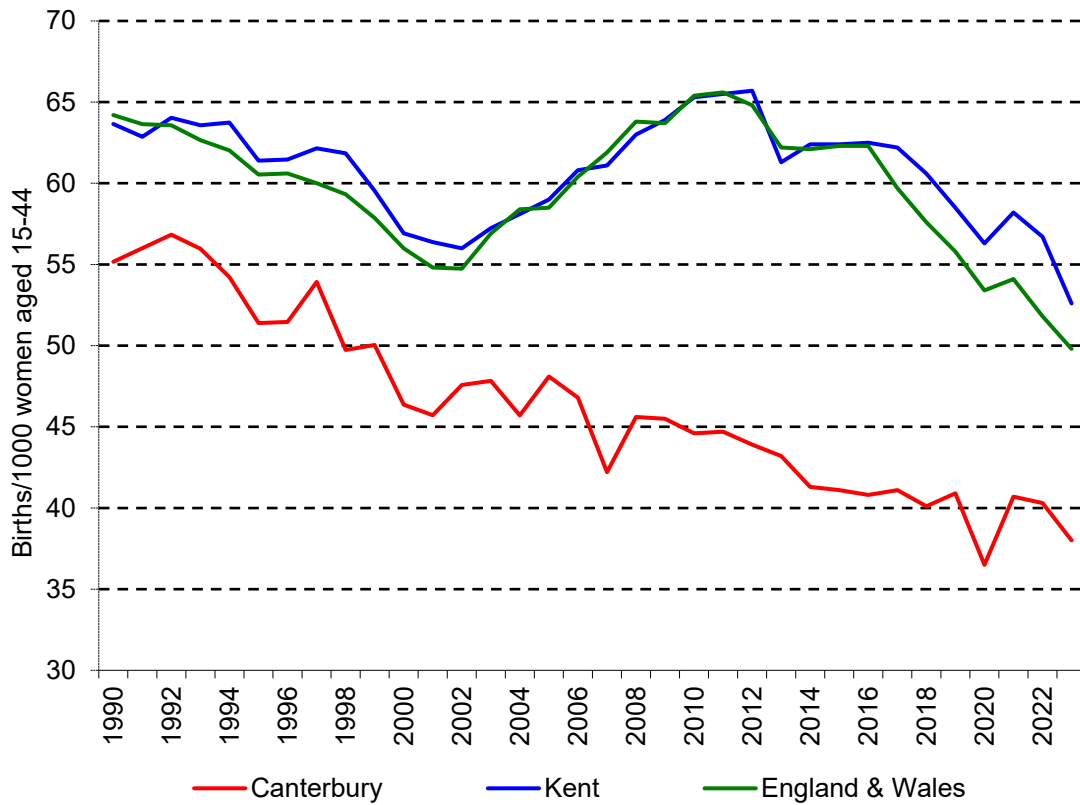
Planning Group	School	Status
Canterbury City	Blean Primary School	Community
	Canterbury Primary School	Academy
	Parkside Community Primary School	Foundation
	Pilgrims' Way Primary School	Academy
	St. John's CE Primary School (Canterbury)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Peter's Methodist Primary School (Canterbury)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Stephen's Infant School	Academy
	St. Stephen's Junior School	Academy
	St. Thomas' RC Primary School (Canterbury)	Voluntary Aided
	Wincheap Foundation Primary School	Foundation
Marshside	Chislet CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Water Meadows Primary School	Academy
	Hoath Primary School	Community
	Sturry CE Primary School	Academy
Bridge, Barham and Adisham	Adisham CE Primary School	Academy
	Barham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Bridge and Patrixbourne CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

Planning Group	School	Status
Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux	Littlebourne CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Wickhambreaux CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Chartham and Petham	Chartham Primary School	Academy
	Petham Primary School	Academy
Whitstable	Joy Lane Primary School	Foundation
	St. Alphege CE Infant School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Mary's RC Primary School (Whitstable)	Academy
	Swalecliffe Community Primary School	Foundation
	Westmeads Community Infant School	Community
	Whitstable and Seasalter Endowed CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided
	Whitstable Junior School	Foundation
Herne Bay	Thornden Wood Primary School	Academy
	Hampton Primary School	Academy
	Herne Bay Infant School	Community
	Herne Bay Junior School	Foundation
	Herne CE Infant School	Voluntary Controlled
	Herne CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided
	Reculver CE Primary School	Academy

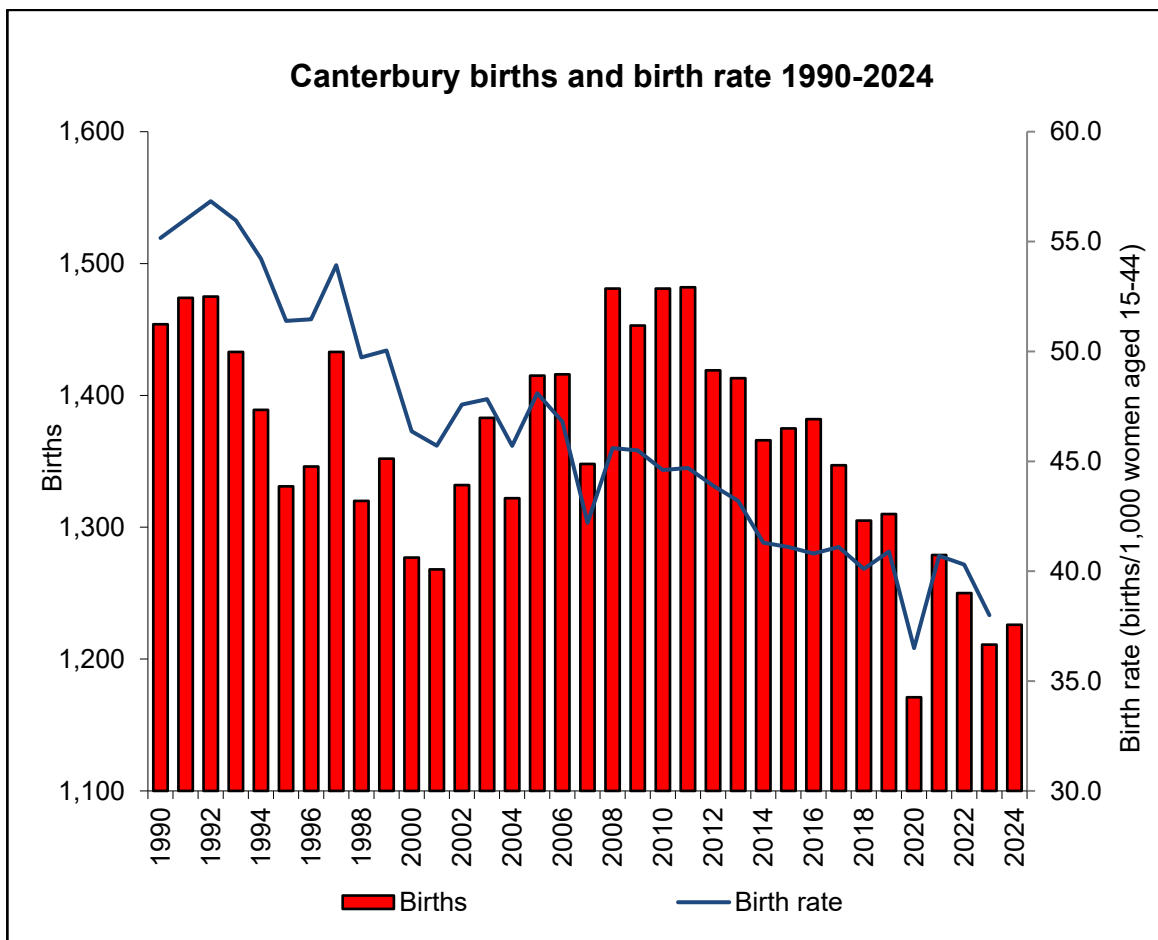
## Birth Rate and Birth Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the district and the number of recorded births.

### Canterbury, Kent and England & Wales birth rates 1990-2023



### Canterbury births and birth rate 1990-2024



## Canterbury Forecasts

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Canterbury City	480	34	19	21	33	21	32	43	57	72	91	114	480
Marshside	119	12	19	3	1	-2	6	6	8	9	9	7	120
Bridge, Barham and Adisham	105	1	-2	4	2	4	3	3	4	5	7	8	105
Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux	30	3	-1	3	1	3	2	2	3	3	4	4	30
Chartham and Petham	75	19	20	12	21	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	75
Whitstable	360	101	56	79	105	107	86	85	83	82	80	75	330
Herne Bay	390	57	36	13	44	54	35	37	40	44	46	45	360
<b>Canterbury</b>	<b>1,559</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>1,500</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Canterbury City Non-Selective	680	4	10	-5	-55	-61	-57	-69	-52	-77	-84	-59	680
Canterbury Coastal Non-Selective	618	61	56	41	25	66	35	36	100	78	85	123	618
Canterbury and Faversham Selective	645	-8	15	0	-47	-28	-30	-42	-7	-30	-34	-28	645

## **Primary District Commentary**

Forecasts indicate that across Canterbury district there will be surplus capacity for Year R places. The surplus for Year R fluctuates throughout the forecast period from 4.5FE surplus for 2026/27 to 199 (6.6FE) for 2030/31 with significant variations across the different Planning Groups. The lower rate of housebuilding combined with the decline in birth rate has resulted in surplus primary places across the planning groups with significant surplus of places in Herne Bay and Whitstable.

### **Canterbury City Planning Group**

Forecasts indicate a surplus of places in the planning group of between 0.7FE for Year R in 2026/27 increasing to 1.4FE in 2030/31. However, the first phase (1FE) of the new 2FE Saxon Fields primary school in Thanington will be established to serve the new housing development of 750 homes in the planning group. This phased approach will prevent overcapacity in the planning area and help to realign historical travel patterns.

### **Marshside Planning Group**

Forecasts indicate an increasing surplus of capacity from 0.1FE in 2026/27 to 0.2FE in 2030/31. Later in the forecast period, we will expand Water Meadows Primary Academy by 1FE to serve the housing development in this planning group.

### **Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux Planning Group and Bridge, Barham and Adisham**

Forecasts indicate that there will be a slight growing pressure for Year R places within the planning groups. This is due to the significant number of families who traditionally travel into the planning groups for places. Later in the forecast period, dependent on new housing being brought forward in the planning group, a 0.5FE expansion of Littlebourne Primary School will be commissioned.

### **Whitstable Planning Group**

Forecasts indicate a sustained surplus of Year R places from 2.6FE in 2026/27 to 2.8FE in 2030/31. Discussions will take place with schools in the planning group to manage this surplus.

### **Herne Bay Planning Group**

Forecasts indicate surplus capacity of between 0.4FE in 2026/7 to 1.2FE in 2030/31 of for Year R places. If new housing developments are delivered in line with the Local Plan, additional capacity will be required in the plan period. Dependent on the order in which developments are built out, this could be delivered through a 1FE expansion of Thornden Wood Primary School or the phased establishment of a new 2FE primary school on the Hillborough development.

## **Secondary District Commentary**

There are three planning groups within Canterbury district, or which cross the Borough boundary (See appendix 13.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). Two planning groups are non-selective (Canterbury City and Canterbury Coastal), and one selective (Canterbury and Faversham). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

### **Canterbury City Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are four schools in the Canterbury City non-selective planning group: Archbishop's School, Barton Manor, Canterbury Academy, and St Anselm's Catholic School.

Forecasts indicate a pressure of 0.1FE from 2026/27 which increases to 2.3FE in 2030/31. The historical trend of students travelling from the Coastal planning group to Canterbury city schools place pressure on the Canterbury City planning group. The surplus capacity in the Coastal planning group will help offset these pressures in Canterbury city schools and will realign students to the coastal schools near to where they live. Any additional pressures within Canterbury City planning group will be met by temporary or permanent expansions.

### Canterbury Coastal Non-Selective Planning Group

There are three schools in the Canterbury Coastal non-selective planning group: The Whitstable School, Herne Bay High School and Spires Academy.

Year 7 forecasts indicate a fluctuating surplus of places between 1.3FE in 2026/27 to 1.2FE in 2030/31. The historical trend of students travelling from the coast to Canterbury city is starting to change and the surplus capacity in the coastal schools will help offset the pressures in Canterbury City planning group.

### Canterbury and Faversham Selective Planning Group

There are four schools in the Canterbury and Faversham selective planning group: Barton Court Grammar School, Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School.

Forecasts indicate sufficient capacity in the planning group until 2027. From 2027/28 the forecast indicates a fluctuating pressure of up to 1.5FE. We will be working with existing school within the planning group to meet this need.

### Planned Commissioning - Canterbury

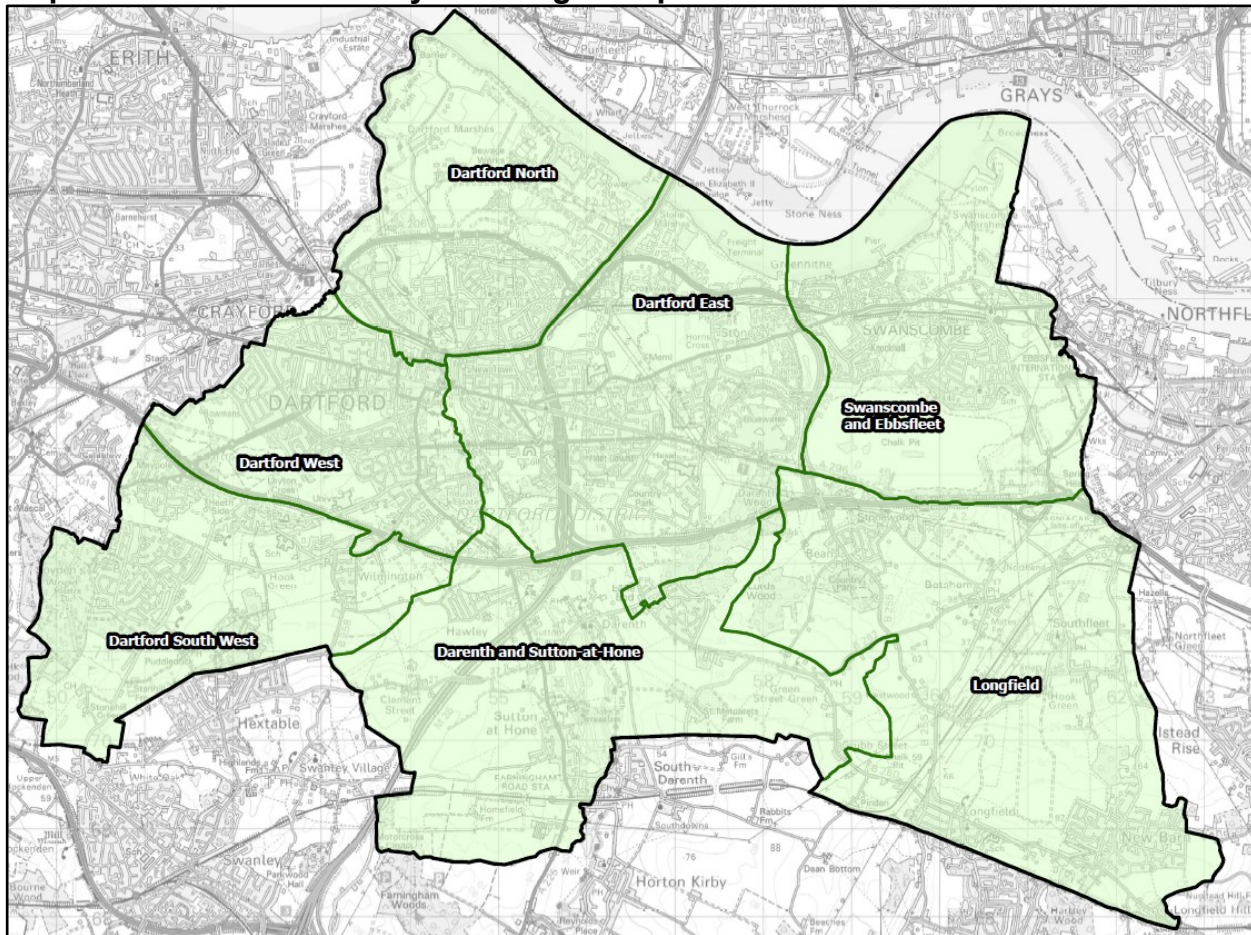
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Canterbury City			1FE of new School in Thanington – Saxon Fields Primary School			1 FE Saxon Fields Primary School
Marshside					1FE expansion of Water Meadows	1FE of new provision in Sturry/ Broad Oak
Herne Bay						1FE expansion of Thornden Wood PS or 1FE new provision in Herne Bay
Canterbury City Non- Selective		Up to 1FE temporary places	Up to 1 FE temporary places	Up to 1 FE temporary places		
Canterbury and Faversham Selective		0.5FE expansion of Simon Langton Girls School				

## 7.3 Dartford

### Borough Summary

- The Dartford birth rate continues to fall, although it remains significantly higher than the Kent and National averages.
- Primary forecasts indicate surpluses of 4.5FE in the first year of the Plan but increases to a peak of 8FE during the remainder of the Plan period. Over the next year, KCC is supporting a school to reduce their PAN; through In Year Variation. This reduction is not reflected in the forecasts, but the reduction would reduce the amount of capacity in Dartford by 15 Year R places per year. We need to be mindful that there is still significant house building scheduled in Dartford over the period of the Borough's recently adopted Local Plan, and much of that housing has not been consented, so is not included in the forecasts. However, KCC will continue to monitor the situation, and should schools begin to experience issues in respect of their financial viability, officers will work with them to assess whether further PAN reductions are required.
- Over the Plan period in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group, forecast surplus fluctuates between just over 4.5FE to 7FE. The Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group shows a deficit from the outset for all of the Plan period. The deficit increases year on year, peaking at just over 3.5FE for September 2028, before reducing to 2.5FE in September 2030 and peaking again in September 2033 with a deficit of just over 4FE. Extensive work has been undertaken in recent years with all schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group to introduce additional places and so further expansion opportunities are extremely limited. Therefore, until Gravesham's new Local Plan is produced and adopted, cross border working will need to be employed to ensure sufficiency of school places in the locality.
- Selective demand in both the Gravesham and Longfield Selective and North West Kent Selective Planning Groups are under pressure throughout the whole Plan period. With the deficit peaking in the Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group at just under 3FE for September 2033 and in the North West Kent Selective Planning Group at 2FE for September 2028. Any options for creating additional selective capacity will be extremely challenging and KCC may only be able to ensure that the Local Authority statutory duty to provide sufficient secondary places, of any type, is met. However, KCC continues to work with all selective Schools in the wider North Kent Area to identify possible options for further expansion of provision.
- Dartford Borough Council (DBC) and the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) had estimated that up to 2026, approximately 17,300 new homes would be built. The build trajectory to achieve that had slipped due to covid but continues to move at pace.
- More recently, the EDC has confirmed that a total 15,000 homes will be built in their area of responsibility alone, with a considerable number already completed. However, there is a significant proportion of that housing still to be produced. Not all of the anticipated housing has been consented, and so it will not appear in the forecasts. KCC is working in collaboration with DBC and EDC to ensure that sufficient places are available to accommodate the children from the new housing, even if it does not feature in the forecasts.

## Map of the Dartford Primary Planning Groups



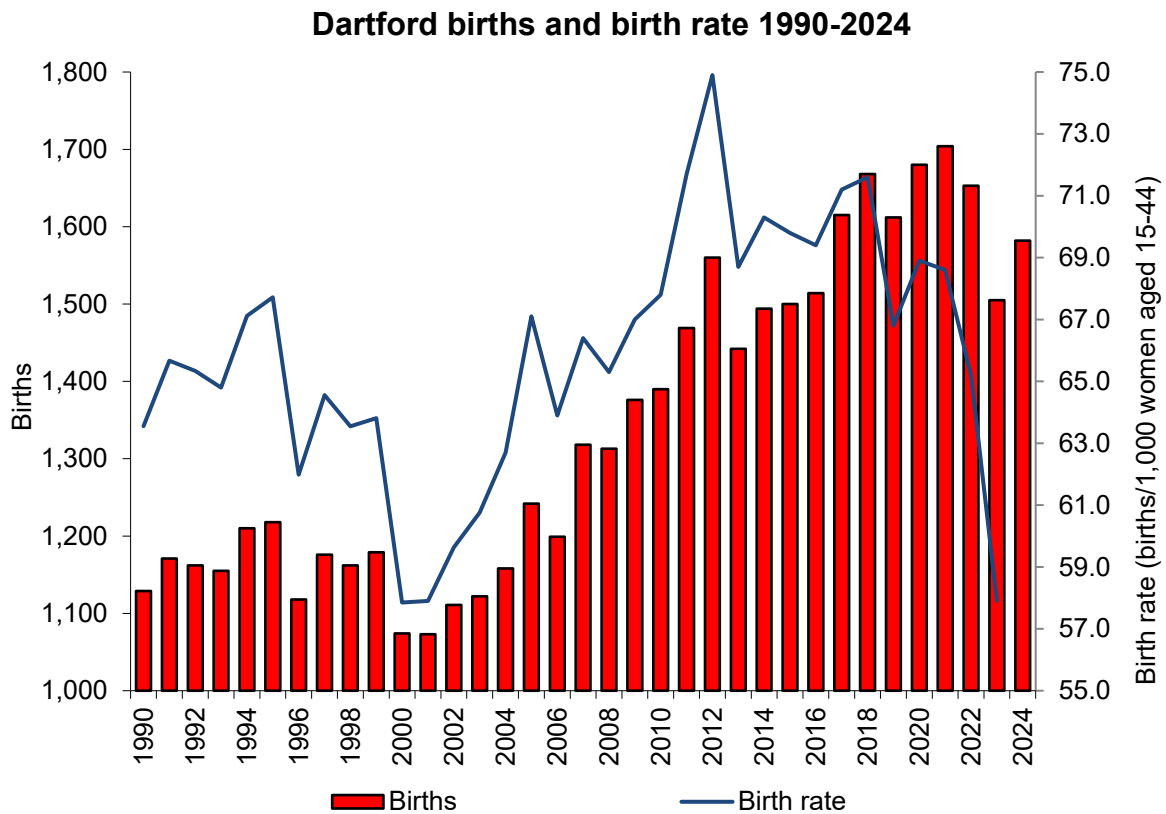
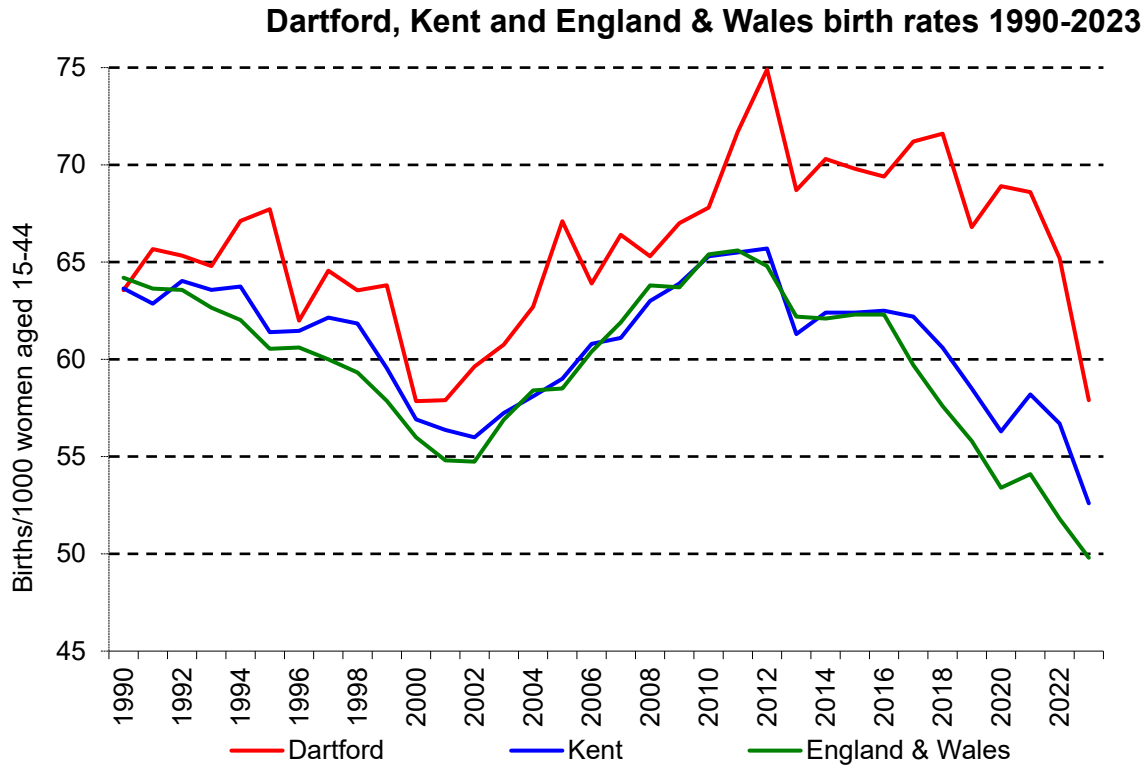
## Dartford Primary Schools by Planning Group

	School	Status
Dartford North	Dartford Bridge Community Primary School	Academy
	Holy Trinity CE Primary School (Dartford)	Voluntary Aided
	River Mill Primary School	Free
	St. Anselm's RC Primary School	Academy
	Temple Hill Primary Academy	Academy
Dartford West	Oakfield Primary Academy	Academy
	Our Lady's RC Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Wentworth Primary School	Academy
	West Hill Primary Academy	Academy
	Westgate Primary School	Academy
Dartford East	Brent Primary School	Academy
	Leigh Academy Dartford	Academy
	Fleetdown Primary School	Academy
	Gateway Primary Academy	Academy
	Stone St. Mary's CE Primary School	Academy
Dartford South West	Joyden's Wood Infant School	Academy
	Joyden's Wood Junior School	Academy
	Maypole Primary School	Academy
	Wilmington Primary School	Academy
Darenth and Sutton-at-Hone	Greenlands Primary School	Academy
	Sutton-at-Hone CE Primary School	Academy
Swanscombe and	Alkerden C of E Academy (from September 2026)	Academy

	<b>School</b>	<b>Status</b>
Ebbsfleet	Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard	Academy
	Craylands School	Community
	Ebbsfleet Green Primary School	Free
	Knockhall Primary School	Academy
	Manor Community Primary School	Academy
Longfield	Bean Primary School	Community
	Langafel CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sedley's CE Primary School	Academy

## Birth Rate Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.



## Dartford Forecasts

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Dartford North	330	40	50	49	68	99	71	78	84	91	97	103	330
Dartford West	315	18	38	6	30	22	23	23	22	21	22	23	315
Dartford East	390	3	8	-1	18	21	15	17	19	22	27	33	390
Dartford South West	180	49	35	41	63	55	48	47	46	46	46	45	180
Darenth and Sutton-at-Hone	90	25	16	23	21	25	21	20	20	20	20	21	90
Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet	390	51	-8	3	-31	6	30	35	41	48	58	67	420
Longfield	90	16	12	13	14	14	12	11	11	10	10	10	90
<b>Dartford</b>	<b>1,785</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>1,815</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective	1,260	10	123	175	132	154	176	174	211	184	146	205	1,560
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective	1,370	32	-3	-34	-78	-113	-74	-71	-75	-97	-126	-103	1,389
Gravesham and Longfield Selective	420	-13	-29	-41	-58	-70	-59	-59	-66	-73	-87	-84	420
North West Kent Selective	720	-7	-23	-32	-48	-57	-53	-52	-24	-21	-43	-5	720

## **Primary Borough commentary**

Forecasts, for the Borough as a whole, indicate a range of 4.5FE - 8FE surplus for the first three years of the main Plan period for Year R. From September 2031 the surplus increases steadily from 8FE - 10FE over the remainder of the longer term planning period. Forecasted demand comes from the Dartford East Planning Group and the Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet Planning Group.

Dartford remains one of the fastest growing boroughs. Although, the recent fall in birth rate has created this surplus of forecasted places resulting in no action likely to be needed. However, it may be necessary to consider temporary PAN reductions of some schools to maintain financial viability. In addition to the forecast identified above, plans for further housing across the borough will increase the need for school places. Over and above the current planned housing numbers, Dartford Borough Council have a new Local Plan that describes an additional 7000 units.

### **Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet Planning Group**

This planning group is significantly impacted by the Ebbsfleet Garden City development area. A new primary school was established on the Ebbsfleet Green development in 2020-21 which opened with 1FE. The increased demand for year R places due to the pace of housebuilding, necessitated that it be expanded to its capacity of 2FE ahead of the projected timeline.

Due to increased pupil yields from new housing, the demand has been such in the planning group that a need to commission additional Year R places at Ebbsfleet Green Primary School was identified. The school offered bulge classes for 2024 and for 2025 only.

As the Garden City development progresses, a new 2FE primary provision will be provided at the Alkerden all-through school, opening with 1FE from September 2026 and expanding to 2FE from September 2028. However, this 1FE expansion may be considered to be brought forward a year to September 2027 in order to meet the deficit forecast for September 2027/2028. This new provision has been commissioned and is already included in the current forecasts.

In the longer term, should housing be delivered at expected rates, two further new primary schools (Ashmere and Ebbsfleet Central) will be required in addition to the establishment of the primary provision at Alkerden. This will provide a total of 6FE of new primary provision across the Plan period. The additional schools at Ashmere and Ebbsfleet Central will only be commissioned when the requisite number of new dwellings have been consented.

## **Secondary Borough Commentary**

There are two non-selective and two selective planning groups that cover Dartford Borough or which cross the Borough boundary. See appendix 13.2 for the secondary planning group maps.

### **Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are eight schools in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group: Alkerden C of E Academy, Dartford Science and Technology College, Ebbsfleet Academy, Leigh UTC, Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy, Stone Lodge School, Leigh Academy Wilmington and Orchards Academy. All the schools are in Dartford Borough, except for Orchards Academy which is in Sevenoaks District.

Demand is manageable without any intervention for the duration of the Plan period.

To manage the demand that will be derived from the additional housebuilding, the new secondary provision at the Alkerden C of E Academy, will be expanded to its full capacity of 8FE, in the coming years that is included within the current forecast. For 2025 the school has opened in temporary accommodation admitting 5FE of Year 7 students. For 2026 Alkerden C of E Academy will be admitting 6FE of Year 7 students.

Also included in the forecasts is the 2FE that KCC have commissioned at Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy.

### **Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are seven schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group: Longfield Academy, Meopham School, Northfleet Technology College, Northfleet School for Girls, Thamesview School, Saint George's CE School and Saint John's Catholic Comprehensive School.

The planning group is in deficit for the duration of the Plan period, fluctuating between 1FE and 4FE deficit for the whole of the main Plan period. The deficit of just over 1FE for September 2026 increases to just under 4FE for September 2028. The deficit then decreases to 2.5FE and remains steady for a three-year period before increasing to a second peak of just over 4FE for September 2033.

KCC have recently commissioned an additional permanent 1FE at Northfleet Technology College, which has been included in the forecasts.

By 2027, another 3FE of provision will appear to be required. However, as previously stated, demand will need to be met through cross border working in the medium term. In the meantime, KCC will work with the schools in the planning group and Gravesham Borough Council to identify options for increasing existing provision or introducing new schools, whilst acknowledging that any work to expand an existing school will be very expensive and logistically challenging.

Longer term, KCC will definitely need to consider new secondary provision based on the publication of the Gravesham Local Plan. KCC will monitor the forecasts as the new Gravesham Local Plan becomes clear. During the local plan consultation, KCC notified GBC that there is a deficit and so any new housing needs to come with land for a new, non-selective secondary school or schools.

There are four schools in the North West Kent Selective Planning Group: Wilmington Grammar School for Girls, Wilmington Grammar School for Boys, Dartford Grammar School and Dartford Grammar School for Girls.

Forecasted demand for selective places in the North West Kent Selective Planning Group indicates that the planning group will now be in deficit for the duration of the Plan period.

For 2026, the deficit is forecast to be 1FE and will likely be manageable within existing provision. The deficit then increases to 2FE for September 2028. The deficit continues to fluctuate between 1FE and 2FE for the remainder of the Plan period.

All four Grammar schools have been assessed for whether an expansion is possible. The two schools in Wilmington would be very challenging to expand, due to local traffic concerns. In Dartford, the two schools are on extremely constrained ground. However, KCC is working with the boys Grammar school to see whether a small expansion is possible. A project that would provide 0.5FE has been identified and feasibility work is underway.

In addition, KCC has worked with Dartford Grammar School to amend their admission criteria so that the school offers more places to students who are Kent residents. This had the effect of guaranteeing access to 40 more year 7 places for students who are Kent residents, from September 2025, without any physical changes to the buildings.

Nevertheless, there remain small pockets of Dartford where obtaining a Grammar school place is challenging due to the home to school distance being too far. KCC may only be able to ensure that the Local Authority statutory duty to provide sufficient places, of any type, is met.

As stated in previous iterations of the KCP, if additional Grammar school places are to be provided, the only feasible option is to look holistically at selective provision across the wider North Kent area. The most efficient use of resources would be to introduce new satellite provisions, similar to those introduced in Sevenoaks. This is because current Government legislation prohibits the introduction of new selective schools.

However, options to do this would be logistically and politically challenging. The key constraints would be identifying both boys and girls Grammar schools willing to operate a satellite provision on a shared site, identifying land to accommodate the provisions, obtaining DfE approval and obtaining the requisite capital funding. An estimate of cost can be made by looking at the cost of a new 6FE school. This would indicate a cost of c£40m to introduce a 3FE boys, and a 3FE girls Grammar satellite, plus the capital cost of obtaining at least four hectares of land. Any smaller than 3FE and a satellite becomes financially unviable for the host school to manage.

KCC will pursue every avenue to try and identify a solution that provides the selective provision required. This provision is included in the planning matrix at the end of this section, but it needs to be borne in mind that this entry is predicated on whether such a provision is even achievable.

### **Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group**

There are two schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group: Gravesend Grammar School and the Mayfield Grammar School.

The planning group is in deficit for the whole of the planning period. For September 2026, the deficit is 1.5FE. This deficit increases to 2FE - 3FE for the duration of the Plan period.

Following expansions to both Mayfield Grammar School and Gravesend Grammar School, both Gravesham Grammar Schools are at their capacity and cannot be expanded further. Therefore, this demand will need to be managed across Borough boundaries or by expansion to existing schools by using satellites.

If additional Grammar school places are to be provided, the only feasible option is to look holistically at selective provision across the wider North Kent. The most efficient use of resources would be to introduce new satellite provisions, similar to those introduced in Sevenoaks. This is because current Government legislation prohibits the introduction of new selective schools.

However, options to do this would be logistically and politically challenging. The key constraints would be identifying both boys and girls Grammar schools willing to operate a satellite provision on a shared site, identifying land to accommodate the provisions, obtaining DfE approval and obtaining the requisite capital funding. An estimate of cost can be made by looking at the cost of a new 6FE school. This would indicate a cost of c£40m to introduce a 3FE boys, and a 3FE girls Grammar satellite, plus the capital cost of obtaining at least four hectares of land. Any smaller than 3FE and a satellite becomes financially unviable for the host school to manage.

Due to the constraints around providing further selective provision, KCC will seek to ensure that there is sufficient capacity, even if that provision is non-selective.

### Planned Commissioning - Dartford

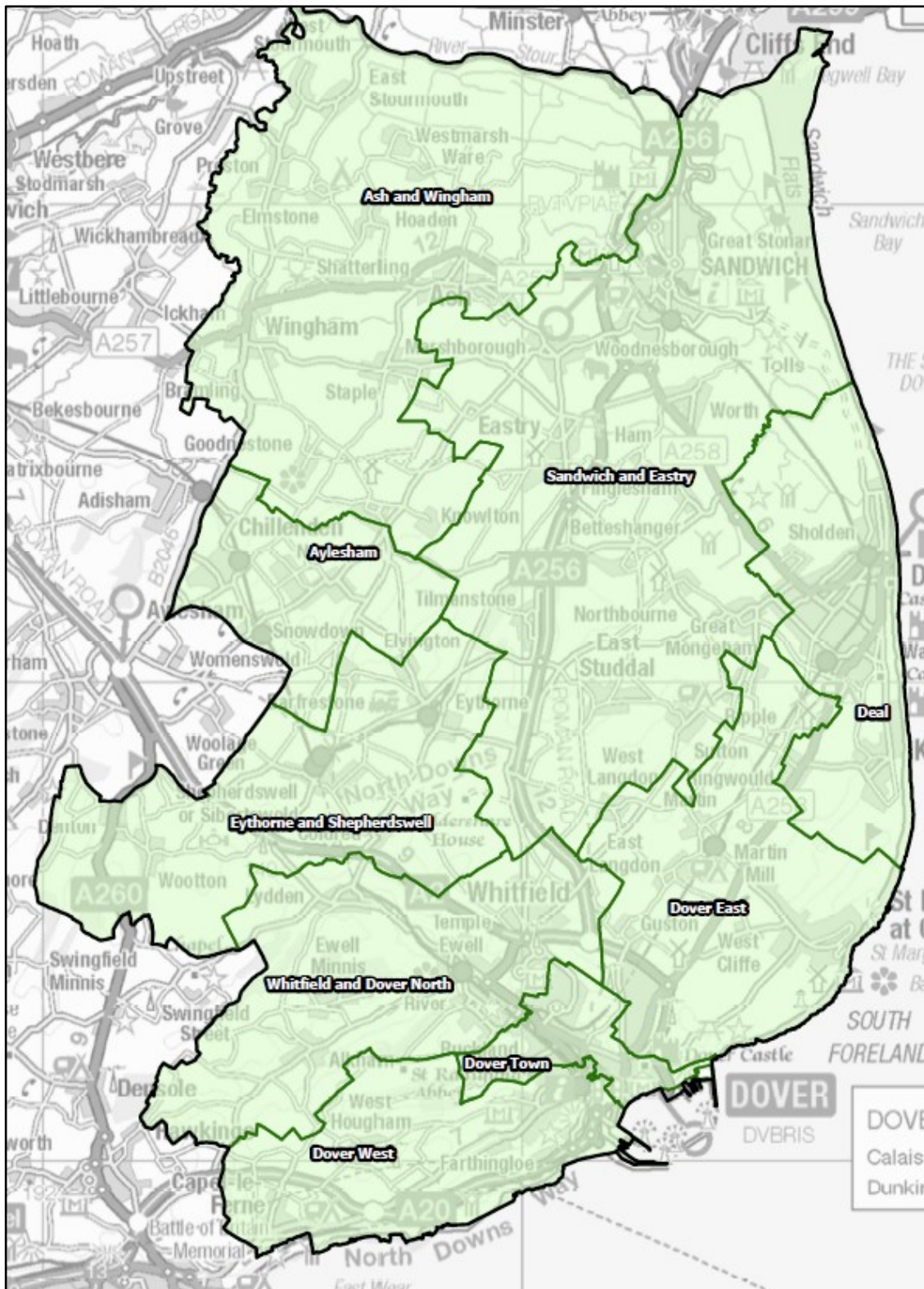
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet		Possible additional 1FE at Alkerden C of E Academy		2FE provision at Ashmere	2FE provision at Ebbsfleet Central	
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective				3FE permanent expansion		
North West Kent Selective And Gravesham and Longfield Selective			6FE selective permanent provision			

## 7.4 Dover

### District commentary

- The Dover District birth rate has been on a downwards trend since a high point in 2012. The rate for Dover is above the National average but dipped below the Kent average in 2023. The number of births in Dover have followed a similar trend before rising by 57 births between 2023 and 2024. Indications are the downwards trend reversed in England, Kent and Dover in 2024 with increases in birth rates. Comparable published data is awaited.
- We forecast around 20% of Year R places will be surplus across the District for the majority of the forecast period.
- Across the District we generally forecast there will be sufficient secondary school places throughout the forecast period. The impacts of planned house building may need to be mitigated at some point, dependent on the rate of delivery.
- Dover District Council's new Local Plan for the period 2020-2040 was adopted in October 2024. We continue to work with Dover District Council Officers to ensure any required school places to meet the demands generated by new housing can be delivered at the right time.

## Map of the Dover primary planning groups



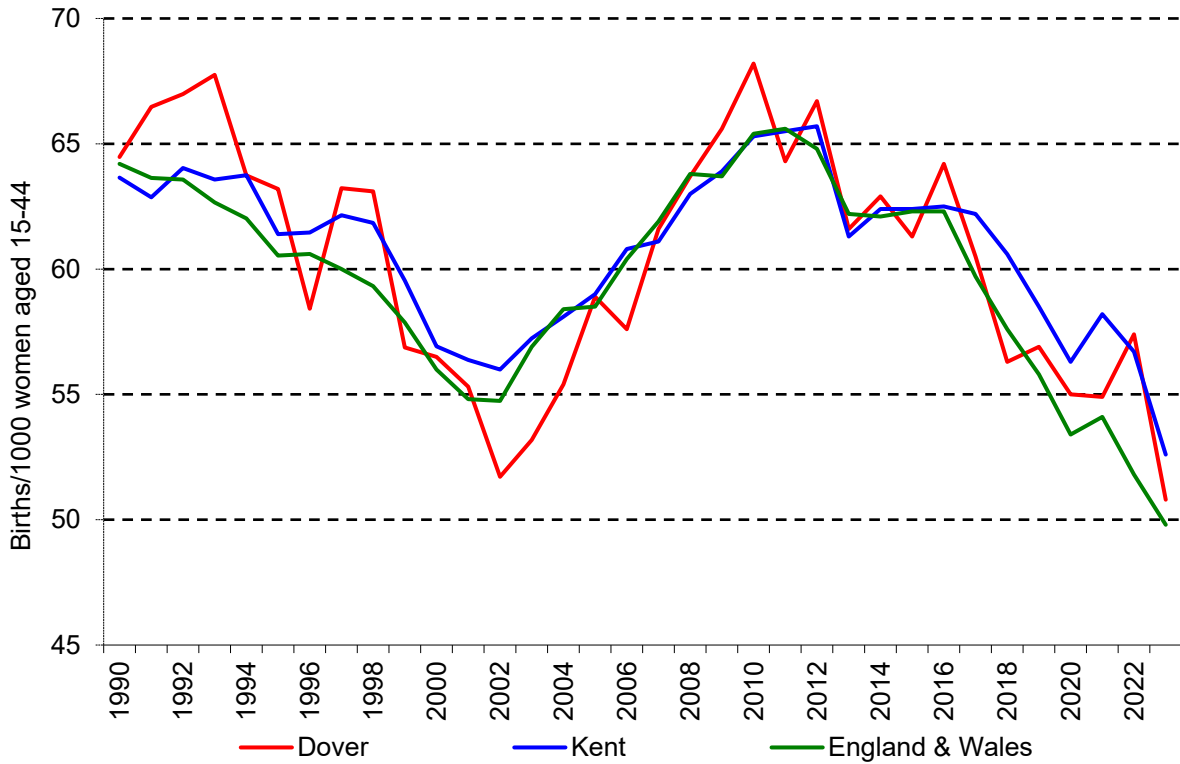
## Dover primary schools by planning group

Planning Group	School	Status
Dover Town	Barton Junior School	Academy
	Charlton CE Primary School	Academy
	Green Park Community Primary School	Community
	Shatterlocks Infant School	Academy
	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Dover)	Voluntary Aided
	St. Richard's RC Primary School	Academy
	White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts	Academy
Whitfield and Dover North	Lydden Primary School	Community
	River Primary School	Community
	Temple Ewell CE Primary School	Academy
	Whitfield Aspen School	Community
Dover West	Aycliffe Community Primary School	Community
	Capel-le-Ferne Primary School	Community
	Priory Fields School	Academy
	St. Martin's School (Dover)	Academy
	Vale View Primary School	Academy
Dover East	Guston CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Langdon Primary School	Community
	St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe Primary School	Community
Deal	Deal Parochial CE Primary School	Academy
	Downs CE Primary School	Academy
	Hornbeam Primary School	Academy
	Kingsdown and Ringwold CE Primary School	Academy
	Sandown School	Academy
	Sholden CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Mary's RC Primary School (Deal)	Academy
	Warden House Primary School	Academy
Sandwich and Eastry	Eastry CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Northbourne CE Primary School	Academy
	Sandwich Infant School	Academy
	Sandwich Junior School	Community
	Worth Primary School	Academy
Ash and Wingham	Ash Cartwright and Kelsey CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Goodnestone CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Preston Primary School	Community
	Wingham Primary School	Community
Aylesham	Aylesham Primary School	Academy
	Nonington CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Joseph's RC Primary School (Aylesham)	Academy
Eythorne and Shepherdswell	Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School	Community
	Sibertswold CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

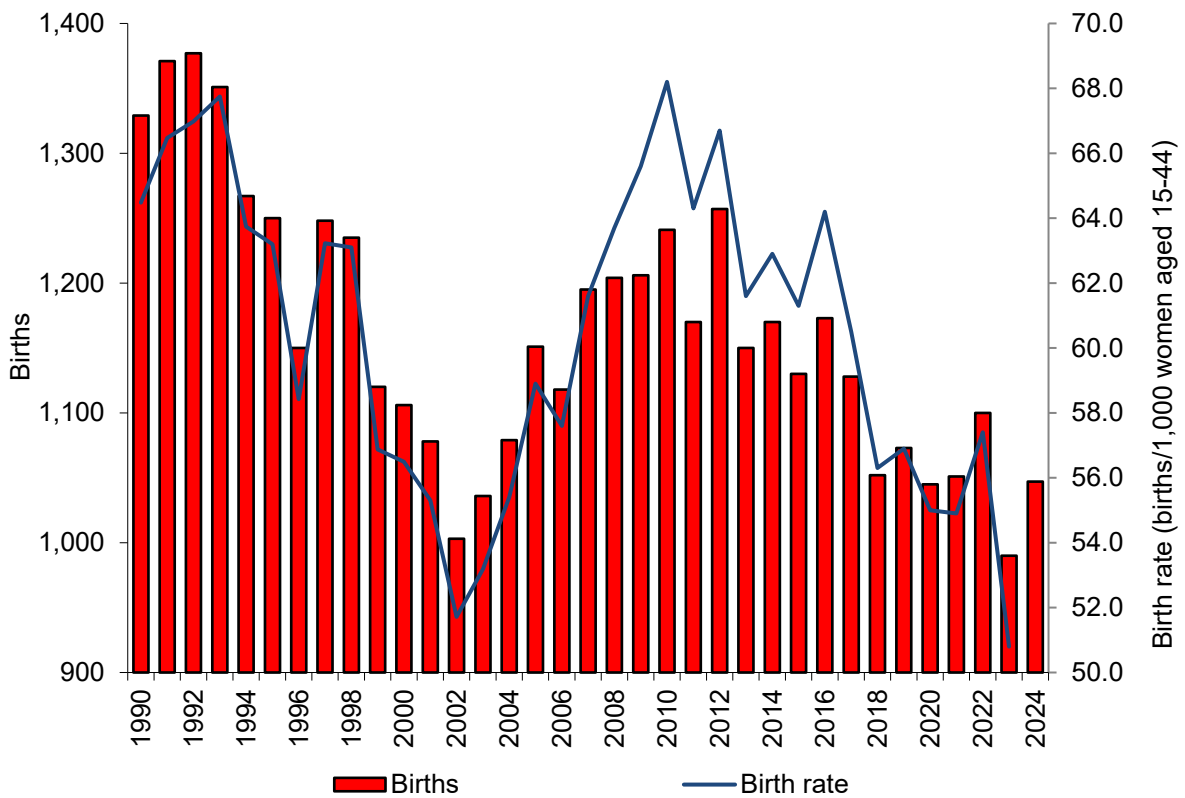
## Birth rate and birth analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the District and the number of recorded births.

### Dover, Kent and England & Wales birth rates 1990-2023



### Dover births and birth rate 1990-2024



## Dover District Forecast

### Primary - Year R surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Dover Town	240	40	41	30	34	64	46	47	49	52	56	59	240
Whitfield and Dover North	182	27	26	-3	2	29	17	18	19	20	22	24	182
Dover West	170	56	63	58	59	72	62	62	63	65	66	67	170
Dover East	67	16	5	3	12	12	9	9	9	9	9	9	65
Deal	315	55	57	64	72	79	69	65	62	61	60	59	315
Sandwich and Eastry	116	28	30	12	22	21	21	21	22	23	25	27	116
Ash and Wingham	90	10	9	11	13	10	13	14	15	17	19	22	90
Aylesham	102	27	20	21	32	32	28	28	28	29	29	30	102
Eythorne and Shepherdsweil	50	10	5	1	13	15	9	8	8	8	8	8	50
<b>Dover</b>	<b>1,332</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>1,330</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Dover Non-Selective	450	57	18	-1	-20	-11	12	32	52	44	7	32	420
Deal and Sandwich Non-Selective	435	95	69	25	15	5	0	39	21	29	2	37	395
Dover District Selective	440	4	20	0	6	5	4	19	22	17	9	11	440

## **Primary District Commentary**

Across the District we forecast c20% surplus Year R places during the forecast period. Across the whole primary cohort, forecasts predict 12.5% surplus capacity growing to 17.8%. There is no pressures for places in any year group. In the short to medium term, we will collaborate with schools to manage the levels of surplus Year R places to help maintain high quality, sustainable provision. In line with Government policy, surplus may also be used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, or to provide more specialist SEN places.

### **Whitfield and Dover North Planning Group**

We forecast a deficit of places in the 2026/27 academic year and a very small surplus in 2027-28. This will be managed through the admissions process.

Much of this planning group comprises the area designated as the Whitfield Urban Expansion (WUE). The WUE has outline planning consent for 5,750 new homes to be delivered over the next 20 years. To provide sufficient primary school places the provision of three 2FE primary schools were included within the Master Plan. The expansion of Whitfield Aspen on to a satellite site at Richmond Way currently provides 1FE of this new schools' provision.

It has been around 13 years since the WUE masterplan was adopted. The latest evidence shows that new housing in Dover is generating a higher number of primary aged pupils than was the case a decade and a half ago. Additionally, a further 600 dwellings have been allocated within the Local Plan. We are working with Dover District Council officers to plan for the impact of the DfE pupil yield and the additional 600 dwellings to identify the impact on the number of pupil places that the development will need to mitigate and when school places will need to be added.

### **Sandwich and Eastry Planning Group**

Surplus Year R places are forecast throughout the forecast period. However, consented and allocated developments in Sandwich and the neighbouring villages together account for over 1,000 new homes. Should housing come forward as identified in the Local Plan, up to an additional 1FE of provision in Sandwich may be required.

### **Ash and Wingham Planning Group**

Current forecasts are showing a surplus of Year R places which reduces across the forecast period. Developer contributions have been agreed which will support the expansion of primary school places when this be required.

### **Aylesham Planning Group**

Forecasts suggest consistent surplus Year R places in the planning group. However, significant development continues in Aylesham and developer contributions are secured to support the expansion of provision in the planning group if and when required. This is anticipated to be no sooner than 2029-30 currently, however, we will continue monitor pupil numbers.

## **Secondary District Commentary**

There are three secondary planning groups within Dover District. Two planning groups are non-selective (Dover, Deal and Sandwich) and one selective. The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

### Dover Non-Selective Planning Group

There are three Schools in the Dover non-selective planning group: Astor College of the Arts, Dover Christ Church Academy and St. Edmunds RC School. The Whitfield Urban Expansion will, over time, increase the pressure on local secondary schools. When additional places are required, it is expected this will be via the expansion of Dover Christ Church Academy as the local school.

The forecast pressure for Year 7 places between 2026/27 and 2029/30 will be managed within existing schools.

### Deal and Sandwich Non-Selective Planning Group

There are two Schools in the Deal and Sandwich non-selective planning group: Goodwin Academy and Sandwich Technology School. Forecasts suggest sufficient Year 7 places throughout the forecast period. Consented and proposed developments in Sandwich, and the neighbouring villages, account for over 1,000 new homes. Additional land is being secured through the local plan process to support additional secondary school places at Sandwich Technology College as and when required.

### Dover Selective Planning Group

Three schools provide selective provision: Dover Boys Grammar, Dover Girls Grammar and Sir Roger Manwood's Grammar. There is forecast to be sufficient places in this sector throughout the forecast period.

### Planned Commissioning – Dover

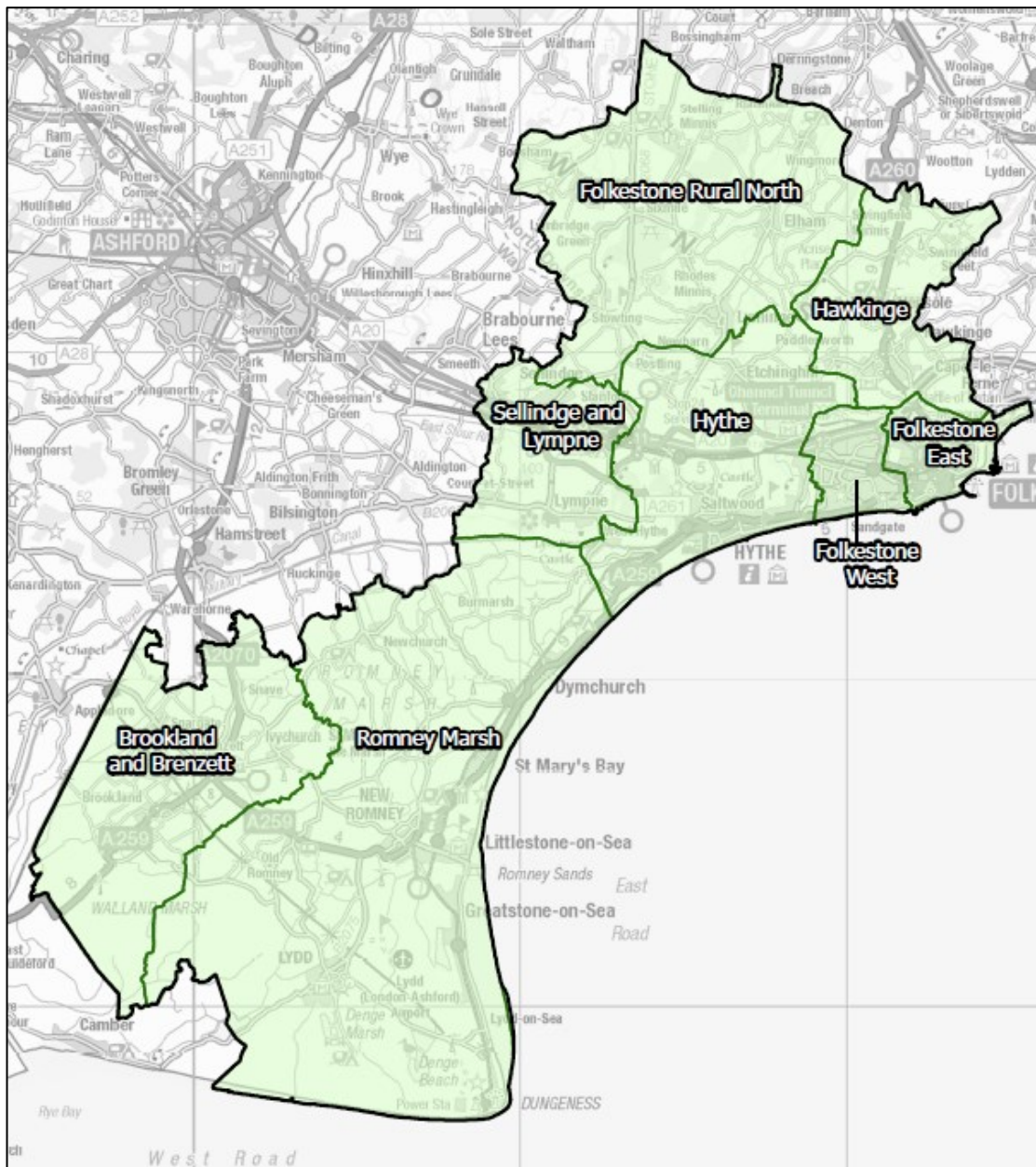
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Whitfield and North Dover					Expansion of Whitfield Aspen by 1FE	New 2FE primary school in Whitfield
Aylesham				up to 0.3FE expansion of existing provision		
Sandwich and Eastry						1FE Sandwich planning group
Dover Non-selective						Up to 2FE at Dover Christ Church Academy

## 7.5 Folkestone and Hythe

### District commentary

- The birth rate in Folkestone and Hythe continued the downward trend which commenced in 2011. The rate remains below the County average, but is comparable to the National rate. The number of recorded births rose by 48 between 2023 and 2024. Indications are the downwards trend in birth numbers reversed in England, Kent and Folkestone and Hythe in 2024 with increases in birth rates. Comparable published data is awaited.
- We forecast around 20% of Year R school places will be surplus across the District throughout the Plan period.
- Within the secondary sector, we forecast a deficit of non-selective secondary school places in Folkestone and Hythe. Generally, this is offset by places in other planning groups within the District. We will work with existing schools to ensure there are sufficient non-selective places for all who require one.
- The adopted Core Strategy (2022) sets out a long-term vision for the District from 2019/20 to 2036/37. The indicative housing trajectory in the Core Strategy suggest that 13,407 new dwellings could be delivered in the period 2019/20 to 2036/37, with Otterpool Park accounting for 5,593 of these dwellings. This would be an average of 745 per annum. During the period 2014/15 to 2023/24 an average of 410 homes were completed per annum (Kent Analytics Statistical Bulletin May 2025).
- Plans for the Garden Village at Otterpool Park continue to progress. The level of development would require significant educational infrastructure across not only primary and secondary phases, but also Early Years and specialist sector. We continue to work with the District Council and the promoter of the site to identify the extent and when new provision will be required.

## Map of the Folkestone and Hythe primary planning groups



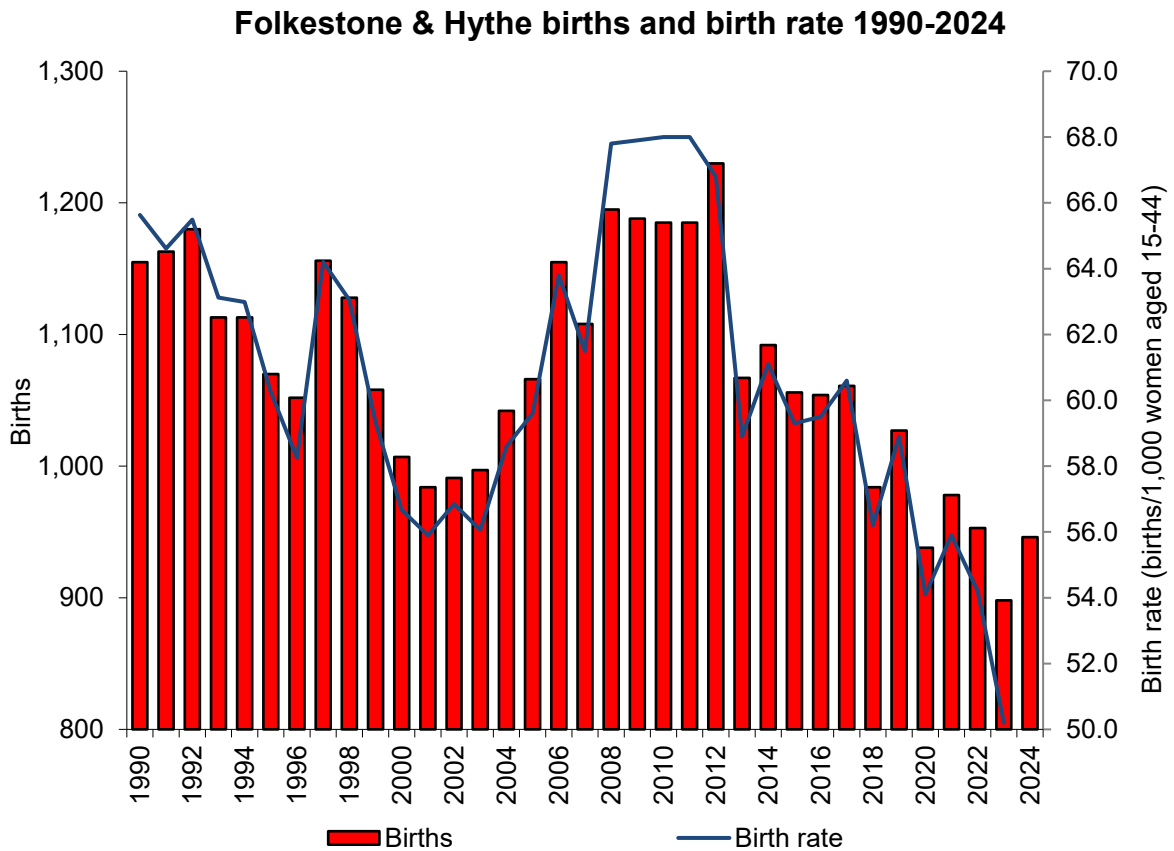
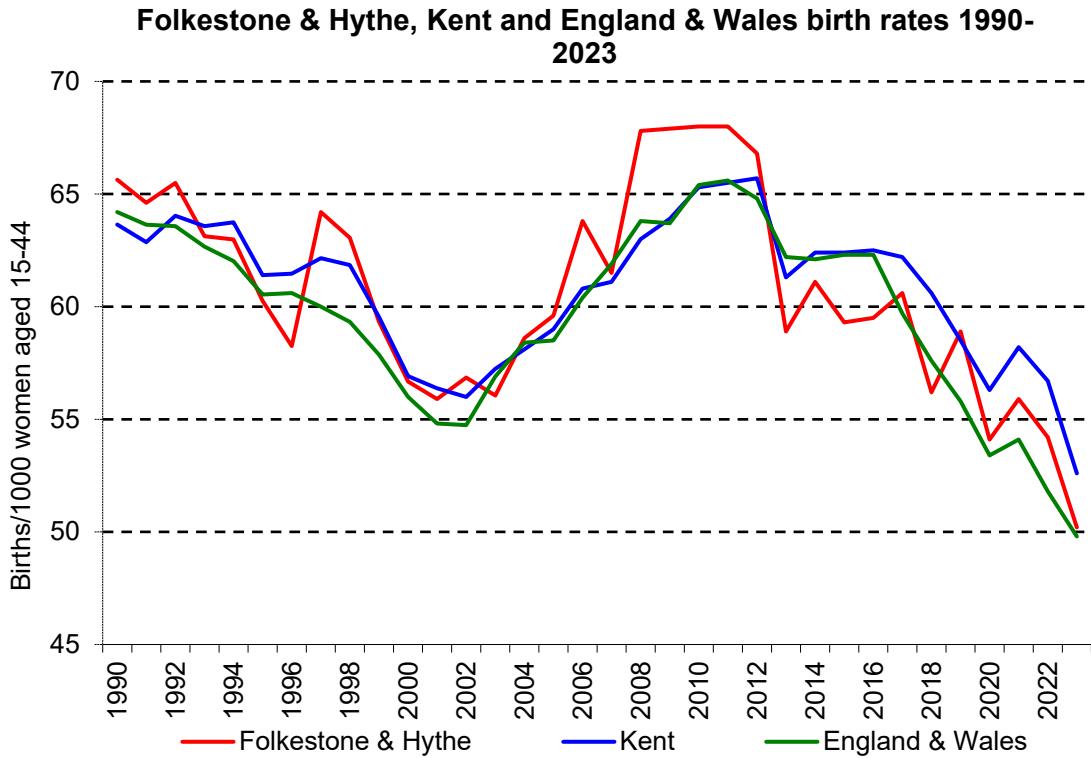
## Folkestone and Hythe primary schools by planning group

Planning Groups	School	Status
Folkestone East	Castle Hill Community Primary School	Community
	Christ Church CE Academy	Academy
	Folkestone Primary Academy	Academy
	Martello Primary School	Academy
	Mundella Primary School	Academy
	St. Eanswythe's CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Mary's CE Primary Academy (Folkestone)	Academy
	St. Peter's CE Primary School (Folkestone)	Voluntary Controlled
	Stella Maris RC Primary School	Academy
Folkestone West	All Souls' CE Primary School	Academy
	Cheriton Primary School	Foundation
	Harcourt Primary School	Foundation
	Morehall Primary School	Academy
	Sandgate Primary School	Community

Planning Groups	School	Status
	St. Martin's CE Primary School (Folkestone)	Voluntary Controlled
Hawkinge	Churchill School (Hawkinge)	Academy
	Hawkinge Primary School	Foundation
	Selsted CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Folkestone Rural North	Bodsham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Elham CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Lyminge CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Stelling Minnis CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Stowting CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Hythe	Hythe Bay CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Palmarsh Primary School	Community
	Saltwood CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Seabrook CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Augustine's RC Primary School (Hythe)	Academy
Sellindge and Lympne	Lympne CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sellindge Primary School	Community
Romney Marsh	Dymchurch Primary School	Academy
	Greatstone Primary School	Foundation
	Lydd Primary School	Academy
	St. Nicholas CE Primary Academy	Academy
Brookland and Brenzett	Brenzett CE Primary School	Academy
	Brookland CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

## Birth rate and birth analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the District and the number of recorded births.



## Folkestone and Hythe Analysis

### Primary - Year R surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Folkestone East	373	69	55	90	91	93	81	84	86	86	86	86	373
Folkestone West	255	31	23	21	36	20	30	31	33	35	38	41	255
Hawkinge	135	47	24	27	27	39	31	32	33	34	34	34	135
Folkestone Rural North	93	26	22	6	18	17	16	16	17	17	17	17	85
Hythe	150	54	36	24	47	36	38	37	36	34	33	32	140
Sellindge and Lympne	60	6	3	-3	-6	-2	-3	-4	-7	-10	-13	-15	60
Romney Marsh	187	57	32	42	49	53	47	47	47	46	45	44	165
Brookland and Brenzett	35	1	4	2	6	8	6	6	7	7	7	7	35
<b>Folkestone &amp; Hythe</b>	<b>1,288</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>1,248</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Folkestone and Hythe Non-Selective	625	10	-26	-9	-57	-37	0	-54	43	-9	-5	39	595
Romney Marsh Non-Selective	180	6	-7	15	15	1	10	13	23	20	26	39	180
Folkestone & Hythe District Selective	330	-15	20	18	23	18	19	21	20	22	25	25	330

## Primary District Commentary

### Folkestone and Hythe District Analysis - Primary

Across the District we forecast c20% of Year R places will be surplus throughout the forecast period. Across the whole primary cohort, forecasts predict 12.6% surplus capacity growing to 16.6%. There is no pressures for places in any year group. We will collaborate with schools to manage the levels of surplus primary school places to help maintain high quality, sustainable provision. In line with Government policy, surplus may also be used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, or to provide more specialist SEN places.

### Folkestone West Planning Group

Forecasts suggest sufficient Year R capacity throughout the forecast period. Land and developer contributions remain available for a new 2FE primary school at Shorncliffe Heights. This will not be required in this decade.

### Sellindge and Lympne Planning Group

Current forecasts are showing a deficit of Year R places from 2026-27 onwards growing to 0.5FE by the end of the forecast period. Further development is expected in the village which will need to be mitigated. Developer contributed land and funding has been agreed which will enable Sellindge Primary School expand as and when required.

## Secondary District Commentary

### Folkestone and Hythe Non-Selective Planning Group

There are three schools in the Folkestone and Hythe non-selective planning group: Brockhill Park Performing Arts College, Folkestone Academy and The Turner Free School.

We forecast a deficit of non-selective secondary school places in Folkestone and Hythe. In part this is due to Folkestone Academy reducing its published admissions number from 210 to 180 from September 2025, with some of the accommodation being used to provide a specialist resourced provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions. The deficit is generally offset by places in other planning groups within the District. We will work with existing schools to ensure there are sufficient non-selective places for all who require one.

### Romney Marsh Non-Selective Planning Group

There is one non-selective school in the planning group: The Marsh Academy. Forecasts suggest sufficient places across the forecast period.

### Folkestone and Hythe Selective Planning Group

There are two selective schools in the District: Folkestone Girls Grammar and Harvey Grammar. Forecasts suggest there will be sufficient Year 7 places available throughout the forecast period.

## Planned Commissioning – Folkestone and Hythe

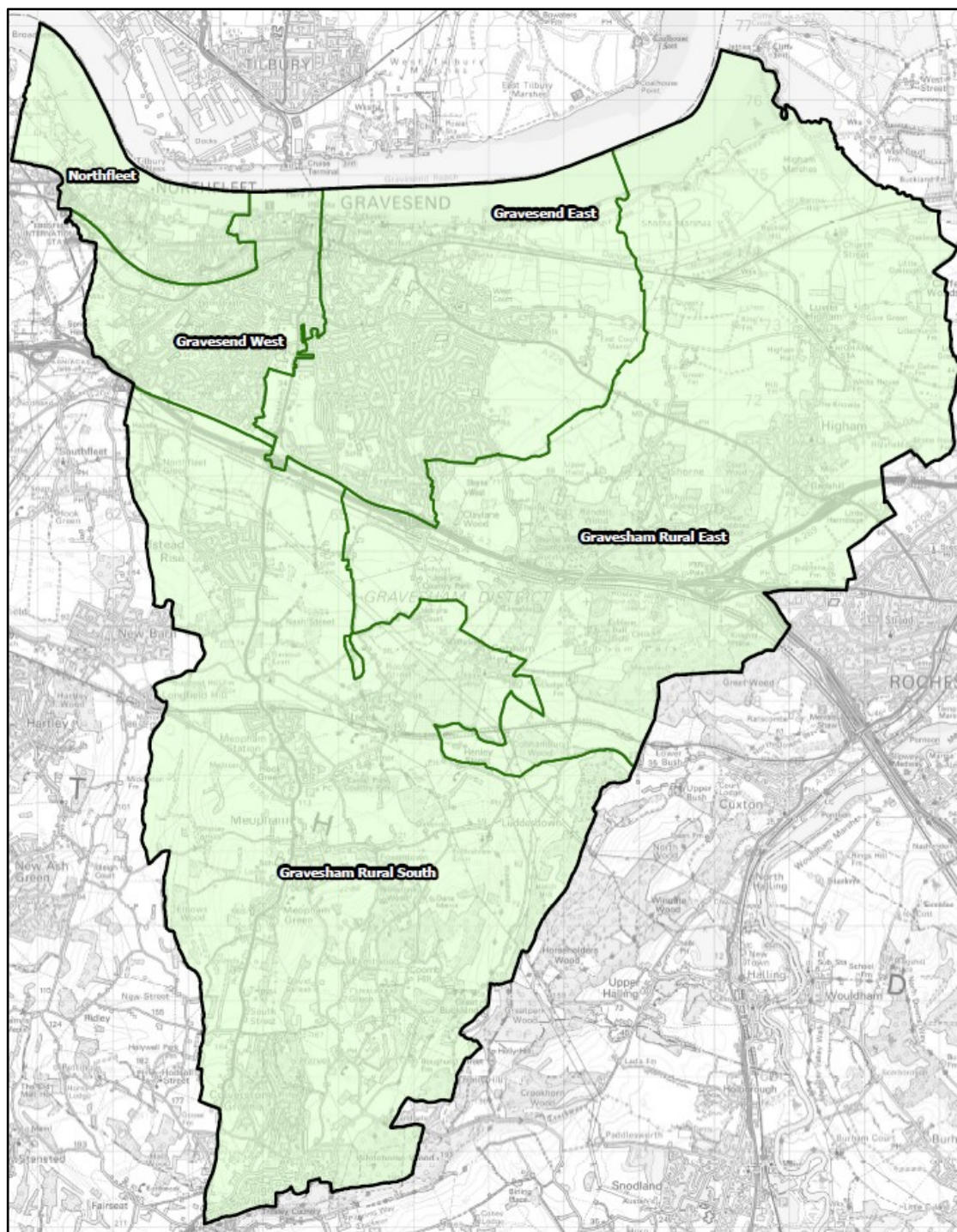
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Folkestone West Primary						2FE new provision in Shorncliffe

## 7.6 Gravesham

### Borough Summary

- The Gravesham birth rate and number of births have fallen sharply since 2019, but remain above the county and national figures. Following a small increase in 2022, the rate dropped again in 2023 and then rose slightly in 2024, but not to rate seen in 2022
- Forecasts indicate that there is a manageable surplus of Year R places across the Primary planning groups.
- Small pockets of primary deficits are forecast in just two Gravesham planning groups but these can be covered as required, following the relocation and expansion of Rosherville Primary School in Northfleet. The school currently has a PAN of 20 and will be able to accommodate 2FE in the future.
- The Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group shows a deficit from the outset for all of the Plan period. The deficit increases year on year, peaking at just over 3.5FE for September 2028, before reducing to 2.5FE in September 2030 and peaking again in September 2033 with a deficit of just over 4FE. Extensive work has been undertaken in recent years with all schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Planning Group to introduce additional places and so further expansion opportunities are extremely limited. Therefore, until Gravesham's new Local Plan is produced and adopted, cross border working will need to be employed to ensure sufficiency of school places in the locality.
- The Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group forecast shows a deficit of about 2.5FE for September 2028. Any options for creating additional selective capacity will be extremely challenging and KCC may be only able to ensure that the Local Authority statutory duty to provide sufficient places, of any type, is met.
- The current Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) Local Plan, adopted in September 2014, states an intention to build 6,170 dwellings between 2011 to 2028. Gravesham's emerging Local Plan and Site Allocations Document will cover the period up to 2042, and aims to address the required delivery of 11,492 new dwellings. KCC will work closely with GBC to ensure that sufficient school places are available. It is already clear that any options for further expansion of existing secondary schools will be both extremely limited and logistically challenging, so sufficient land for new school sites will need to be provided to ensure the sufficiency of Secondary School places over the longer term.
- Migration from urban centres in Greater London to locations such as Gravesham Borough continues to affect place planning. We are regularly seeing this in the Junior aged cohort, as families move into the area to place themselves in a more favourable position of gaining a place for their child in the Secondary School of their choice.

## Gravesham Primary Schools by Planning Group



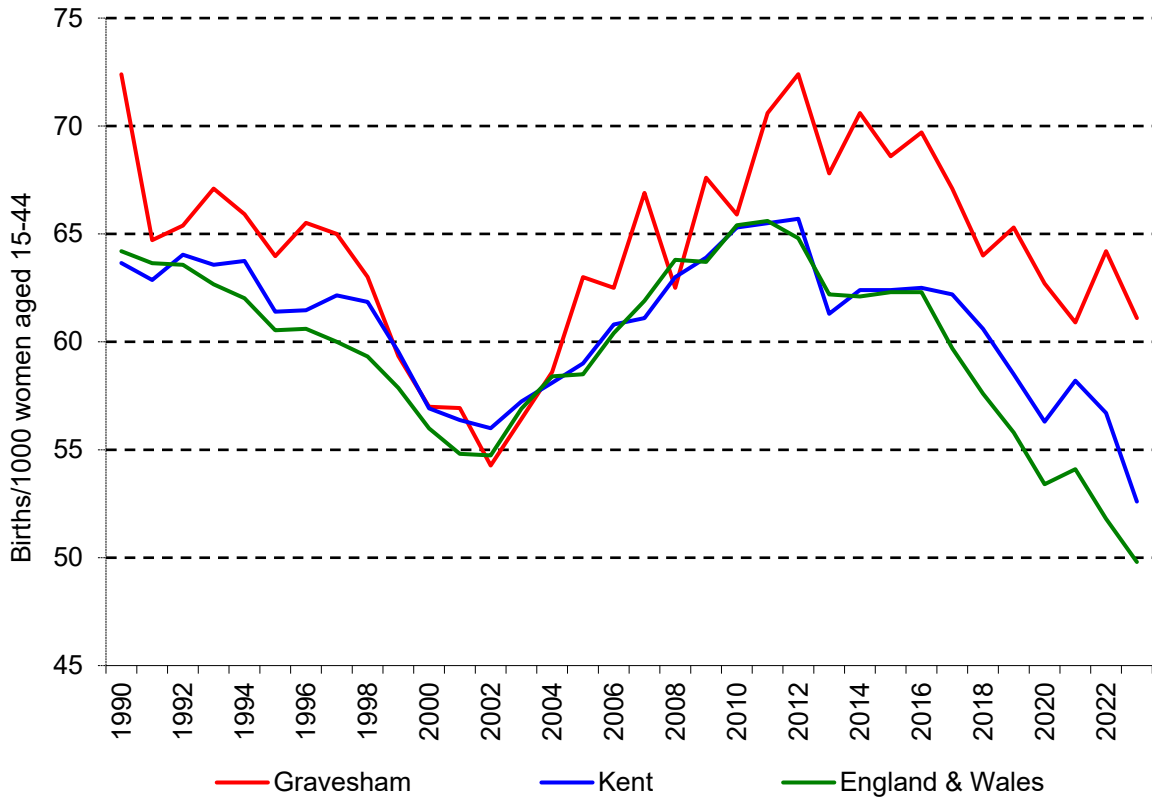
Planning Group	School	Status
Gravesend East	Chantry Community Academy	Academy
	Holy Trinity CE Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	Kings Farm Primary School	Community
	The Riverview Academy	Academy
	Singlewell Primary School	Community
	St. John's RC Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	Tymerwood Academy	Academy
	Westcourt Primary School	Academy
	Whitehill Primary School	Academy

Planning Group	School	Status
	Cecil Road Primary School	Community
Gravesend West	Copperfield Academy	Academy
	Painters Ash Primary School	Community
	Saint George's CE Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	Shears Green Infant School	Academy
	Shears Green Junior School	Community
	Springhead Park Primary School	Free
	Wrotham Road Primary School	Academy
	Lawn Primary School	Community
Northfleet	Rosherville CE Primary Academy	Academy
	St. Botolph's CE Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	St. Joseph's RC Primary School (Northfleet)	Academy
	Higham Primary School	Community
Gravesham Rural East	Shorne CE Primary School	Academy
	Cobham Primary School	Community
Gravesham Rural South	Culverstone Green Primary School	Academy
	Istead Rise Primary School	Academy
	Meopham Community Academy	Academy
	Vigo Village School	Community

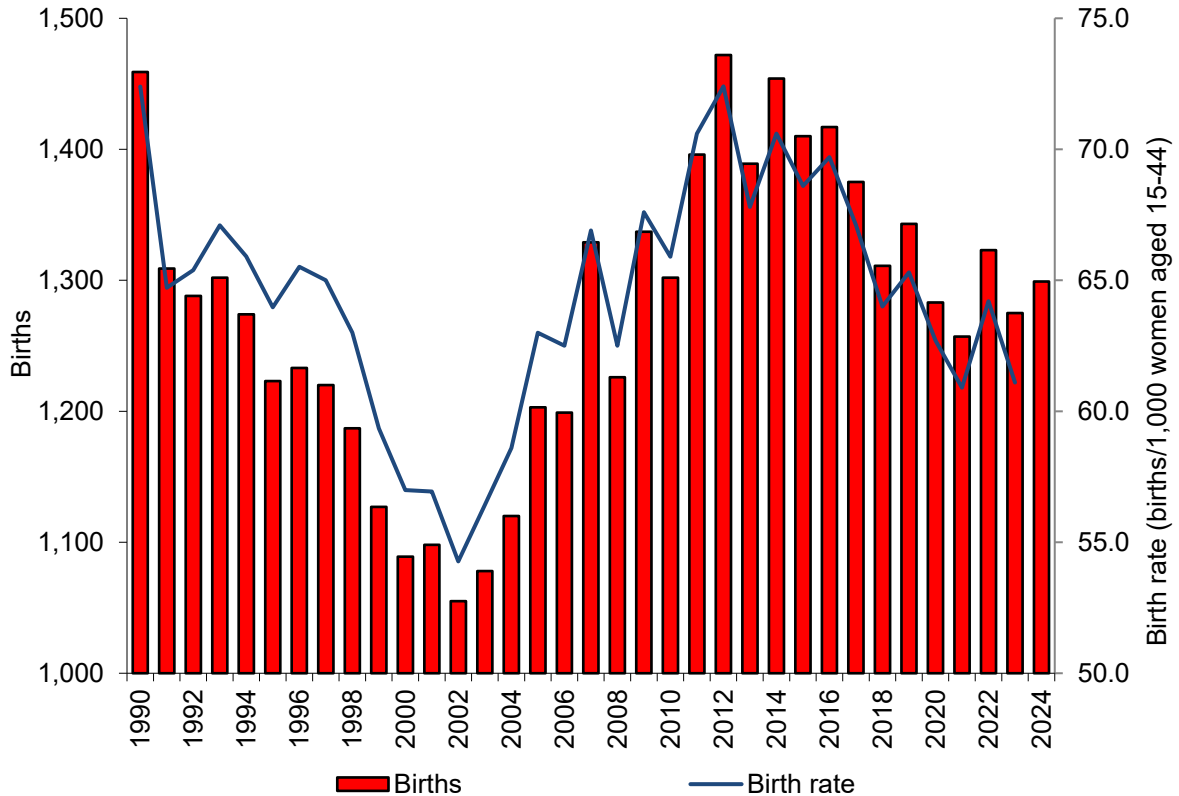
## Birth Rate and Birth Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.

### Gravesham, Kent and England & Wales birth rates 1990-2023



### Gravesham births and birth rate 1990-2024



## Gravesham Forecasts

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Gravesend East	652	69	64	31	50	55	46	43	39	36	34	34	622
Gravesend West	474	52	17	19	6	5	-1	-3	-6	-10	-15	-20	444
Northfleet	140	0	3	-7	5	-12	-2	-5	-8	-10	-13	-15	150
Gravesham Rural East	60	4	1	15	12	9	9	8	8	7	7	7	60
Gravesham Rural South	180	27	25	1	24	42	22	20	18	16	14	12	180
<b>Gravesham</b>	<b>1,506</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1,456</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective	1,370	32	-3	-34	-78	-113	-74	-71	-75	-97	-126	-103	1,389
Gravesham and Longfield Selective	420	-13	-29	-41	-58	-70	-59	-59	-66	-73	-87	-84	420

## **Primary Borough commentary**

Recent forecasts have indicated a stabilisation of demand that leaves a manageable surplus of Year R capacity across the Borough for the duration of the Plan period. Locally, Northfleet Planning Group indicates a small deficit in September 2026 and then from September 2028 for subsequent years. Gravesend West Planning Group also indicates a very small deficit from September 2029.

These deficits can be addressed through expansion of Rosherville CE Primary Academy. Once the school moves into its new premises on the Cable Wharf development in Northfleet, the school can increase its intake to 2FE from a current PAN of 20.

Gravesham is expected to publish a new Local Plan in 2026. The Reg 18 consultation has been completed. Ahead of any new Plan being published, new housing development on the Northfleet Embankment and Gravesend Canal Basin will see demand for Primary School places increase in the medium term.

The new housing on the Canal Basin is expected to comprise a mix of types, with the majority being one, two and three bedroom flats. Traditionally, the number of school age children generated from such housing types is lower than for houses, but the shortage of housing may now result in more families living in smaller dwellings. KCC will work with GBC to ensure that we remain cognisant of the numbers and types of dwelling and react accordingly.

The largest surplus is in the Gravesham East Primary Planning Group. There is additional capacity ready to be re-introduced, following some schools in the area taking the decision to reduce their PAN in response to low year R intakes in recent years. However, if a significant number of new dwellings are more suitable for families, then we may need to seek land for a new primary school for the longer term.

New housing in the Coldharbour area will generate some additional need for Year R places. This will be accommodated within the primary provision at Saint George's CE Primary School and the Shears Green Infant and Shears Green Junior schools.

### **Northfleet Planning Group**

The planning group indicates only a very small surplus for September 2026 and September 2029, with deficits for the rest of the Plan period. This will be managed by using the expanded and relocated Rosherville CE Primary Academy.

### **Gravesham Rural South Planning Group**

The planning group indicates a small deficit for the Plan period. This will be managed locally by adjacent planning areas.

### **Gravesend West**

This planning group sees small deficits forecast through the longer term planning period. Shears Green Infant School recently reduced their PAN from 4FE to 3FE due to reduced demand in the area. Should the forecast deficits materialise, KCC has the option of working with the school/trust to increase capacity once more.

## **Secondary Borough Commentary**

There is one selective and one non-selective planning group that cover the Gravesham area. See appendix 13.2 for the secondary planning group maps.

### **Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are seven schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group: Longfield Academy, Meopham School, Northfleet Technology College, Northfleet School for Girls, Thamesview School, Saint George's CE School and Saint John's Catholic Comprehensive School.

The planning group is in deficit for the duration of the Plan period, fluctuating between 1FE and 4FE deficit for the whole of the main Plan period. The deficit of just over 1FE for September 2026 increases to just under 4FE for September 2028. The deficit then decreases to 2.5FE and remains steady for a three-year period before increasing to a second peak of just over 4FE for September 2033.

KCC have recently commissioned an additional permanent 1FE at Northfleet Technology College, which has been included in the forecasts.

By 2027, another 3FE of provision will appear to be required. However, as previously stated, demand will need to be met through cross border working in the medium term. In the meantime, KCC will work with the schools in the planning group and Gravesham Borough Council to identify options for increasing existing provision or introducing new schools, whilst acknowledging that any work to expand an existing school will be very expensive and logistically challenging.

Longer term, KCC will definitely need to consider new secondary provision based on the publication of the Gravesham Local Plan. KCC will monitor the forecasts as the new Gravesham Local Plan becomes clear. During the local plan consultation, KCC notified GBC that there is a deficit and so any new housing needs to come with land for a new, non-selective secondary school or schools.

### **Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group**

There are two schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group: Gravesend Grammar School and the Mayfield Grammar School.

The planning group is in deficit for the whole of the planning period. For September 2026, the deficit is 1.5FE. This deficit increases to 2FE - 3FE for the duration of the Plan period.

Following expansions to both Mayfield Grammar School and Gravesend Grammar School, both Gravesham Grammar Schools are at their capacity and cannot be expanded further. Therefore, this demand will need to be managed across Borough boundaries or by expansion to existing schools by using satellites.

If additional Grammar school places are to be provided, the only feasible option is to look holistically at selective provision across the wider North Kent. The most efficient use of resources would be to introduce new satellite provisions, similar to those introduced in Sevenoaks. This is because current Government legislation prohibits the introduction of new selective schools.

However, options to do this would be logistically and politically challenging. The key constraints would be identifying both boys and girls Grammar schools willing to operate a satellite provision on a shared site, identifying land to accommodate the provisions, obtaining DfE approval and obtaining the requisite capital funding. An estimate of cost can be made by looking at the cost of a new 6FE school. This would indicate a cost of c£40m to introduce a 3FE boys, and a 3FE girls Grammar satellite, plus the capital cost of obtaining at least four hectares of land. Any smaller than 3FE and a satellite becomes financially unviable for the host school to manage.

Due to the constraints around providing further selective provision, KCC will seek to ensure that there is sufficient capacity, even if that provision is non-selective.

## Planned Commissioning – Gravesham

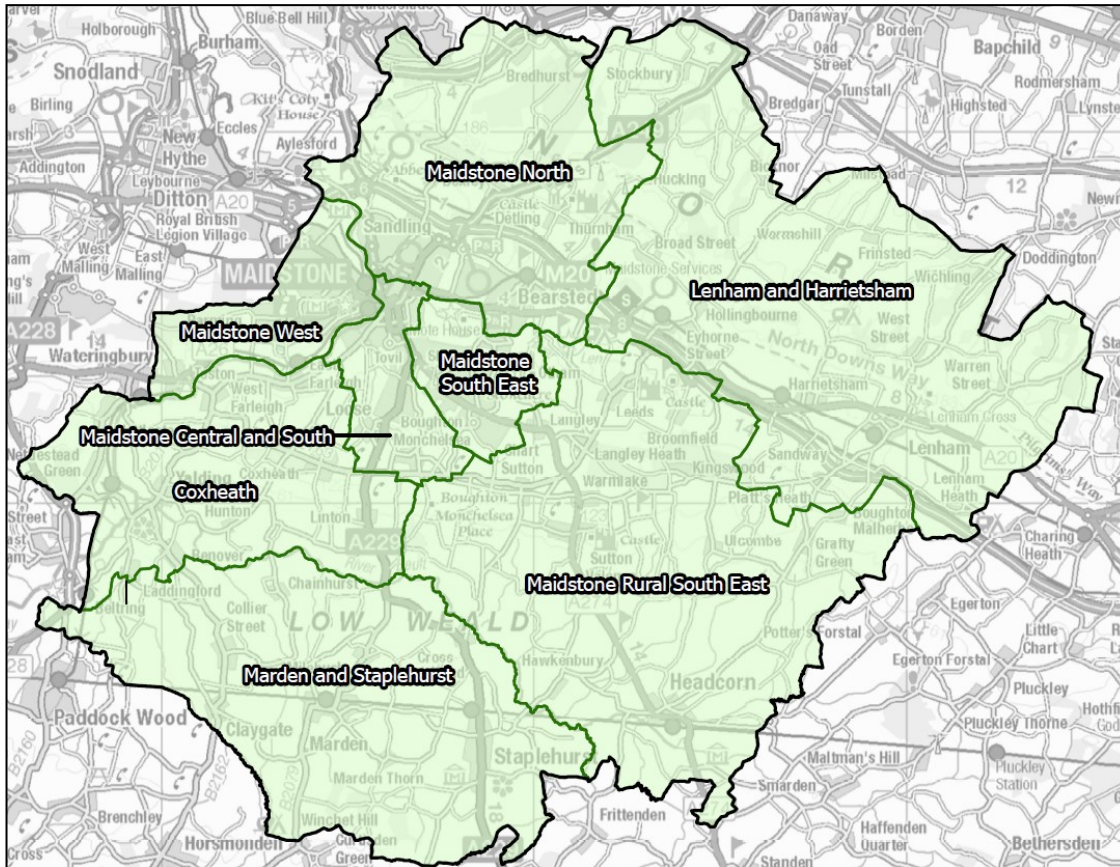
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Northfleet			1FE at Rosherville CE Primary Academy			
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective				3FE permanent expansion		
North West Kent Selective And Gravesham and Longfield Selective			6FE selective permanent provision			

## 7.7 Maidstone

### Borough commentary

- The birth rate in Maidstone dropped sharply in 2019 and 2020, but then increased significantly in 2021, before dropping back again in 2022 and 2023. However, it remains above the county and national averages.
- We forecast sufficient primary school places across the Borough throughout the Plan period. However, there is pressure for places forecast within some planning groups. Within the secondary sector, we forecast a significant pressure for places in both the non-selective and selective sectors.
- Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan was formally adopted in October 2017, setting out the scale and location of proposed development up to 2031. This plan was reviewed and in 2024 the Borough Council adopted the Local Plan Review, which plans for the delivery of 1,157 per annum until 2038.

## Map of the Maidstone Primary Planning Groups



## Maidstone Primary Schools by Planning Group

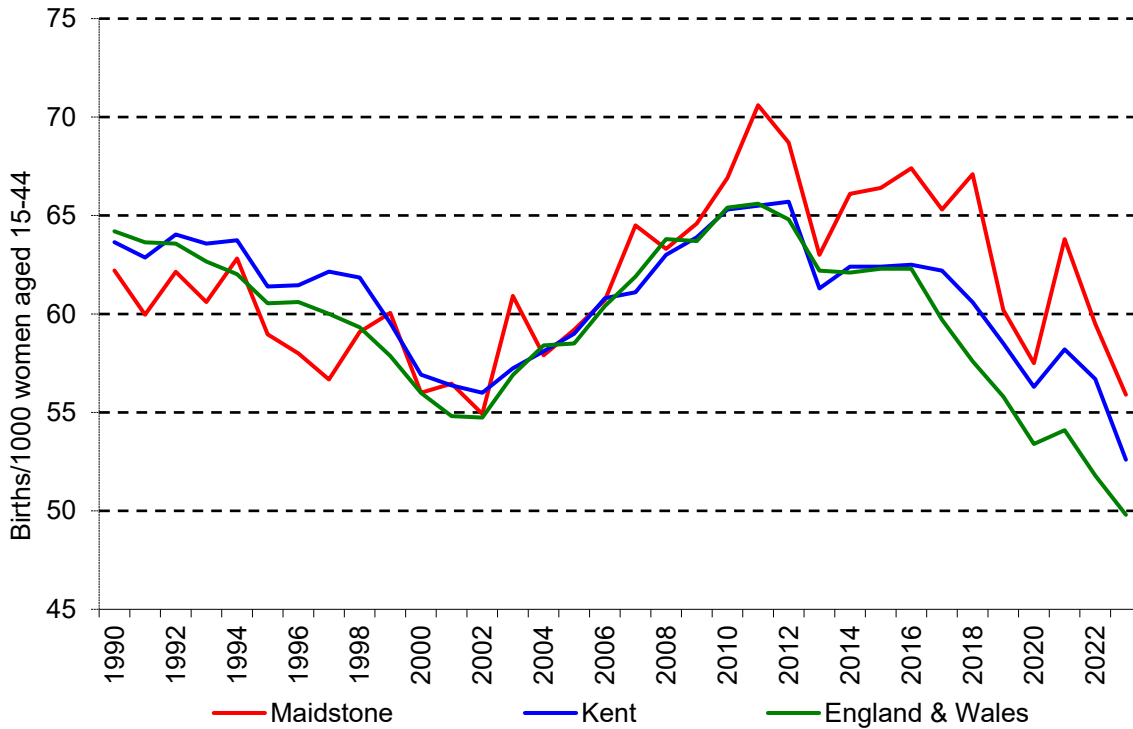
Planning Groups	School	Status
Maidstone Central and South	Archbishop Courtenay CE Primary School	Academy
	Boughton Monchelsea Primary School	Community
	Loose Primary School	Community
	South Borough Primary School	Academy
	Tiger Primary School	Free
Maidstone North	Bearsted Primary Academy	Free
	Bredhurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Madginford Primary School	Community
	North Borough Junior School	Community
	Roseacre Junior School	Foundation
	Sandling Primary School	Community
	St. John's CE Primary School (Maidstone)	Academy
	St. Paul's Infant School	Community
	Thurnham CE Infant School	Voluntary Controlled
Valley Invicta Primary School at East Borough	Academy	
Maidstone West	Allington Primary School	Academy
	Barming Primary School	Academy
	Brunswick House Primary School	Community
	Jubilee Primary School	Free
	Palace Wood Primary School	Community
	St. Francis' RC School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Michael's CE Infant School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Michael's CE Junior School	Voluntary Controlled
West Borough Primary School	Community	
Maidstone South East	Greenfields Community Primary School	Community
	Holy Family RC Primary School	Academy

Planning Groups	School	Status
	Langley Park Primary Academy	Academy
	Molehill Primary Academy	Academy
	Oaks Primary Academy	Academy
	Park Way Primary School	Community
	Senacre Wood Primary School	Community
	Tree Tops Primary Academy	Academy
Lenham and Harrietsham	Harrietsham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Hollingbourne Primary School	Community
	Lenham Primary School	Community
	Platts Heath Primary School	Community
Coxheath	Coxheath Primary School	Community
	East Farleigh Primary School	Community
	Hunton CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Yalding St. Peter and St. Paul CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Marden and Staplehurst	Laddingford St. Mary's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Marden Primary Academy	Academy
	St. Margaret's Collier Street CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Staplehurst School	Community
Maidstone Rural South East	Headcorn Primary School	Community
	Kingswood Primary School	Community
	Leeds and Broomfield CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sutton Valence Primary School	Community
	Ulcombe CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

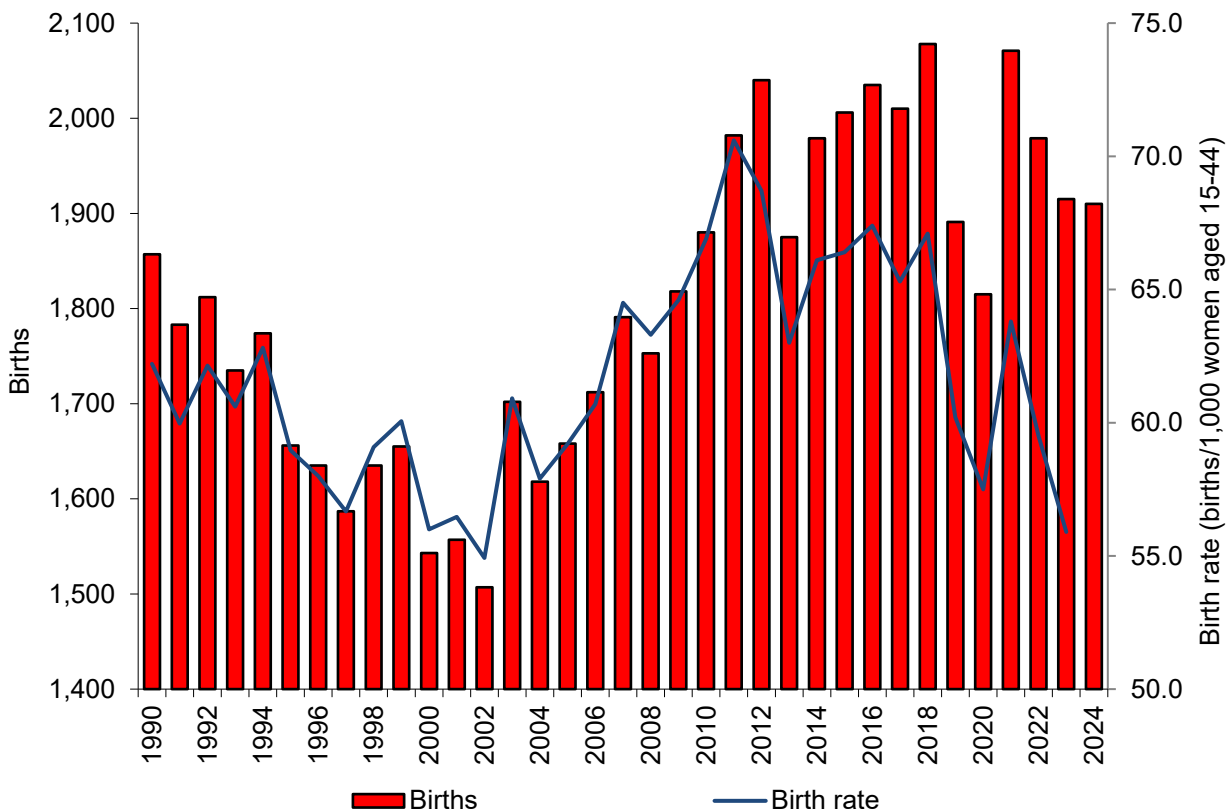
## Birth Rate and Births Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.

### Maidstone, Kent and England & Wales birth rates 1990-2023



### Maidstone births and birth rate 1990-2024



## Maidstone Forecasts

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Maidstone Central and South	285	19	24	10	7	9	11	11	12	15	21	27	285
Maidstone North	530	20	33	31	60	47	45	46	46	49	54	59	530
Maidstone West	460	25	36	-10	13	58	19	19	22	28	37	46	460
Maidstone South East	327	8	32	-6	12	19	23	27	30	35	41	48	327
Lenham and Harrietsham	118	21	14	15	15	14	12	11	10	10	10	10	118
Coxheath	159	13	-16	-5	-21	-7	-15	-16	-17	-17	-15	-14	129
Marden and Staplehurst	165	24	7	16	11	22	13	13	13	14	17	19	165
Maidstone Rural South East	140	17	24	18	16	34	22	21	21	21	22	24	140
<b>Maidstone</b>	<b>2,184</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>2,154</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Maidstone Non-Selective	1,530	-25	-80	-93	-124	-179	-237	-173	-164	-144	-221	-175	1,560
Maidstone and Malling Selective	815	-15	17	16	-8	-32	-56	-27	-32	-20	-52	-21	815

## **Primary District commentary**

Overall, forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient places for Year R across the Plan period for the Maidstone district. However, there is pressure for places within the rural planning groups.

Over the past decade the Borough of Maidstone has seen one of the highest levels of inward migration in the county; this means that pre-school and school-aged children born outside of the area have moved into the Borough. The most common driver of this movement is the creation of new housing in the Borough, either through planned housebuilding or the conversion of office and retail spaces through permitted development, utilising permitted development rights that aren't controlled through the planning system in the same way. At times this has placed significant in-year pressure on schools, the County Council will continue to monitor the impact of this over the duration of The Plan.

### **Maidstone West Planning Group**

There is a deficit of 10 places forecast for 2026-27. We will monitor the situation carefully to assess whether additional provision is needed, however, we anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the demand.

In the longer term, housing developments on the Maidstone side of Hermitage Lane will necessitate up to 2FE of additional provision. Land has been secured that would enable a 2FE primary school to be established on a site to the East of Hermitage Lane, known as Chapel Field. However, based on the current rate of housing growth, it is currently not expected to be required within the Plan period, this will continue to be reviewed as houses are occupied. The location on the boundary between Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling means that it is important to consider demand arising from housing growth local to the site in both Maidstone North and East Malling when anticipating the timing of the school's establishment.

### **Coxheath Planning Group**

Housebuilding within this area has increased the pre and school aged population very significantly over recent years, in response the 2025 iteration of the Plan proposed commissioning of an additional 1FE in the planning group to mitigate the forecast deficit. As part of our ongoing commissioning cycle the County Council tracked and analysed the most local data available, this has shown that whilst the demand for school places in the area will still be significantly greater than it was five years ago, the rate of increase in that demand has eased and is forecast to remain stable.

The forecast show a fluctuating deficit of around 15 places on average throughout the Plan period, with the exception of 2026-27 and 2028-28 when the deficit dips to 5 and 7 respectively. Given local context which includes consideration of nearby schools in adjacent planning areas, existing travel to school patterns and the level of surplus in adjacent areas, it is viewed as not currently appropriate to commission an additional form of entry in Coxheath. This does not mean we anticipate up to 15 pupils living within the area not to be able to secure a place close to their home, as there is expected to be some natural offsetting against pupils living further away from the school.

We will closely monitor the demand for places within the planning group and respond appropriately to any changed in demand or wider context in future.

### **Maidstone South East Planning Group**

There is a deficit of 6 places forecast for 2026-27. We will monitor the situation carefully to assess whether additional provision is needed, however, we anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the demand.

### **Secondary District Commentary**

There are two planning groups which are within Maidstone Borough, one non-selective and one selective (See appendix 12.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

### **Maidstone Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are eight schools in the Maidstone non-selective planning group: Cornwallis Academy, The Lenham School, Maplesden Noakes School, New Line Learning Academy, School of Science and Technology, St. Augustine Academy, St. Simon Stock Catholic School and Valley Park School.

The planning group is in deficit throughout the Plan period, with the initial deficit of 93 places (in excess of 3.0FE) gradually increasing to a high of 237 places (around 8 FE) in 2029-30. After 2029-30, the longer-term forecast suggests that the deficit will decrease slightly but will remain significant if no mitigating action is taken.

In recent years, schools within this planning group have admitted over PAN, creating additional capacity. We anticipate this pattern to continue and will accommodate some of the forecast deficit. However, up to 60 to 90 temporary places via bulge provision within the existing Secondary schools will be needed to meet the demand for places during the initial 2 years of the Plan period and this increases to 120 temporary places in 2028-29.

We anticipate the need for the establishment of a new secondary school or programme of significant expansions no later than 2029-30 and will seek to continue to work with partners, including the DfE, to identify an appropriate and available location within the Borough for either a new school or additional land for an existing school over the coming year.

### **Maidstone and Malling Selective Planning Group**

There are four schools in the Maidstone selective planning group: Invicta Grammar School, Maidstone Grammar School, Maidstone Grammar School for Girls and Oakwood Park Grammar School.

The forecast for the planning group indicates that there will be sufficient places in 2026-27. However, in 2027-28 there will be a deficit of 8 places that then increases markedly from 2028-29, with fluctuating deficits of around a 1 FE forecast through to the end of forecast period in 2033-34. Therefore, in the longer term, subject to the pace and school of housing development, it will be necessary to expand an existing school by 1 FE.

## Planned Commissioning – Maidstone

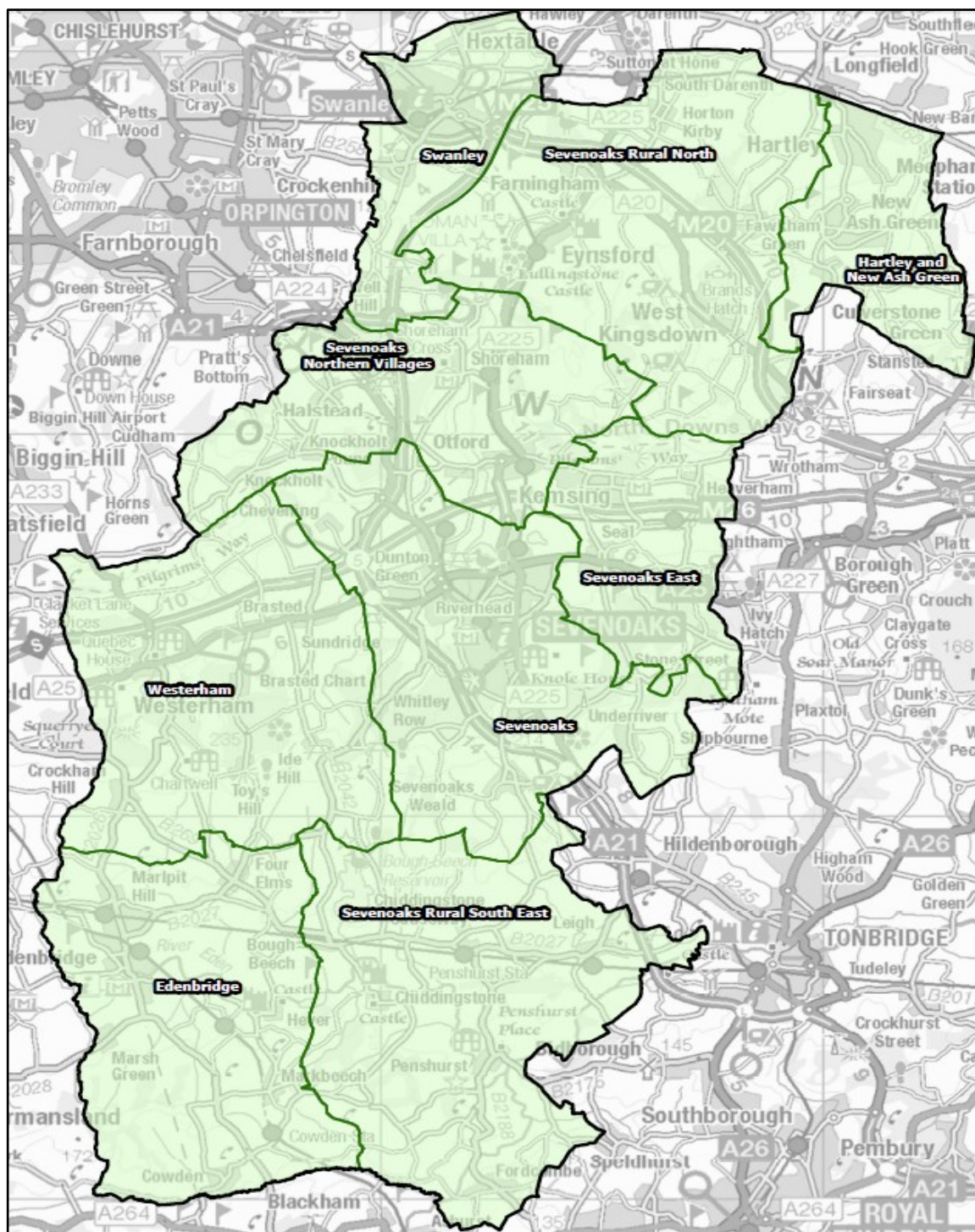
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
<b>Maidstone West</b>					New 2FE School on East of Hermitage Lane	
<b>Maidstone Non-Selective Planning Group</b>	Up to 90 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	Up to 90 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	Up to 120 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	Establishment of new 6FE secondary school OR Programme of Expansions including potential expansion on to additional land		
<b>Maidstone and Malling Selective Planning Group</b>				1 FE permanent expansion of existing school		

## 7.8 Sevenoaks

### District Summary

- The birth rate in Sevenoaks rose in 2021, but declined markedly in 2022 and 2023 with a slight increase recorded in 2024. However, it is still above the County and National averages. The number of births has followed a similar trend and dropped significantly to 1092 in 2023, which is lowest for more than 20 years.
- There remains a surplus of Year R places across the district. However, after reaching a peak in 2027, that surplus is forecast to reduce throughout the Plan period. Forecasts only show a marginal deficit in the Sevenoaks Rural North Planning Group from September 2029, but to address this, capacity can be utilised in adjacent planning groups that show a surplus, such as Sevenoaks East, Swanley, Sevenoaks Northern Villages and the Hartley and New Ash Green. KCC has previously initiated discussions with some primary schools, where surplus places were more acute, about how they would seek to maintain financial viability. This could be done by proposing a reduction in PAN through the annual admissions consultation, or when the need appeared to be more urgent, through In Year Variation. However, KCC is cognisant of the upcoming new Sevenoaks Local Plan (see below), and the impact of the Local Plan on existing primary surpluses. Therefore, no further PAN reductions are proposed at this time.
- The Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Secondary Planning Group is forecast to show a surplus of places for the duration of the Plan period. Currently, KCC plan no action, although the numbers will be monitored over the forthcoming years and once the Sevenoaks Local Plan is published.
- For all of the Plan period in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group, there is a surplus. The surplus is forecast to fluctuate between a 4.5FE to 7FE. However, house building in Dartford Borough continues at pace and not all planned sites have yet been consented and therefore not included in the current projections.
- The West Kent Selective Planning Group has small deficits forecast during the early part of the Plan period that may require additional temporary bulge provision.
- Sevenoaks District Council is expected to publish a new Local Plan within the next 18 months that will indicate building a significant number of new dwellings (up to 17,175) in the years up to 2042. Sevenoaks District Council had consulted on their Infrastructure Delivery Plan to identify the essential community infrastructure that will be required and have scheduled to consult again in Autumn 2025. Prior to the publication of the Local Plan, new housing development sites have already been identified with Fort Halstead, Four Elms Road and Sevenoaks Quarry being progressed. Fort Halstead and Sevenoaks Quarry sites have the potential for a new Primary School if sufficient demand for new provision materialises.

## Map of the Sevenoaks Primary Planning Groups



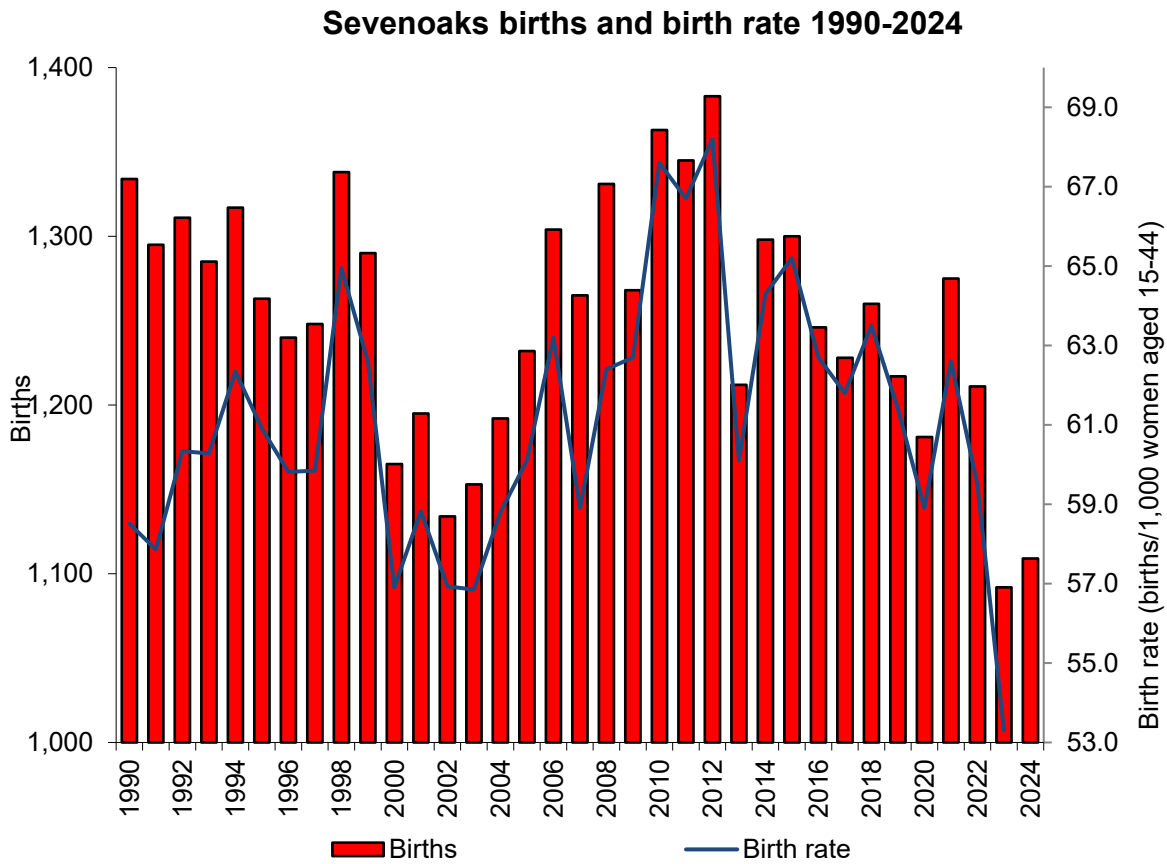
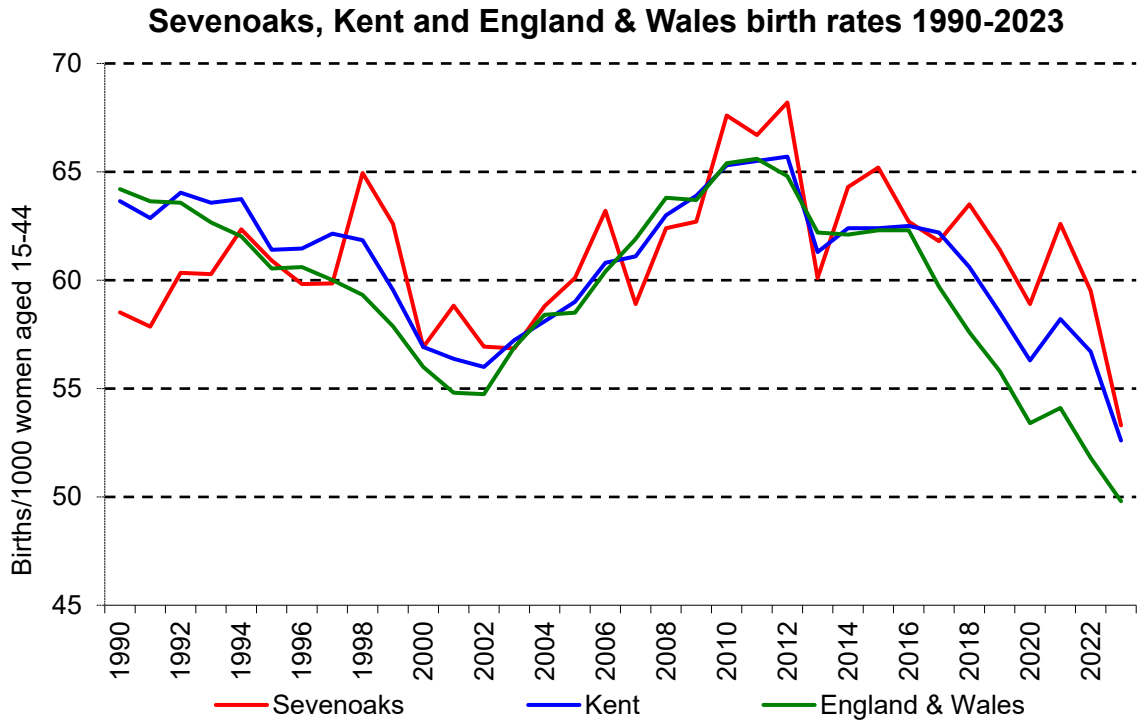
## Sevenoaks Primary Schools by Planning Group

Planning group	School	Status
Swanley	Crockenhill Primary School	Community
	Downsview Community Primary School	Community
	Hextable Primary School	Community
	High Firs Primary School	Community
	Horizon Primary Academy	Academy
	St. Bartholomew's RC Primary School	Academy
	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Swanley)	Voluntary Aided

Planning group	School	Status
	St. Paul's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Sevenoaks Rural North	Anthony Roper Primary School	Foundation
	Fawkham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Horton Kirby CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Edmund's Church of England Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Hartley and New Ash Green	Leigh Academy Hartley	Academy
	New Ash Green Primary School	Community
	Our Lady of Hartley RC Primary School	Academy
Sevenoaks Northern Villages	Halstead Community Primary School	Academy
	Otford Primary School	Community
	Shoreham Village School	Academy
	St. Katharine's Knockholt CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
Sevenoaks East	Kemsing Primary School	Community
	Seal Church of England Primary School	Academy
	St. Lawrence CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Sevenoaks	Amherst School	Academy
	Chevening St. Botolph's CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Dunton Green Primary School	Community
	Lady Boswell's CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Riverhead Infant School	Community
	Sevenoaks Primary School	Community
	St. John's CE Primary School (Sevenoaks)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Thomas' RC Primary School (Sevenoaks)	Academy
Weald Community Primary School	Community	
Westerham	Churchill CE Primary School (Westerham)	Voluntary Controlled
	Crockham Hill CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Ide Hill CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Sundridge and Brasted CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Edenbridge	Edenbridge Primary School	Academy
	Four Elms Primary School	Academy
	Hever CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
Sevenoaks Rural South East	Chiddingstone CE School	Academy
	Fordcombe CE Primary School	Academy
	Leigh Primary School	Community
	Penshurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided

## Birth Rate and Births Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the district and the number of recorded births.



## Sevenoaks Forecasts

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Swanley	300	36	11	4	30	19	18	15	8	6	8	10	300
Sevenoaks Rural North	120	25	10	-1	12	0	-2	-5	-8	-10	-11	-12	105
Hartley and New Ash Green	150	15	-2	22	16	14	10	8	6	6	5	5	150
Sevenoaks Northern Villages	130	66	26	33	41	35	33	31	28	27	27	26	100
Sevenoaks East	102	27	15	22	31	22	21	20	19	19	19	19	102
Sevenoaks	390	86	79	42	72	75	52	47	37	29	22	19	360
Westerham	87	7	13	22	21	20	17	15	13	11	10	10	87
Edenbridge	105	16	8	9	12	16	9	8	5	2	-1	-3	105
Sevenoaks Rural South East	83	18	26	20	27	27	23	23	22	21	20	20	83
<b>Sevenoaks</b>	<b>1,467</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1,392</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
NS - Dartford and Swanley	1,260	10	123	175	132	154	176	174	211	184	146	205	1,560
NS - Sevenoaks and Borough Green	610	-3	29	6	13	27	19	30	74	32	52	118	630
SG - West Kent	1,264	-41	-2	-14	-13	11	10	39	75	84	99	165	1,294

## **Primary District commentary**

The Year R forecast indicates that no additional Primary capacity is needed. The levels of surplus forecast have persisted for three years and individual schools have started to encounter financial viability issues. KCC has worked with a number of schools across the district to take mitigating action where necessary. Otford Primary School, Sevenoaks Primary School and Anthony Roper Primary school have all consulted to reduce their PANs, removing 75 places of Primary capacity. This has helped to reduce the district wide surplus to more manageable levels in the future.

However, forecasts do not take into account any further new housing development that Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) may include in the new Sevenoaks District Local Plan, that has not been notified to KCC already.

Three consented sites in Fort Halstead, Sevenoaks Quarry and Four Elms Road will create demand for Primary places. However, it is likely that demand can be managed using existing capacity, at least in the medium term.

As more new housing developments come forward and demand for school places increases, KCC will, in the first instance, look to accommodate that demand within existing provision. Where there is the potential for demand to exceed capacity in a particular planning group, KCC will look for the most appropriate option to address the issue. Options will include utilising surplus capacity in adjacent planning groups, expansion of existing schools or introducing new provision.

## **Secondary District Commentary**

There are three non-selective and two selective secondary planning groups that are fully or partially within Sevenoaks District. See appendix 13.2 for the secondary planning group maps.

However, only three groups (West Kent Selective, Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective and Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Groups) actually have schools or satellites of schools within Sevenoaks District in them.

### **Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are eight schools in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group: Alkerden C of E Academy, Dartford Science and Technology College, Ebbsfleet Academy, Leigh UTC, Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy, Stone Lodge School, Leigh Academy Wilmington and Orchards Academy. All the schools are in Dartford Borough, except for Orchards Academy which is in Sevenoaks District.

Demand is manageable without any intervention for the duration of the Plan period.

To manage the demand that will be derived from the additional housebuilding, the new secondary provision at the Alkerden C of E Academy, will be expanded to its full capacity of 8FE, in the coming years and is included in the forecast. For 2025 the school has opened in temporary accommodation admitting 5FE of Year 7 students. For 2026 Alkerden C of E Academy will be admitting 6FE of Year 7 students. Also included in the forecasts is the 2FE that KCC have commissioned at Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy.

### **Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are three schools in the Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group: Knole Academy, Wrotham School and Trinity School. Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period.

A key factor in this planning group is the impact of the publication of the Sevenoaks Local Plan, which has been explained above. Should the Sevenoaks Local Plan be agreed in the near future, additional housing will see the secondary need increase. KCC has notified Sevenoaks District Council that there is limited opportunity to expand any of the existing schools, and that any notable increase in demand for secondary provision will need to be accommodated by the introduction of a new school.

Sevenoaks have indicated that a new development site is being considered in the north of the planning group, at Pedham Place, a former golf course, providing about 2500 new homes. This development must also provide a new secondary school.

No decisions can be made until the Local Plan is published, but it is possible that a new secondary school could be provided in Edenbridge where there is a site that is being held for such provision, if required. The commissioning of a new school in Edenbridge depends on its financial viability. The Department for Education has indicated in the past, a preference for any new secondary schools to be larger (>5FE), rather than smaller (4 - 5FE), which impacts on viability.

Currently, there is insufficient demand in Edenbridge and its environs, to support a new secondary school. If sufficient new housing was outlined in the new Local Plan, or through windfall sites, KCC will again consider whether a new school in Edenbridge is viable.

**West Kent Selective Planning Group**

There are six schools in the planning group: Judd School, Tonbridge Grammar School, Weald of Kent Grammar School, Skinners' School, Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

The forecast indicates that there will be deficits of 14 and 13 in 2026-27 and 2027-28. We anticipate that these forecast deficits will be met through commissioned bulge provision in existing schools where necessary or own admission authorities offering over their PAN. We will keep the need for additional permanent capacity under review.

**Planned Commissioning – Sevenoaks**

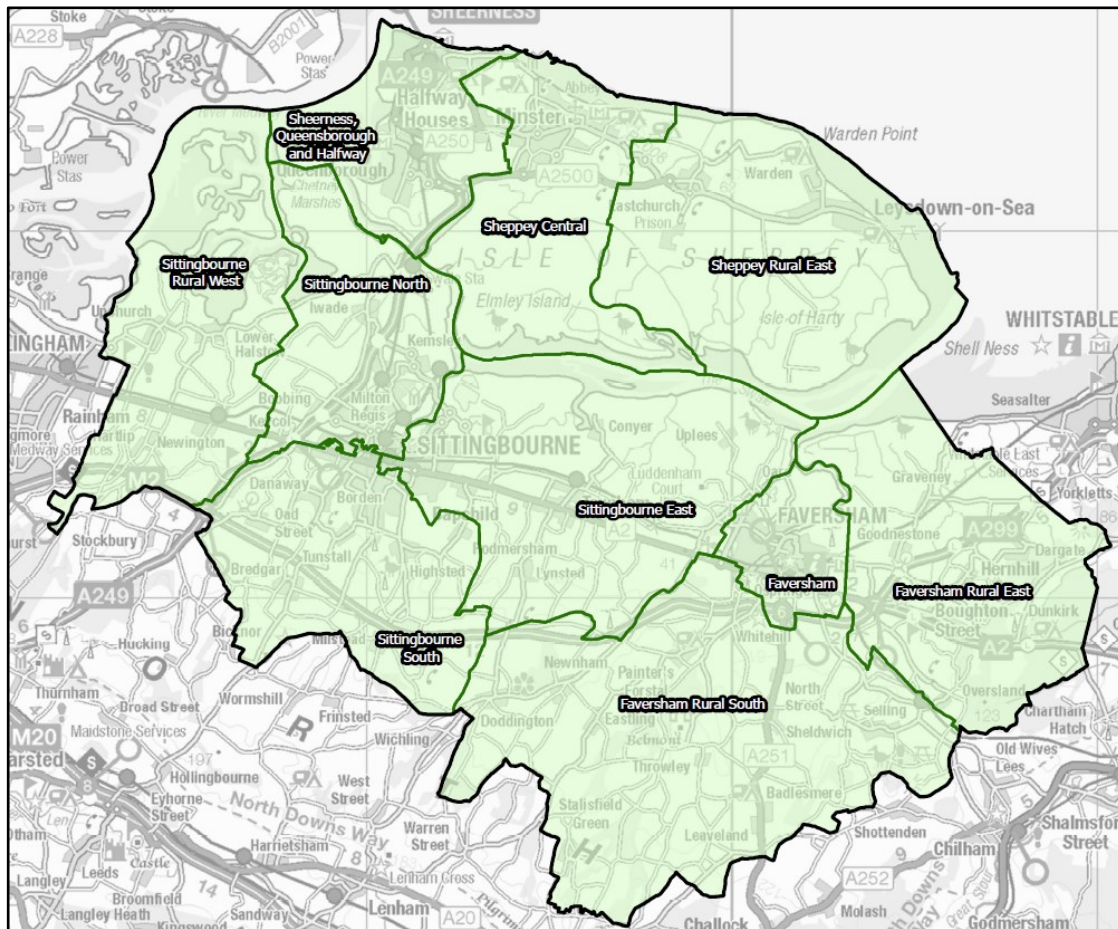
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
West Kent Selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places				

## 7.9 Swale

### District commentary

- The birth rate for Swale remains slightly above the national and county averages and follows a similar pattern with a notable decline in the rate from 2016 to 2020, before recovering slightly in 2021 and then declining once again. The number of births recorded follows a similar pattern.
- We forecast surplus primary places across the District throughout the plan period however there are variances across the different planning groups.
- Within the secondary sector, we forecast pressures on capacity for non-selective Year 7 places including Sittingbourne non-selective planning group and Isle of Sheppey planning group. Whilst Sittingbourne and Sheppey selective planning group shows capacity across the plan period.
- Swale Borough Council's Local Plan, adopted in July 2017, proposes a total of 13,192 new homes over the Plan period to 2031 with approximately 776 dwellings per year. During the 2014/15 to 2023/24 a total of 7,288 houses were completed (NET) with an average of 729 dwellings per year.
- Swale Borough Council is in the process of reviewing their current local plan and have agreed the Local Development Scheme 2024 (LDS). The LDS is the formal document that sets out the timetable for the Council's Local Plan Review and states that a draft Plan Regulation 18 consultation will be carried out in the fourth quarter of 2025, with a Regulation 19 pre-submission consultation in the second quarter of 2026, with submission of the Council's Local Plan, at the end of the fourth quarter in 2026.

## Map of the Swale Primary Planning Groups



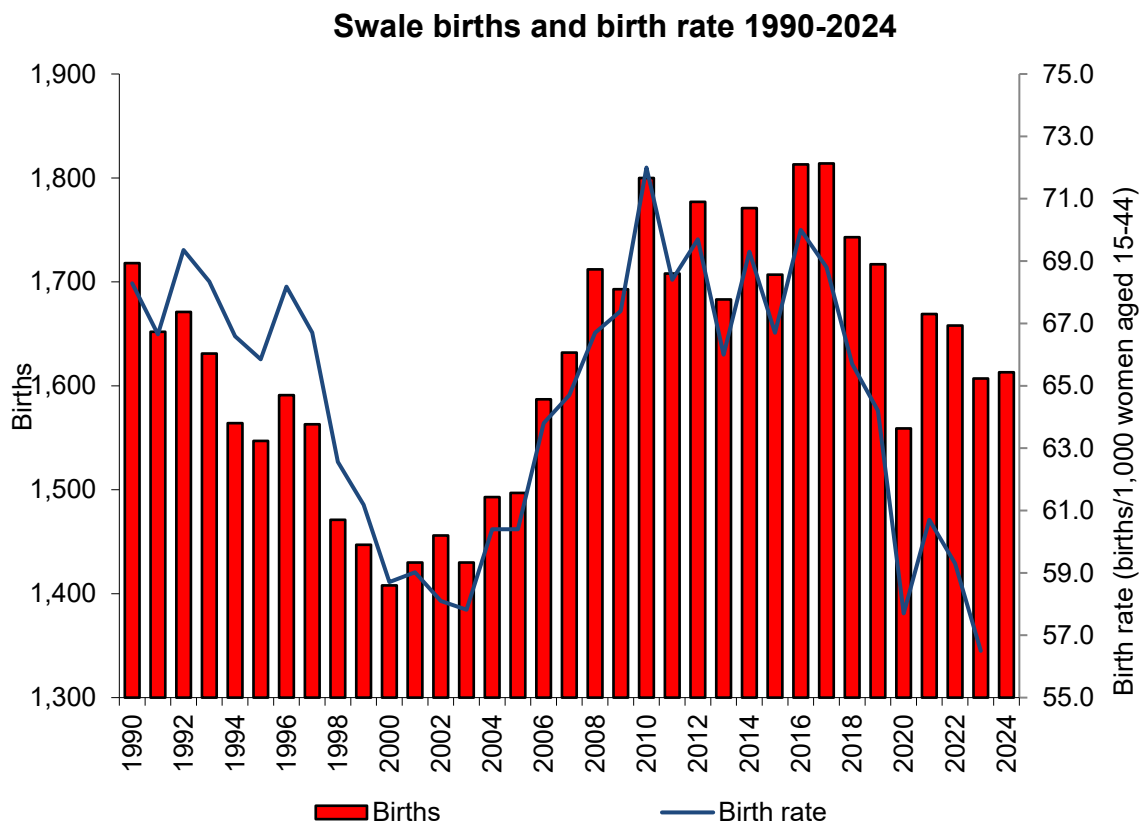
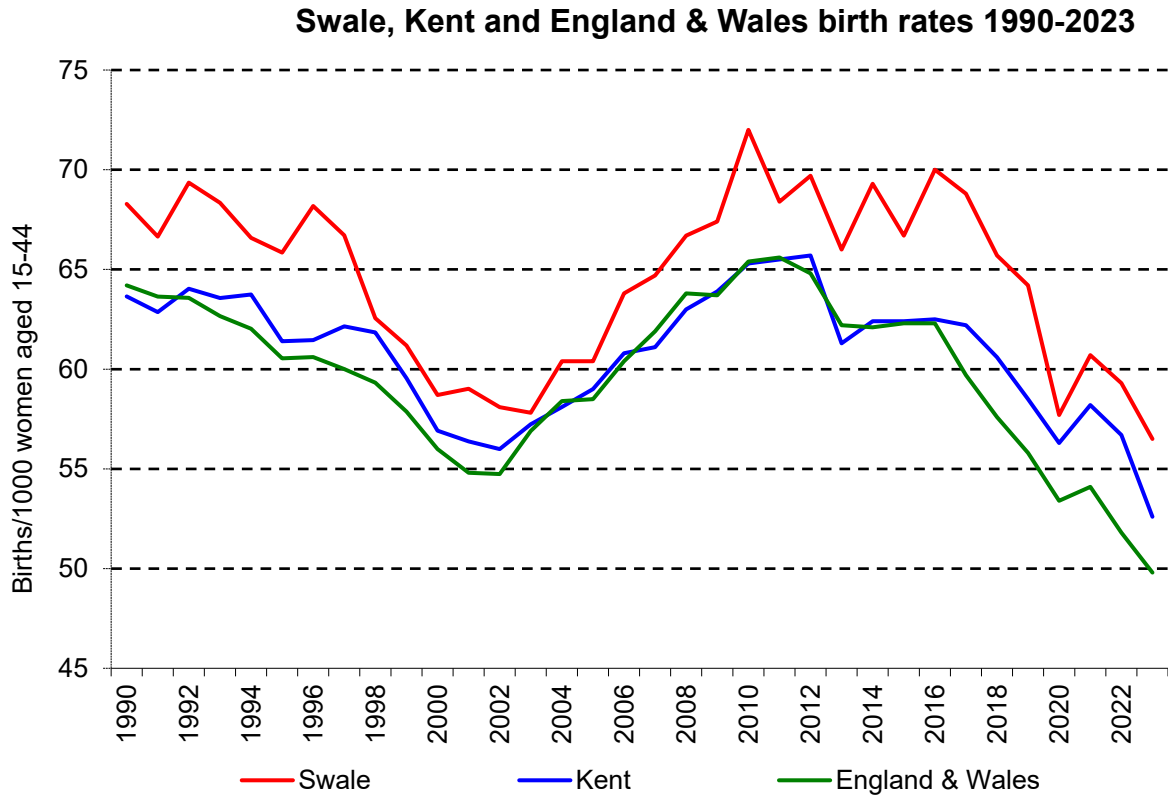
## Swale Primary Schools by Planning Group

Planning groups	School	Status
Faversham	Bysing Wood Primary School	Academy
	Davington Primary School	Community
	Ethelbert Road Primary School	Community
	Luddenham School	Academy
	Ospringe CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Mary of Charity CE Primary School	Academy
Faversham Rural East	Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Graveney Primary School	Academy
	Hernhill CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Faversham Rural South	Eastling Primary School	Community
	Selling CE Primary School	Academy
	Sheldwich Primary School	Academy
Sittingbourne East	Bapchild and Tonge CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Canterbury Road Primary School	Community
	Lansdowne Primary School	Academy
	Lynsted and Norton Primary School	Academy
	South Avenue Primary School	Academy
	Sunny Bank Primary School	Academy
Sittingbourne South	Teynham Parochial CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Borden CE Primary School	Academy
	Bredgar CE Primary School	Academy
	Milstead and Frinsted CE Primary School	Academy
	Minterne Community Junior School	Academy

Planning groups	School	Status
	Oaks Community Infant School	Academy
	Rodmersham Primary School	Community
	St. Peter's RC Primary School (Sittingbourne)	Academy
	Tunstall CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Westlands Primary School	Academy
Sittingbourne North	Bobbing Village School	Academy
	Grove Park Primary School	Academy
	Iwade School	Academy
	Kemsley Primary Academy	Academy
	Milton Court Primary Academy	Academy
	Regis Manor Primary School	Academy
Sittingbourne Rural West	Hartlip Endowed CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Holywell Primary School	Academy
	Lower Halstow Primary School	Community
	Newington CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway	Halfway Houses Primary School	Academy
	Queenborough School	Academy
	Richmond Academy	Academy
	Rose Street Primary School	Community
	St. Edward's RC Primary School	Academy
	West Minster Primary School	Community
Sheppey central	Minster in Sheppey Primary School	Academy
	St. George's CE Primary School (Minster)	Academy
	Thistle Hill Academy	Academy
Sheppey Rural East	Eastchurch CE Primary School	Academy
	St Clements CE Primary School	Academy

## Birth Rate and Births Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.



## Swale Forecasts

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 Capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Faversham	240	42	18	15	-19	-18	0	-4	-11	-18	-20	-20	240
Faversham Rural East	75	2	8	-1	-1	-2	3	2	1	0	-1	-1	75
Faversham Rural South	60	8	11	10	3	6	7	6	5	4	3	3	60
Sittingbourne East	270	49	21	46	68	54	52	50	47	43	42	39	285
Sittingbourne South	305	27	22	7	45	29	15	4	-6	-16	-21	-28	300
Sittingbourne North	330	29	33	13	31	40	25	21	18	15	13	12	330
Sittingbourne Rural West	105	7	13	11	1	17	9	7	4	2	1	0	105
Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway	360	59	46	25	19	46	35	37	40	43	46	46	300
Sheppey Central	210	55	54	45	46	41	41	39	36	35	35	35	210
Sheppey Rural East	60	19	20	9	8	20	14	14	14	13	13	12	60
<b>Swale</b>	<b>2,015</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1,965</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Faversham Non-Selective	210	9	32	20	-3	6	5	-9	4	-11	-16	-40	210
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	360	11	3	-1	-12	-3	-12	-9	17	31	30	29	330
Sittingbourne Non-Selective	765	-3	-37	-8	-97	-69	-66	-90	-21	-29	-57	5	765
Canterbury and Faversham Selective	645	-8	15	0	-47	-28	-30	-42	-7	-30	-34	-28	645
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	300	6	24	32	5	19	12	8	33	32	24	44	300

## **Primary District Commentary**

Forecasts indicate that across Swale district there will be surplus capacity for Year R throughout the plan period. Year R surplus capacity peaks at 7.8FE in 2028/29 for the district, however there are differences across the primary planning groups with place pressures in Faversham planning groups and surplus across the Isle of Sheppey Planning Groups.

### **Faversham Planning Group**

Forecasts indicate from 2027/2028 a pressure on places for Year R of 0.6FE, which fluctuates across the plan period. There are several housing developments and strategic sites in Faversham and dependent on the rate of build-out and occupation of these sites, it is likely that there will be a need for additional school places. A feasibility study has been undertaken for the future expansion of St Mary's of Charity primary school by 1FE to meet this need when required.

### **Sittingbourne East, South, North and Rural West Planning Groups**

Forecasts indicate an ongoing surplus of places in Sittingbourne planning groups across the plan period with the highest surplus capacity in 2027/2028 and then this decreases. It is anticipated that in the medium to long term, as new housing developments are built and occupied, a new 2FE primary school will be established to serve the need from the Wises Lane development in the Sittingbourne South planning area.

### **Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway, Sheppey Central and Sheppey Rural East Planning Groups**

Forecasts indicate an ongoing surplus of places of over 3FE across these three planning groups throughout the plan period. Discussions will take place with the schools on managing this surplus to ensure schools remain viable.

## **Secondary District Commentary**

There are five planning groups within Swale district, or which cross the district boundary (See appendix 13.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). Three of which are non-selective (Faversham, Isle of Sheppey and Sittingbourne) and two selective (Sittingbourne and Sheppey, and Canterbury and Faversham). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

### **Faversham Non-Selective Planning Group**

The Abbey School is the only non-selective school in Faversham. Forecasts indicate there are sufficient Year 7 places across the plan period with a slight pressure on places for 2027/2028 and then surplus capacity for 2028/2029. It shows a sustained pressure in the medium/long term from 2032/2033. All the housing developments for Faversham identified in the current Local Plan are being built out and a 1FE permanent expansion of The Abbey School will be required later in the forecast period as housing occupations increase to meet this need.

### **Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are two schools in the Isle of Sheppey non-selective planning group: East Kent College Sheppey Secondary and Leigh Academy Minster.

Forecasts for Year 7 show a pressure of places from 2026/2027 continuing across the plan period. The plan's forecast takes into consideration the historical travel flows of pupils travelling off the Isle of Sheppey for their education in Sittingbourne schools. This results in additional pressure on places in the Sittingbourne non-selective planning group. The establishment of two schools on the Isle of Sheppey in September 2024 has started to address this situation and is helping reverse the volume of pupils travelling off the Isle of Sheppey to secondary schools in Sittingbourne. Discussions are being held with the schools on the Isle of Sheppey to ensure there are sufficient

Year 7 places in the short term. An expansion of one of the island schools will be required to continue to reverse previous travel patterns.

### Sittingbourne Non-Selective Planning Group

There are three schools in the Sittingbourne non-selective planning group: Fulston Manor School, The Westlands School and The Sittingbourne School.

Forecasts indicate that for Year 7 there is a fluctuating deficit of places over the plan period. For 2026/27 forecasts show a deficit of 0.2FE places rising to a peak of 3.2FE in 2027/28. The pressure showing in Sittingbourne is exacerbated by the numbers of pupils travelling off the Isle of Sheppey for their secondary education. Temporary bulges will be needed for 2026/27 prior to a permanent expansion to meet the ongoing need for places in Sittingbourne and Isle of Sheppey.

In the longer term, a new 6FE secondary school on the North Sittingbourne Quinton Road housing development will be commissioned between 2030 and 2033 to meet the need from new housing developments.

### Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective Planning Group

There are two Schools in the planning group, Borden Grammar School (Boys) and Highsted Grammar School (Girls). Forecasts indicate sufficient Year 7 places with a surplus capacity across the plan period.

### Canterbury and Faversham Selective Planning Group

There are four schools in the Canterbury and Faversham selective planning group: Barton Court Grammar School, Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School.

Forecasts indicate sufficient capacity in the planning group until 2027. From 2027/28 the forecast indicates a fluctuating pressure of up to 1.5FE. We will be working with existing school within the planning group to meet this need.

### Planned Commissioning – Swale

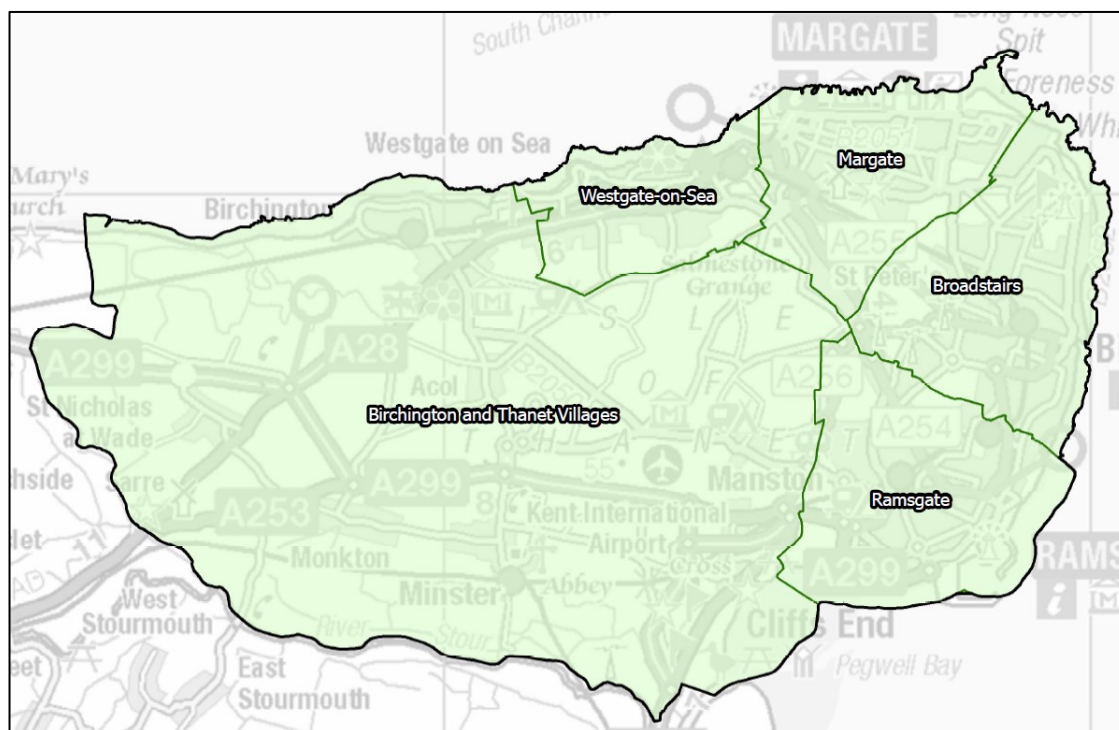
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Faversham			1FE expansion of St Mary's of Charity			
Sittingbourne South					2FE new Primary School at Wises Lane	
Faversham Non-Selective					1FE expansion of Abbey School	
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 2FE Permanent expansion				
Sittingbourne Non-selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 2FE Permanent expansion			6FE new provision - NW Sittingbourne/ Quinton Road	
Canterbury and Faversham Selective		0.5FE expansion Simon Langton Girls School				

## 7.10 Thanet

### District commentary

- The birth rate in Thanet has fallen steadily from 2017 however the birth rate is higher than the national average but has fallen below the county average. The number of births has similarly decreased since 2017 to a low of 1251 in 2023 and 2024.
- We forecast surplus primary school places across the district throughout the plan period with a peak in 2028/2029.
- Within the secondary sector, we forecast pressures on capacity for non-selective Year 7 places across the plan period. There is a surplus of capacity of selective places throughout the plan period for the Thanet selective group.
- Thanet District Council's Local Plan to 2031, adopted on the 9 July 2020, includes the provision of 17,140 additional dwellings in the period up to 2031. During the 2014/15 to 2023/24 a total of 4,628 houses were completed (NET) with an average of 463 per year.
- Thanet District Council is revisiting the timetable for the Thanet Local Plan update subject to the outcome of the new Government's consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system.

## Map of the Thanet Primary Planning Groups



## Thanet Primary Schools by Planning Group

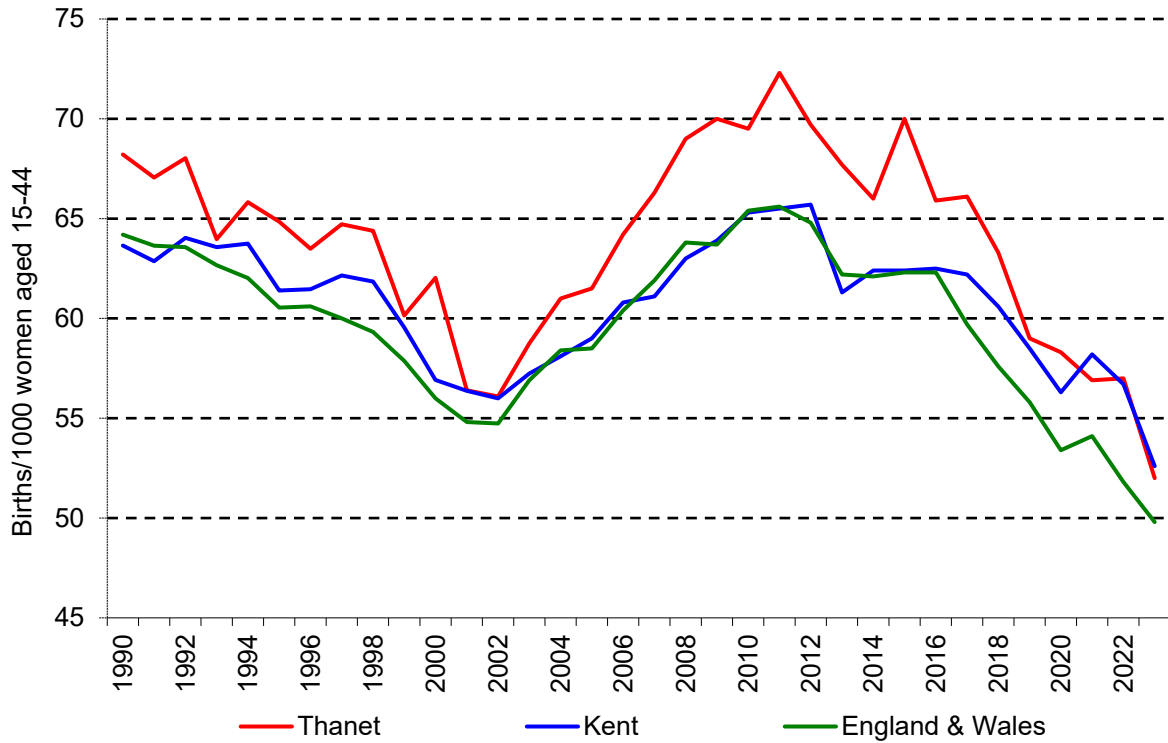
Planning Group	School	Status
Margate	Cliftonville Primary School	Academy
	Drapers Mills Primary Academy	Academy
	Holy Trinity and St. John's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Northdown Primary School	Academy
	Palm Bay Primary School	Academy
	Salmestone Primary School	Academy
	St. Gregory's RC Primary School	Academy
Westgate-on-Sea	Garlinge Primary School	Community
	St. Crispin's Community Infant School	Community
	St. Saviour's CE Junior School	Voluntary Controlled
Ramsgate	Chilton Primary School	Academy
	Christ Church CE Junior School	Academy
	Dame Janet Primary Academy	Academy
	Ellington Infant School	Community
	Newington Community Primary School (Ramsgate)	Academy
	Newlands Primary School	Academy
	Priory Infant School	Community
	Ramsgate Arts Primary School	Free
	Ramsgate Holy Trinity CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Ethelbert's RC Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Laurence-in-Thanet CE Junior Academy	Academy
Broadstairs	Bromstone Primary School	Foundation
	Callis Grange Infant School	Community
	St. George's CE Primary School (Broadstairs)	Foundation
	St. Joseph's RC Primary School (Broadstairs)	Academy
	St. Mildred's Infant School	Community

Planning Group	School	Status
	St. Peter-in-Thamet CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided
	Upton Junior School	Academy
Birchington and Thanet Villages	Birchington CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Minster CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Monkton CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Nicholas at Wade CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

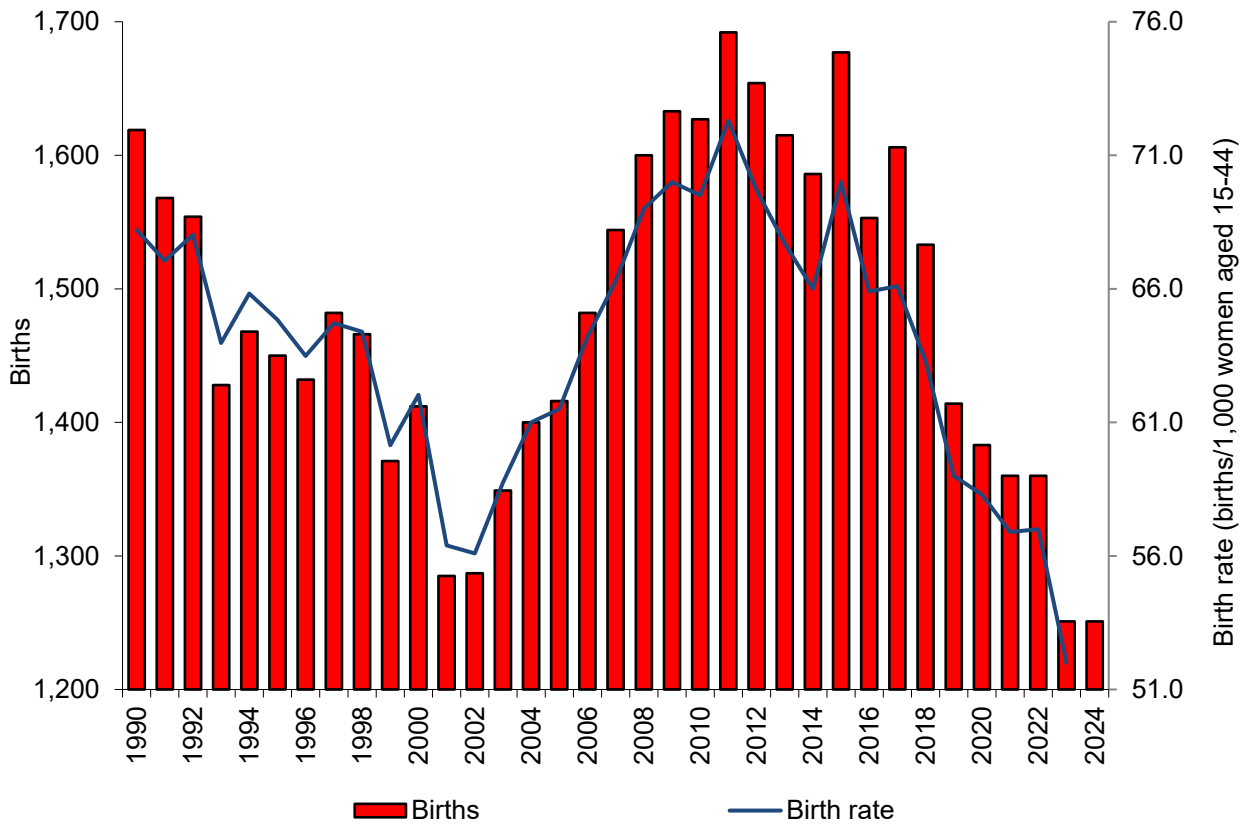
## Birth Rate and Births Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the district and the number of recorded births.

### Thanet, Kent and England & Wales birth rates 1990-2023



### Thanet births and birth rate 1990-2024



## Thanet Forecasts

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 Capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Margate	435	60	69	27	73	73	60	63	65	68	73	79	390
Westgate-on-Sea	210	51	9	13	9	24	17	19	20	21	23	25	180
Ramsgate	495	63	121	59	73	56	53	51	47	39	32	30	465
Broadstairs	330	24	31	42	46	48	36	35	33	30	28	27	315
Birchington and Thanet Villages	165	21	10	14	1	4	5	3	1	-2	-6	-9	165
<b>Thanet</b>	<b>1,635</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>1,515</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 Capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Thanet Non Selective	1,099	-36	-75	-68	-82	-38	-127	-14	-22	27	26	65	1,099
Thanet Selective	345	-1	21	23	21	25	9	23	25	26	30	37	345

## Primary District Commentary

Forecasts indicate that Thanet district has surplus capacity for Year R places across the Plan period. Surplus capacity ranges between 5.2FE in 2026/27 to a peak of 6.8FE in 28/29.

There are differences within the individual planning groups, with Margate and Ramsgate showing high levels of surplus capacity, Westgate-on-sea and Broadstairs also showing some capacity whilst Birchington and Thanet Villages planning group showing slight surplus capacity which is reducing to a deficit of places later in the plan period.

### Margate and Ramsgate Planning Groups

Forecasts indicate surplus Year R places across the plan period between for both Margate and Ramsgate planning groups, discussions will continue to take place with the schools on options to manage this surplus.

### Birchington and Thanet Villages Planning Group

Forecasts indicate a small reduction of surplus capacity for Year R places. Any future pupil pressures arising from the developments closer to the borders of the Margate and Ramsgate planning groups could initially be accommodated in Margate and Ramsgate schools due to the surplus capacity available. Birchington Primary School will revert to a 3FE PAN to support the initial pressure from new housing in Birchington. New primary school provision to serve any new housing developments may be required later in the plan period in Birchington and/or Westgate-on-Sea if all housing comes forward as set out in the Local Plan.

## Secondary District Commentary

There are two planning groups which are within Thanet district, one non-selective and one selective (See appendix 13.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

### Thanet Non-Selective Planning Group

There are six schools in the Thanet non-selective planning group: Charles Dickens School, Hartsdown Academy, King Ethelbert School, Royal Harbour Academy, St George's CE Foundation School and Ursuline College.

Forecasts indicate a pressure on places across the plan period of 2.2FE from 2026/27 which increases to 4.2FE in 2029/30. We will work with existing schools to ensure there are sufficient Year 7 places to meet the need.

### Thanet Selective Planning Group

There are two schools in the Thanet selective planning group: Chatham and Clarendon Grammar School and Dane Court Grammar School. Forecasts indicate surplus places throughout the plan period.

## Planned Commissioning – Thanet

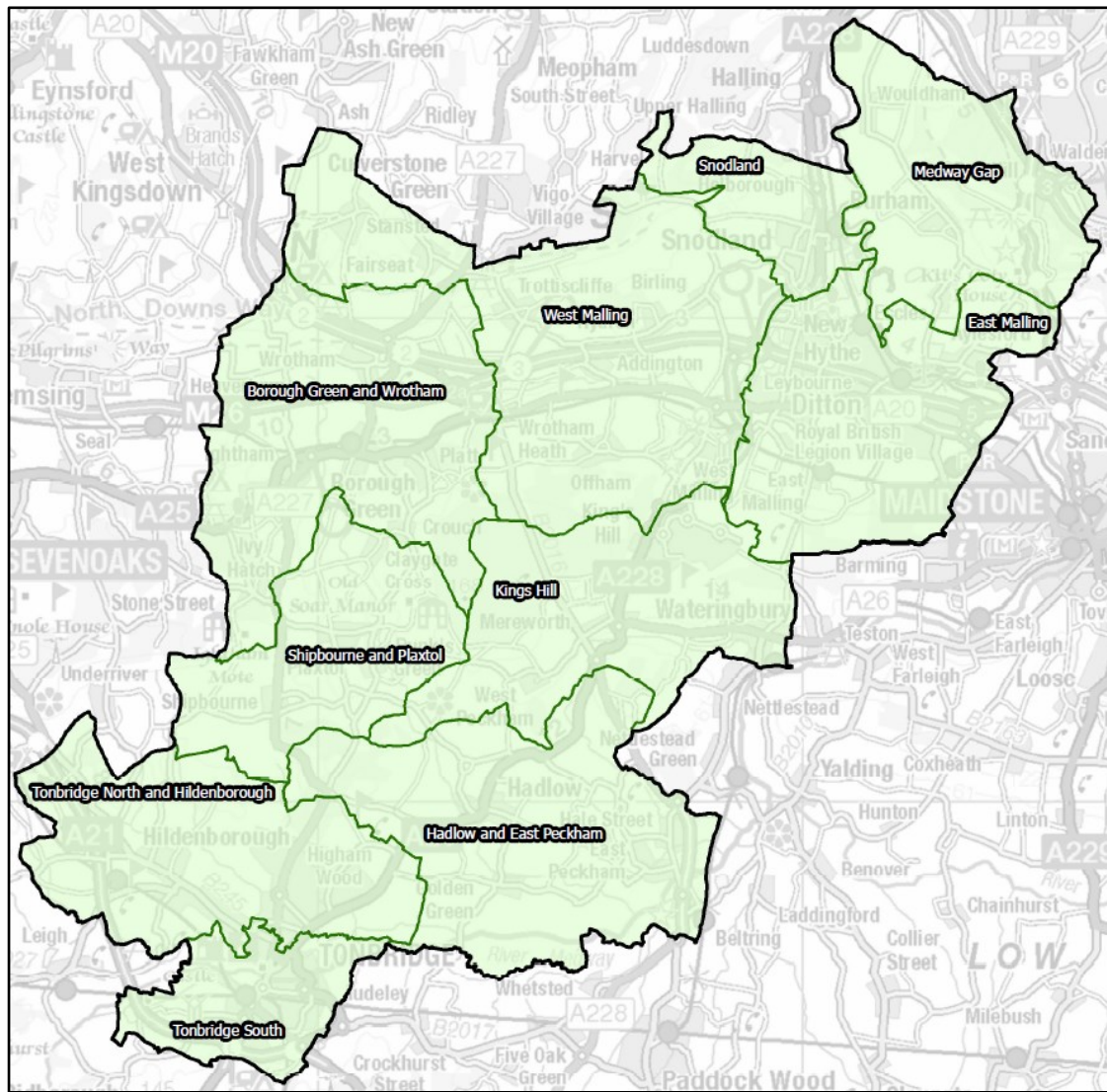
Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
<b>Birchington and Thanet Villages/ Westgate-on-Sea</b>						2FE new primary in Birchington and /or Westgate on Sea
<b>Thanet Non-Selective</b>	Up to 60 temporary places	Up to 90 temporary places	Up to 45 temporary places	Up to 45 temporary places		

## 7.11 Tonbridge and Malling

### Borough commentary

- The birth rate for Tonbridge and Malling dropped from 2018 to 2020, before increasing slightly in 2021 and then falling sharply in 2022 and 2023. The number of births also increased in 2021, but fell back in 2022 and dropped significantly in 2023 to 1253 births which is the lowest since 2013. The number of births moderately recovered in 2024, but remains low.
- We forecast sufficient primary school places across the Borough to meet demand across the Plan period. However, there is local place pressures within some planning groups which will need to be addressed. Within the Non-Selective secondary planning groups, we anticipate sufficient places during the Plan period. The West Kent Selective planning group has small deficits forecast for the initial years of the Plan period.
- On 13 July 2021, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council withdrew their proposed Local Plan from public examination. The Borough Council expects to submit a revised plan to the Secretary of State 2025. The forecasts within the Kent Commissioning Plan incorporate consented housing proposals and remaining sites to be built out from the current Core Strategy. Any housing proposals from emerging Local Plans are not incorporated within the forecasts.

## Map of the Tonbridge and Malling Primary Planning Groups



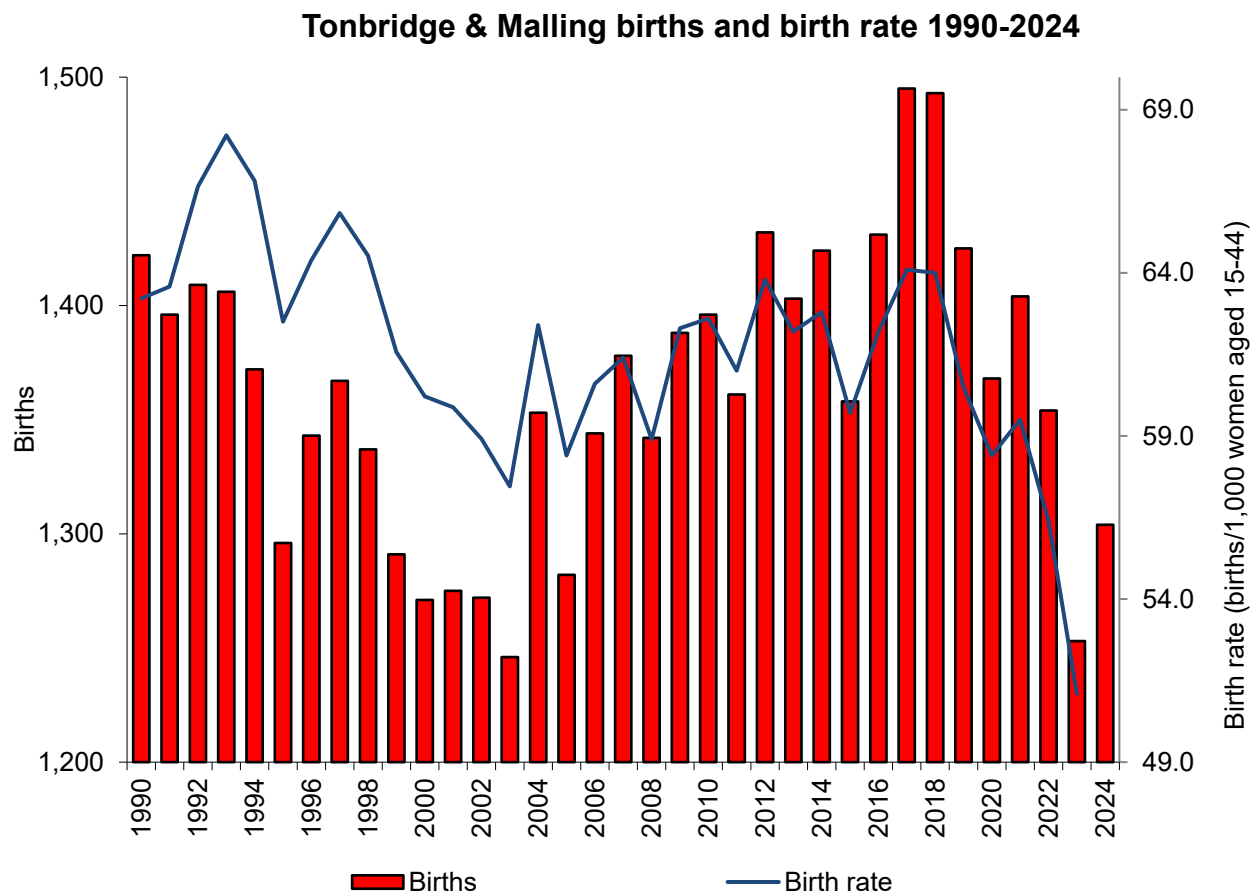
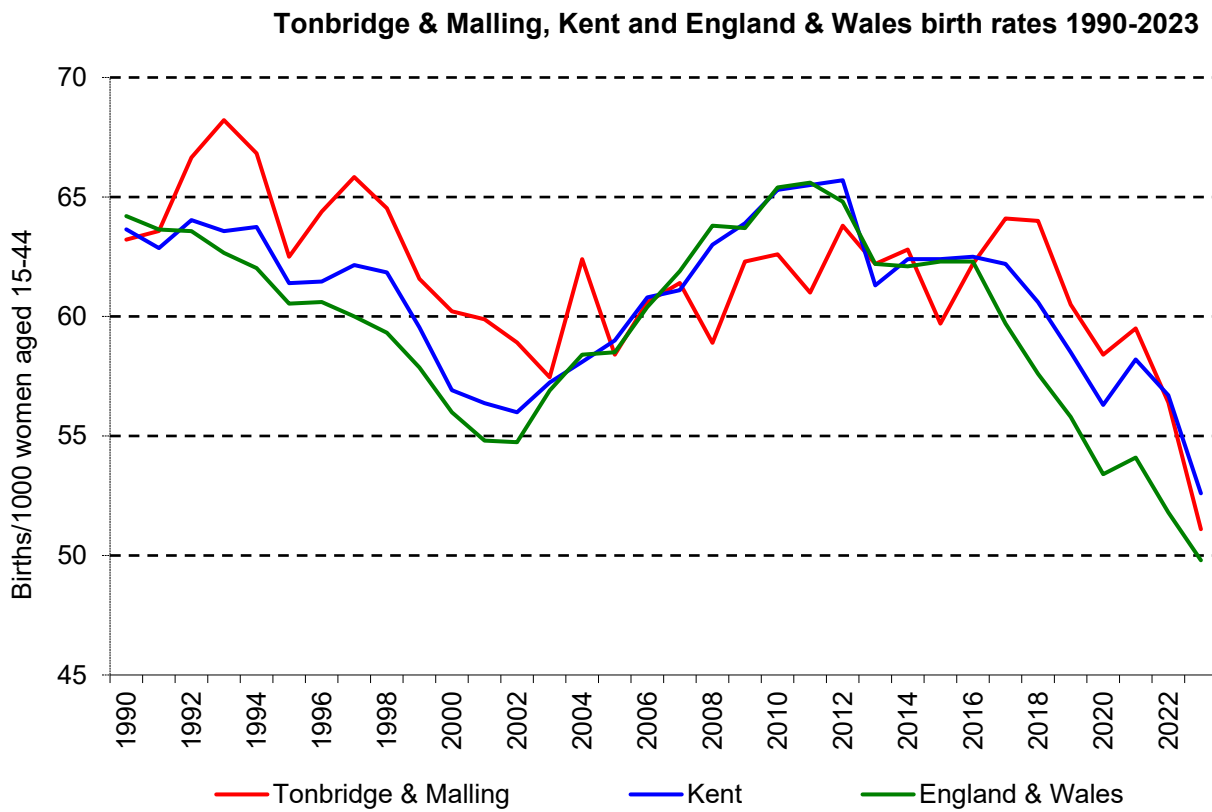
## Tonbridge and Malling Primary Schools by Planning Group

Planning Groups	School	Status
Tonbridge South	Bishop Chavasse CE Primary School	Free
	Royal Rise Primary School	Academy
	Slade Primary School	Community
	Sussex Road Community Primary School	Community
Tonbridge North and Hildenborough	Cage Green Primary School	Academy
	Hildenborough CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Long Mead Community Primary School	Community
	St. Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School	Academy
	Stocks Green Primary School	Community
	Woodlands Primary School	Community
Hadlow and East Peckham	East Peckham Primary School	Community
	Hadlow Primary School	Community
Shipbourne and Plaxtol	Plaxtol Primary School	Community
	Shipbourne School	Community
Kings Hill	Discovery School	Community
	Kings Hill School	Community
	Mereworth Community Primary School	Community
	Valley Invicta Primary School at Kings Hill	Academy
	Wateringbury CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided

Planning Groups	School	Status
Borough Green and Wrotham	Borough Green Primary School	Foundation
	Ightham Primary School	Academy
	Platt CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. George's CE Primary School (Wrotham)	Voluntary Controlled
West Malling	More Park RC Primary School	Academy
	Offham Primary School	Community
	Ryarsh Primary School	Community
	Trottscliffe CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Valley Invicta Primary School at Leybourne Chase	Academy
	West Malling CE Primary School	Academy
East Malling	Brookfield Infant School	Community
	Brookfield Junior School	Community
	Ditton CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided
	Ditton Infant School	Foundation
	Leybourne St. Peter and St. Paul CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Lunsford Primary School	Community
	St. James the Great Academy	Academy
	St. Peter's CE Primary School (Aylesford)	Voluntary Controlled
	Valley Invicta Primary School at Aylesford	Academy
Snodland	Snodland CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Katherine's School (Snodland)	Academy
	Valley Invicta Primary School at Holborough Lakes	Academy
Medway Gap	Burham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Mark's CE Primary School (Eccles)	Academy
	Tunbury Primary School	Community
	Wouldham All Saint's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

## Birth Rate and Births Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.



## Tonbridge and Malling Analysis – Primary

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Tonbridge South	210	27	20	14	45	43	24	23	22	22	24	28	210
Tonbridge North and Hildenborough	270	71	35	46	44	52	40	35	31	28	26	25	225
Hadlow and East Peckham	60	3	-2	5	-2	1	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	60
Shipbourne and Plaxtol	24	12	8	10	10	10	9	9	9	9	10	10	24
Kings Hill	240	22	6	2	20	-2	-10	-20	-26	-30	-34	-36	225
Borough Green and Wrotham	135	40	18	24	50	32	28	26	25	25	26	27	135
West Malling	162	12	15	-1	31	24	11	9	8	7	7	7	162
East Malling	294	33	50	31	39	40	19	15	9	2	-3	-7	294
Snodland	150	5	11	13	1	24	14	14	16	17	19	20	150
Medway Gap	198	35	-1	-13	-16	-18	-18	-25	-30	-31	-32	-34	168
<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</b>	<b>1,743</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1,653</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Malling Non-Selective	543	28	57	68	21	24	21	50	29	57	39	50	543
Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective	610	-3	29	6	13	27	19	30	74	32	52	118	630
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective	1,645	197	169	91	95	88	56	117	126	129	147	178	1,586
West Kent Selective	1,264	-41	-2	-14	-13	11	10	39	75	84	99	165	1,294

## **Primary District Commentary**

For primary education, the overall forecasts indicate sufficient places to meet demand across the Plan period. However, there are local place pressures within some of the individual planning groups.

### **Hadlow and East Peckham Planning Group**

The planning group forecast indicates a 2 place deficit in 2027-28 and a 1 place deficit from 2030-31 to 2033-24. We will monitor the situation carefully, but anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the demand.

### **Kings Hill Planning Group**

Demand for places is forecast to increase during the Plan Period, with a 2 place deficit in 2028-29 increasing to around 30 places from 2031-32 onwards. We will monitor the situation carefully to assess whether additional provision is needed. We anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the initial demand, but may need to commission an additional 1 FE of permanent provision later in the Plan Period.

### **East Malling Planning Group**

There are small deficits forecast for the last 2 years of the Plan Period. We will monitor the situation carefully, but anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the demand.

### **West Malling Planning Group**

Forecasts for West Malling show a small deficit in 2026-27 that can be accommodated in the adjacent Kings Hill planning group.

### **Medway Gap Planning Group**

The planning group is forecast to have a deficit that increases throughout the Plan period. Where the demand in the short to medium term cannot be accommodated in neighbouring planning groups, we will work with local schools to establish bulge provision before seeking a more permanent solution via the expansion of an existing school towards the end of the forecast period. The demand for school places within this group can be impacted by children resident in Medway, we will work with Medway Council when determining the most appropriate commissioning strategy for ensuring all children have a school place.

## **Secondary District Commentary**

There are four planning groups which are within Tonbridge and Malling Borough or which cross the Borough boundary (See appendix 12.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). Three of which are non-selective. The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

### **Malling Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are three schools in the planning group: Aylesford School, Holmesdale School and Malling School. Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period.

### **Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are three schools in the Sevenoaks and Borough Green non-selective planning group: Knowle Academy, Wrotham School and Trinity School. Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period.

### **Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are eight schools in the planning group: Hadlow Rural Community School, Hayesbrook School, Hillview School for Girls, Hugh Christie Technology College, Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Mascalls Academy, Skinners' Kent Academy and St. Gregory's Catholic School.

Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period. It should be noted that these forecasts do not incorporate the impact of housing growth associated with unconsented or unallocated development outside of an adopted Local Plan, therefore future strategic housing growth may have a significant impact over and above the forecast need.

### **West Kent Selective Planning Group**

There are six schools in the planning group: Judd School, Tonbridge Grammar School, Weald of Kent Grammar School, Skinners' School, Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

The forecast indicates that there will be deficits of 14 and 13 in 2026-27 and 2027-28. We anticipate that these forecast deficits will be met through commissioned bulge provision in existing schools where necessary or own admission authorities offering over their PAN. We will keep the need for additional permanent capacity under review.

### **Planned Commissioning – Tonbridge and Malling**

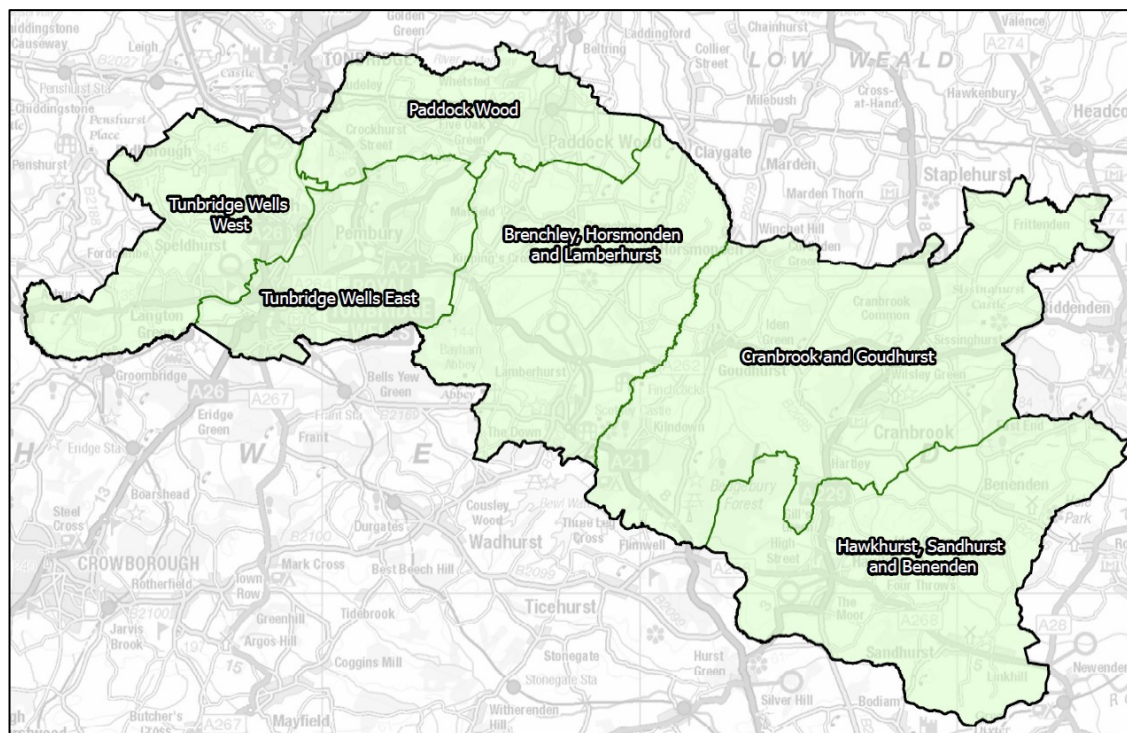
<b>Planning Group</b>	<b>By 2026-27</b>	<b>By 2027-28</b>	<b>By 2028-29</b>	<b>By 2029-30</b>	<b>Between 2030-33</b>	<b>Post 2033</b>
<b>Kings Hill</b>					1FE Expansion of Existing School	
<b>Medway Gap</b>					1FE Expansion of Existing School	
<b>West Kent Selective</b>	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places				

## 7.12 Tunbridge Wells

### Borough Commentary

- The birth rate for Tunbridge Wells has in general been falling since 2010 and continued to drop in 2023. However the rate is still above both the county and national averages. The number of recorded births has followed a similar trend to a low of 1068 in 2023, which is the lowest for more than 20 years, before rising to 1102 in 2024.
- We forecast sufficient primary school places across the Borough throughout the Plan period albeit there is local place pressure within the Cranbrook and Goudhurst, the Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst, Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden and the Paddock Wood planning groups. Within the secondary sector, we anticipate there will be sufficient places during the Plan period within the Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective and the Cranbrook Selective groups. The West Kent Selective planning group as has small deficits forecast for the Plan period.
- A new proposed Local Plan has undergone independent examination and a Final Report is awaited from the Planning Inspector prior to the plan being adopted by the Borough Council. The assessed housing need for the Borough within the proposed new Plan is 678 dwellings per annum, equivalent to some 12,200 additional homes over the plan period to 2038. We will continue working with the Borough Council to ensure sufficient education provision is provided for future housing growth.

## Map of the Tunbridge Wells Primary Planning Groups



## Tunbridge Wells Primary Schools by Planning Group

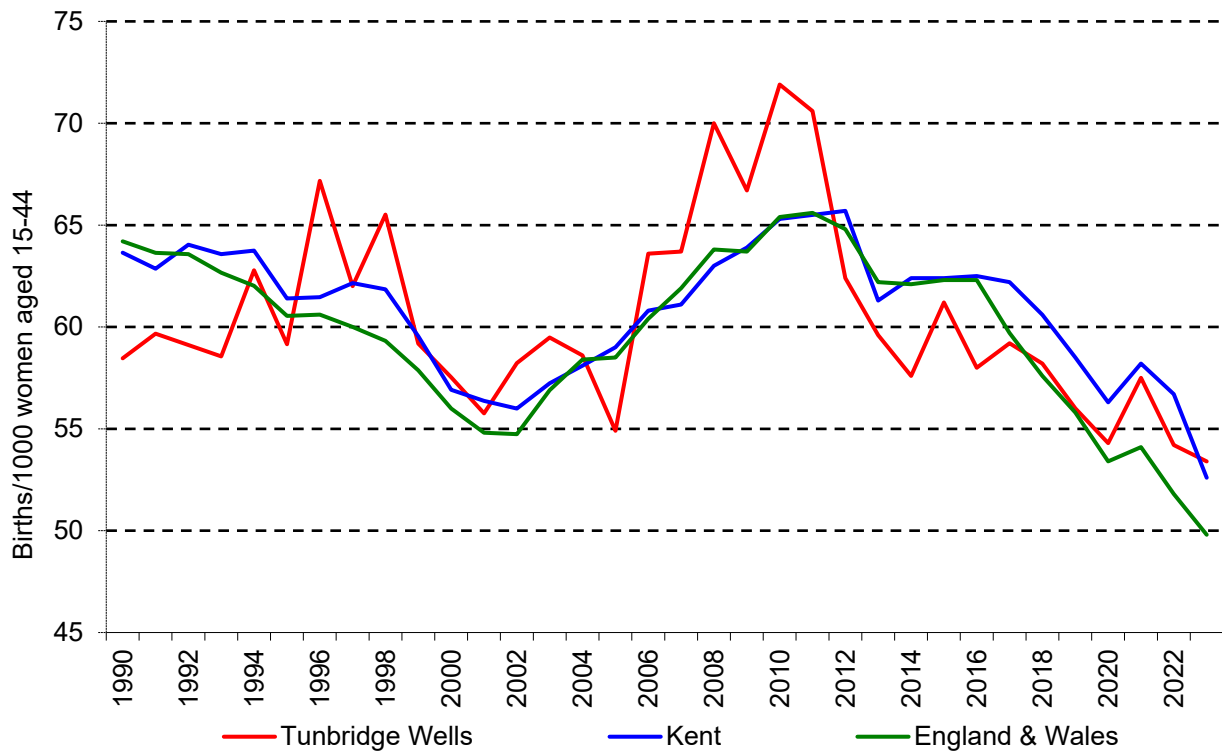
Planning Groups	School	Status
Tunbridge Wells East	Broadwater Down Primary School	Community
	Claremont Primary School	Community
	Pembury School	Community
	Skinners' Kent Primary School	Academy
	St. Barnabas CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. James' CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Mark's CE Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Peter's CE Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Voluntary Controlled
	Temple Grove Academy	Academy
	Wells Free School	Free
Tunbridge Wells West	Bidborough CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Bishops Down Primary School	Community
	Langton Green Primary School	Community
	Rusthall St. Paul's CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Southborough CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Speldhurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Augustine's RC Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Academy
	St. John's CE Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Voluntary Controlled
Paddock Wood	Capel Primary School	Community
	Paddock Wood Primary School	Academy
Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst	Brenchley and Matfield CE Primary School	Academy
	Horsmonden Primary School	Academy
	Lamberhurst St. Mary's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Cranbrook and Goudhurst	Colliers Green CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Cranbrook CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Frittenden CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

<b>Planning Groups</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Goudhurst and Kilndown CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sissinghurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden	Benenden CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Hawkhurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sandhurst Primary School	Community

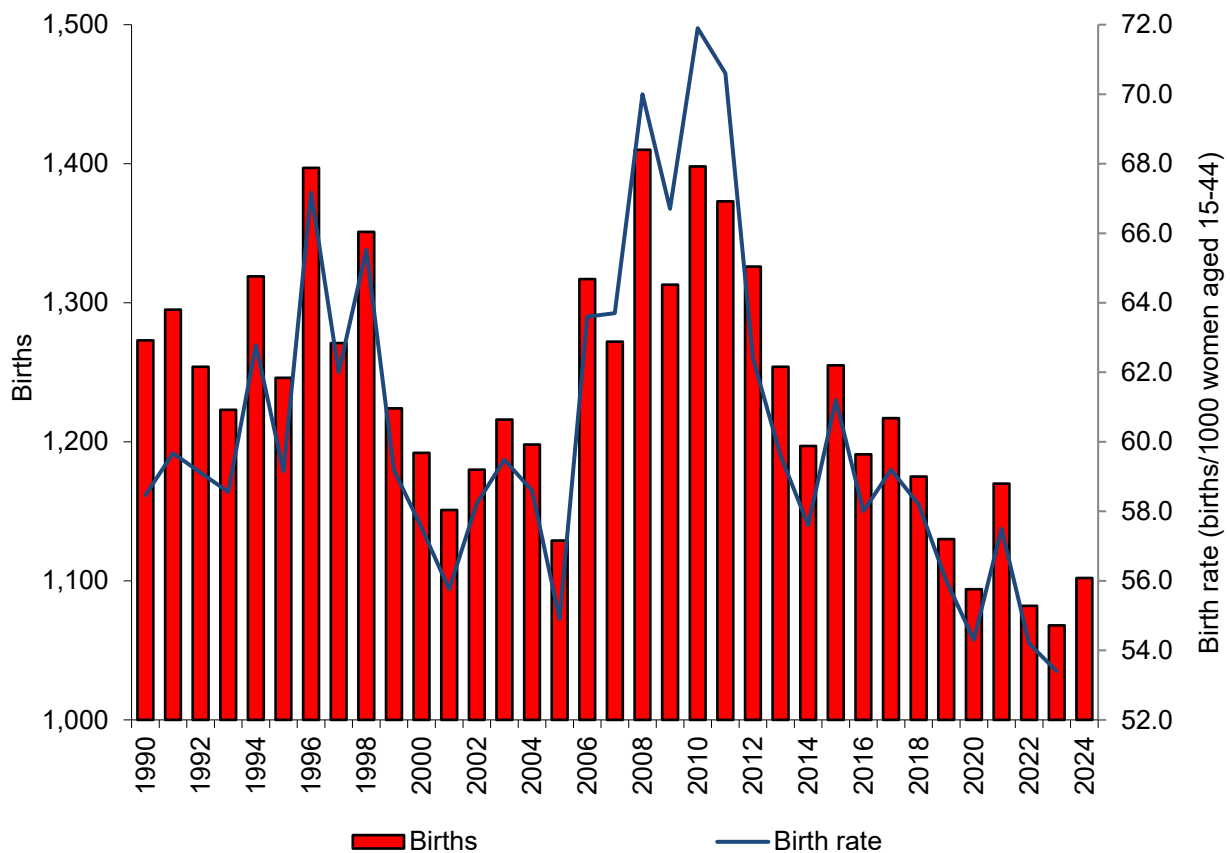
## Birth Rate Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.

### Tunbridge Wells, Kent and England & Wales birth rates 1990-2023



### Tunbridge Wells births and birth rate 1990-2024



## Tunbridge Wells Forecasts

### Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Tunbridge Wells East	450	57	86	87	80	74	84	87	91	98	107	116	450
Tunbridge Wells West	435	39	79	87	120	117	100	98	97	96	99	102	450
Paddock Wood	120	5	2	-7	-27	-50	-29	-38	-44	-47	-48	-49	120
Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst	90	12	-1	-4	2	1	-4	-5	-7	-10	-10	-10	90
Cranbrook and Goudhurst	116	4	0	4	8	21	1	-3	-5	-6	-6	-5	121
Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden	90	5	0	9	7	21	5	2	0	-3	-3	-3	90
<b>Tunbridge Wells</b>	<b>1,301</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>1,321</b>

### Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective	360	95	72	5	2	-1	-5	8	4	-5	4	15	300
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective	1,645	197	169	91	95	88	56	117	126	129	147	178	1,586
Cranbrook Selective	90	0	19	12	5	7	5	4	10	2	8	11	90
West Kent Selective	1,264	-41	-2	-14	-13	11	10	39	75	84	99	165	1,294

## **Primary District Commentary**

For primary education the overall forecasts indicate sufficient places to meet demand across the Plan period for Year R and all primary years. There is local place pressure within the Paddock Wood, the Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst, Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden and the Cranbrook and Goudhurst planning groups

The Year R surplus in Tunbridge Wells town (Tunbridge Wells East and West planning groups) is forecast to be in excess of 20% during the Plan period; depending on the distribution of this surplus between schools it may necessitate adjustment to the PANs of individual schools in order to ensure class sizes remain financially viable.

### **Paddock Wood Planning Group**

The town has seen significant housebuilding in recent years, consequently the planning group is forecast to have deficits throughout the Plan period. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits in the short term will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or within one of the small schools within the planning group offering over PAN for the first 2 years of the Plan period.

From 2028-29 the demand is forecast to be 1 FE or greater and there are fewer places available in neighbouring planning groups. To meet this demand we will seek to establish a new primary school within the town. Careful consideration to any impact for smaller rural schools within the wider area will be given as part of the consultation process for the new school.

### **Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst Planning Group**

The planning group is forecast to have small deficits in 2026-27 and from 2029-30 onwards. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or within one of the small schools within the planning group offering over PAN.

### **Cranbrook and Goudhurst Planning Group**

Forecasts indicate that the planning group will have small deficits from 2030-31 onwards. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or within one of the small schools within the planning group offering over PAN.

### **Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden Planning Group**

Forecasts indicate that the planning group will have small deficits from 2030-31 onwards. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or within one of the small schools within the planning group offering over PAN.

## **Secondary District Commentary**

There are four planning groups which are within Tunbridge Wells Borough or which cross the Borough boundary, two non-selective and two selective (See appendix 12.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

### **Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective Planning Group**

Following a substantive decision by the Secretary of State for Education to close High Weald Academy on 31 August 2022, this is a single school planning group containing Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre. The academy has decreased its PAN for September 2026 entry by 60 Year 7 places, this was in response to the level of surplus places within the wider area. The forecast indicates that there will be small deficits in 2028-29, 2029-30 and 2032-33. The County Council will work with the academy to ensure that sufficient places are made available.

### **Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective Planning Group**

There are eight schools in the planning group: Hadlow Rural Community School, Hayesbrook School, Hillview School for Girls, Hugh Christie Technology College, Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Mascalls Academy, Skinners' Kent Academy and St. Gregory's Catholic School.

Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period. It should be noted that these forecasts do not incorporate the impact of housing growth associated with unconsented or unallocated development outside of an adopted Local Plan, therefore future strategic housing growth may have a significant impact over and above the forecast need.

### **Cranbrook Selective Planning Group**

There is only one school in the Cranbrook selective planning group: Cranbrook School. We forecast sufficient Year 7 and Years 7-11 places throughout the Plan period.

### **West Kent Selective Planning Group**

There are six schools in the planning group: Judd School, Tonbridge Grammar School, Weald of Kent Grammar School, Skinners' School, Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

The forecast indicates that there will be deficits of 14 and 13 in 2026-27 and 2027-28. We anticipate that these forecast deficits will be met through commissioned bulge provision in existing schools where necessary or own admission authorities offering over their PAN. We will keep the need for additional permanent capacity under review.

### **Planned Commissioning – Tunbridge Wells**

<b>Planning Group</b>	<b>By 2026-27</b>	<b>By 2027-28</b>	<b>By 2028-29</b>	<b>By 2029-30</b>	<b>Between 2030-33</b>	<b>Post 2033</b>
<b>Cranbrook and Goudhurst Planning Group</b>					Up to 10 temporary places	
<b>Paddock Wood</b>			1FE Through Establishment of New Primary School			
<b>West Kent Selective</b>	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places				

## 8. Commissioning Special Education Needs

The SEND Sufficiency Plan sits under the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent and is reviewed annually. Its purpose is to strategically inform SEN educational place planning in the medium to long term. The Sufficiency Plan has been updated for 2025 and is appended to the KCP (See Appendix 11.3 in separate document).

This section provides a summary of the key messages and commissioning intentions for education places for children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

### 8.1 Duties to Provide for SEND

The [Children and Families Act 2014](#) provides the statutory basis for identifying children and young people (age 0-25) in England with special educational needs (SEN), assessing their needs and making provision for them. It gives children, young people and their parents/carers greater control and choice in decisions while ensuring needs are properly met. The authority must consider the extent to which the provision available is sufficient to meet the educational needs, training needs and social care needs of the children and young people concerned.

### 8.2 Kent Overview

Nationally the number of EHCPs has increased year on year since their introduction in 2014. The impacts of this on families and the sustainability of the system across England are well documented. In response to this, the Government is preparing for significant changes to the SEND system. A white paper is expected in the autumn and will set out Ministers' reform proposals for schools in England.

Kent is part of the DfE Safety Valve programme which began in 2022-23 and it is set to run for five years. This financial agreement, which provides £140 million of additional funding aims to support us, as a local authority, to reform our High Needs systems and SEND services for children and young people whilst ensuring those services are sustainable. We have also contributed £82 million for this work.

The Kent Local Area received an Improvement Notice following its inspection in 2019. Significant transformation continues as the Local Area works to address the weaknesses and improve the provision and support for children with SEND.

From a provision planning perspective, there are some key headlines which influence our future actions. In 2024/25, proportionally Kent had:

- Fewer children and young people identified as requiring SEN support in mainstream schools (12.4%) when compared to the England average (14%).
- More children and young people (20,635) aged 0-25 years with an EHCP compared to the England average (6.2% Kent; 5.6% England).
- Fewer children and young people with EHCPs educated in mainstream schools, including specialist resource provisions (SRPs), (36%) compared to national averages (44%).
- More children and young people with EHCPs placed in special schools, including independent schools, (39%) compared to national averages (30%).
- More of its EHCPs supporting young people aged 11-15 years (40% of issued EHCPs vs 37% in England), fewer supporting those aged 5-11 years (31% of issued EHCPs vs 33% England) and fewer children and young people aged 0-10 years and aged 20+ years with an EHCP when compared to England.
- Significantly more of its EHCPs with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) as the primary need (46%) compared to England (31%)<sup>2</sup> and fewer with moderate learning difficulties (5% Kent

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<sup>2</sup> [Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2025 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

vs 11% England). Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) at 19% and Speech Language and Communication (17%) are the two next most prolific need types and are at rates similar to England.

The impact of these key headlines is significant for families, schools, the authority and the taxpayer. There remains a systemic need to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. Kent's [Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities](#) sets out the key areas of transformation.

A significant educational change programme is ongoing with the aim of improving the capacity of mainstream school SEND inclusion in Kent. This will enable staff to be increasingly skilled, confident and able to educate and support more children with EHCPs in mainstream provisions.

This realignment will be supported by the inclusive practices included in the Countywide Approach To Inclusive Education (CATIE), the Accessibility Strategy, Services to Schools, the Section 19 Framework, Co-Production Charter and Transition Charter. In particular there has been a focus on developing skills for teaching neurodiverse pupils, with whole school training via the Autism Education Trust, and 'This is Me' which looks at a child's strengths and needs with the aim to help meet their needs at home and at school.

In Kent, wherever possible, we want children to go to schools that are near to where they live so that they have the support of their friends and get to know their local area. We want all of our children and young people to reach their full potential as they transition into adulthood.

We acknowledge that special schools play an important role in our continuum of education provision. However, we have to address the imbalance we have in Kent regarding the proportion of children and young people with EHCPs in mainstream education, when comparing to England. One focus will be increasing places in SRPs to successfully support more children and young people with SEND. This is likely to mean the overall size of Kent's maintained special schools (including the new schools agreed with the Department for Education) remains stable, whilst we reduce our reliance on independent and non-maintained special schools. The sizes of individual schools will change over time to reflect the local demographics and policy changes.

From the data, we are seeing the impact of our transformation:

- In England in between January 2024 and January 2025 there was a 10.8% rise in the number of EHCPs amongst the 0-25 year old cohort. In Kent the rise was 6.8%.
- Kent accounted for 3.23% of England's EHCPs in 2024/25, down from 3.37% in 2023/24.
- In 2023/24 35% of pupils with EHCPs were in mainstream schools in Kent; this increased to 36% in 2024/25. Correspondingly, the percentages in special schools reduced from 41% to 39%.

### **8.3 SEN Provision and Placement**

In Kent, as in other local authorities, we offer a continuum of educational provision. This includes mainstream schools, SRPs within our mainstream schools, special schools and alternative provisions. SEN places in these provisions are commissioned annually by the local authority. To ensure we can provide sustainable high quality educational provision, the SEND system in Kent needs to be realigned. The proportion of children and young people with an EHCP educated within each placement type needs to be brought in line more closely to national figures (see figure 8a).

**Figure 8a: EHCPs by Establishment Type, January 2025 (0-25 year olds)**

Type of Establishment	Number	Kent %	England %
Special school including independent	8,050	39%	30%
Mainstream school including SRPs	7,452	36%	44%
Further Education and post-16	2,952	14%	14%
Educated elsewhere	1,782	9%	8%
Placement not recorded	314	1.5%	>1%
Non-maintained early years	66	>1%	>1%
Alternative Provision	19	>1%	>1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,635</b>		

Source: 2025 SEN2Return

It is expected that an increasing proportion of pupils with an EHCP will attend a mainstream school, and we have clear and defined expectations for this within our [Mainstream Core Standards](#). There are 67 mainstream schools providing 76 SRPs (some schools have more than one SRP) with 42 primary schools and 25 secondary. For 2025-26 a total of 1,589 SRP places have been commissioned for children and young people with an EHCP. This is an increase of 153 places from 2024-25.

Following the work from the SRP Review there are proposals to significantly increase the capacity and number of SRPs across Kent through opening new SRPs and expanding existing SRPs. The additional provision is needed as it is recognised that some pupils who are categorised as SRP appropriate are placed in high cost independent special schools when there is not enough capacity in SRPs. Data from SRP Panel decisions indicate that 81% of cases considered are for children and young people with ASD, and 13% having speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and 6% related to other SEN types. The expansion of SRPs for these principal need types is necessary.

Discussions within the education community, particularly schools with SRPs, has indicated support for broadening the designations of SRPs, particularly those relating to ASD and SLCN, such that an SRP can meet the needs of both. This would further increase the accessibility of local provision.

There are currently 25 state funded special schools in Kent, and we are not intending to significantly expand the overall number of places these provide. Over time the profile of pupils may change so that these schools are supporting those pupils with an EHCP and the most complex needs. Equally overtime the sizes of individual schools may change to reflect local demographics and needs. For 2025-26 a total of 6,432 state funded special school places were commissioned in these provisions. This included 5,482 places for pre-16 pupils and 950 places for post-16 pupils. This is a total increase of 148 places from the number commissioned for 2024-25.

Nore Academy, a new special school on the Isle of Sheppey, opened in January 2025. The DfE has recognised the pressure felt in Kent as proposals for new additional special schools were agreed as part of the Safety Valve. We continue though, to feel the effect of the delayed provision of two new special schools, planned in Swanley and Whitstable. Both were anticipated to open in September 2025 but have been delayed until September 2027 as a result of DfE decision making. This has led to a continued dependence on high cost placements in the independent special school sector.

As of January 2025, 1,772 Kent resident pupils had places funded for an independent non-maintained school place. Although the rate appears to be steady, this is an increase of 124 places from January 2024 and represents 8.5% of all Kent EHCPs. It is our intention to reduce the numbers of new admissions in the independent sector, as we build capacity in other sectors of our SEN provision, thus our expectation is that over time we will have less requirement for provision from this sector.

#### 8.4 Post-16 SEND provision

Most young people with SEND will complete their education alongside their peers by 18 years of age. However, some young people will require longer to complete and consolidate their education and training, and the length of time will vary for each young person. The Children and Families Act 2014 extended the special educational needs system to young people up to the age of 25. Consequently, since 2015 KCC has seen a large growth in the number of EHCPs for young people up to the age of 25.

We know the number of young people wanting to remain in education is growing. However, planning post-16 SEND provision is complex. KCC continues its work to establish a robust evidence base to resolve any gaps in provision. Remaining at their secondary school for sixth form is one of the choices that young people with SEND can make; 17 of Kent's state funded special schools have sixth form provisions.

Further Education (FE) College remains the most common type of provision attended across all the age groups of the post-16 cohort. However, Kent is below the national average for General and Tertiary College/Higher Education placement, with 9.8% of placements compared to 11.1% nationally in 2025.

FE Colleges provide a range of courses for 16 to 25 SEND learners and are the most popular form of education for this group. However, due to a range of issues, FE colleges are not suitable in the first instance for many SEND learners and a proportion of learners drop out of college in the first term. Special post-16 institutions (SPIs) provide an alternative to FE colleges, offering more bespoke learning environments often for learners with additional or more complex needs. In 2025, 928 young people attended an SPI, which is 4.5% of the cohort. In comparison, 1.5% attended SPIs nationally.

Of the SPIs in Kent in 2025, the majority have a contractual relationship with KCC. Growth in SPI provision to this point continues to be largely organic and provider led. To ensure we have full County coverage, we wish to work in partnership with prospective providers as there is the need for more targeted SPI provision in the County.

We continue to work with FE Colleges to ensure that we have good geographical coverage of the right courses at the right levels and that there are clear pathways and partnerships with alternate types of providers such as SPIs to meet the needs of learners with more complex needs or requiring a more bespoke package.

We expect that the number of EHCPs for young people over the age of 18 will continue to grow as the population bulge works its way through secondary school and into post-16, and without careful planning, demand could outstrip supply. To ensure sufficient quality post-16 SEND provision, we will enhance the guidance and support provided to young people as they approach adulthood, including vocational training, career advice, and life skills programs<sup>3</sup>.

We want to explore new ways of working, including potential collaborations between partner agencies and organisations, which are service intelligence and data-driven, in order to get the right provision in the right area to meet need.

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<sup>3</sup> [Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities](#)

## 8.5 Future Commissioning of Provision

Evidence for our commissioning intentions is set out within KCC's SEND Sufficiency Plan and not repeated here. This will inform changes and additional SEN provision required from September 2026 and throughout the rest of this plan period.

A total of 664 new special school places are planned to be commissioned over the time period 2026 to 2030 (Figure 8b). This includes new schools and expansions. It also includes satellite provisions which are classes hosted in mainstream schools for pupils on roll of the special school. They are run by staff employed by the special school.

**Figure 8b: Agreed and Planned Special School Additional Provision in Kent**

Provision: Special School	Proposed Year	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Expansion of special school (Broomhill Bank)	2026	C&I	Sevenoaks/ Tunbridge Wells	172	112	30	30	0	0
New satellite for special school (Aspire Primary)	2026	C&I	Swale	30	8	8	14	0	0
Expansion of special school 6 <sup>th</sup> form, (Meadowfield School)	2026	PSCN	Swale	20	10	10	0	0	0
New special school (all through) Swanley	2028	PSCN	Sevenoaks	250	0	0	114	66	70
New special school (all through) Whitstable	2028	SEMH/ ASD	Canterbury	120	0	0	48	28	44
Expansion of special school (Parkwood Hall)	2031	C&L	Sevenoaks	72	32	8	8	8	16
<b>Total planned special school places</b>				<b>664</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>130</b>

A total of 889 SRP places are planned to be commissioned over the time period 2026 to 2030. These are set out by Area in Figures 8c to 8f below. In some cases, the additional places are already occupied, as schools with SRPs have been required to take further pupils. It is important we right-size these provisions. These also include SRPs that have been committed to or form part of a new academy's funding agreement. These provisions look to address evidenced gaps in SRP provision across Kent, and to ensure there are SRP pathways in both primary and secondary schools in local areas to avoid pupils needing to move in to special schools because of a lack of SRP pathway.

**Figure 8c: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in East Kent**

East Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Lansdowne Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Swale	20	7	7	6	0	0
Richmond Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Swale	40	14	14	12	0	0
Newlands Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	40	14	14	12	0	0
Herne Bay Primary Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	20	0	7	7	6	0
Faversham Primary Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Swale	20	0	7	7	6	0
<b>Total primary planned SRP places</b>				<b>140</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>
Royal Harbour Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	50	16	16	18	0	0
Thanet Non-Selective Secondary	2027	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	50	0	16	16	18	0
Canterbury Coastal Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	50	0	16	16	18	0
Isle of Sheppey Secondary	2027	ASD/SLCN	Swale	50	0	16	16	18	0
<b>Total secondary planned SRP places</b>				<b>200</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total planned SRP places</b>				<b>340</b>					

**Figure 8d: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in North Kent**

North Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Alkerden C of E Academy (Primary)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	15	2	2	3	3	5
Rosherville C of E Primary Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Gravesham	15	6	5	4	0	0
Edenbridge Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	20	7	7	6	0	0
Sevenoaks Rural North Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	20	7	7	6	0	0
Swanley Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	15	6	5	4	0	0
<b>Total primary planned SRP places</b>				<b>85</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
Alkerden C of E Academy (Secondary)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	25	6	6	6	7	0
Gravesham and Longfield Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Gravesham	30	0	10	10	10	0
Sevenoaks and Borough Green Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	30	0	8	12	10	0
<b>Total secondary planned SRP places</b>				<b>85</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total planned SRP places</b>				<b>170</b>					

**Figure 8e: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in South Kent**

South Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Ashford Oaks PS	2026	ASD	Ashford	10	6	4	0	0	0
The Downs PS	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dover	14	6	5	3	0	0
Ashford North Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	6	5	3	0	0
Ashford East Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tenterden South Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	0	6	5	3	0
Ashford South Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	0	6	5	3	0
<b>Total primary planned SRP places</b>				<b>80</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
Homewood School and 6th Form Centre	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	50	16	16	18	0	0
Dover Christ Church	2026	PSCN	Dover	35	10	15	10	0	0
St Edmunds Catholic	2026	ASD	Dover	20	7	7	6	0	0
Turner Free School	2026	SLD	Folkestone & Hythe	20 (already operating -30 places)	10	10		0	0
<b>Total secondary planned SRP places</b>				<b>125</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total planned SRP places</b>				<b>205</b>					

**Figure 8f: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in West Kent**

West Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
SE Maidstone town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
NW Maidstone town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
Maidstone rural	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells town 1	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells town 2	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells rural	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
<b>Total primary planned SRP places</b>				<b>84</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
St Augustine (expansion)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	30	8	12	10	0	0
Maidstone secondary town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	30	8	12	10	0	0
Skidders Kent Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	30	8	12	10	0	0
<b>Total secondary planned SRP places</b>				<b>90</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total planned SRP places</b>				<b>174</b>					

Following conversations regarding broadening the designation of existing SRPs, a number of proposals are expected to be brought to achieve this outcome for September 2026 (see Figure 8g). The details of these are being finalised.

**Figure 8g: Planned changes for SRPs in Kent**

SRP	Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Proposed Category of Change
The Archbishops School (secondary)	2026	VI, SPLD	Canterbury	0	Broaden Designation
Reculver (primary)	2026	C&L, VI	Canterbury	0	Broaden Designation
Castle Hill (primary)	2026	HI	Folkestone & Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
Hythe Bay (primary)	2026	SLCN	Folkestone & Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
The Marsh Academy (secondary)	2026	ASD	Folkestone & Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
Westlands (secondary)	2026	SPLD, PD	Swale	0	Broaden Designation
Bromstone (primary)	2026	SLCN	Thanet	0	Formalisation and Broaden Designation
<b>Total planned places</b>				<b>0</b>	

A total of 70 Alternative Provision (AP) places are planned to be commissioned over the time period 2026 to 2030 (see Figure 8h). The Rosewood School, as a pupil referral unit (PRU) to support medical needs and associated recovery, sits between mainstream and special school provisions. Its core aim is to reintegrate a pupil back to their mainstream provision. It is planned to expand The Rosewood School in the Canterbury district matching the provision in the West of the County. A new Alternative Provision is to be commissioned for up to 40 pupils in the Swale district.

**Figure 8h: Agreed and Planned Alternative Provision in Kent**

Alternative Provision:	Proposed Opening Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Expansion of KS3 provision (The Rosewood School)	2026	Health Needs Education Centre	Canterbury	30	30	0	0	0	0
Alternative Provision	2027	AP	Swale	40	0	40	0	0	0
<b>Total Planned Alternative Provision Places</b>				<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## **9. Commissioning Early Years Education and Childcare**

### **9.1 Legislative Context - Free Entitlements and new Wraparound Childcare**

Early Education and Childcare is legislatively governed by the Childcare Acts of 2006 and 2016. These place a duty on all local authorities to improve outcomes for young children, to cut inequalities between them, to secure sufficient childcare, with adequate flexibility to allow parents to work via the following:

- From September 2025, 30 hours per week for working parents of all children aged 9 months and above
- 15 hours of early education for eligible two-year olds (the Two Year Old Entitlement, in Kent known as Free for Two)
- The Universal Entitlement of 15 hours for all three and four-year olds

In September 2024, the Government announced it would provide capital funding to create or expand 3,000 on-site nurseries in primary schools either run by the school or in partnership with private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers. Funding was allocated to successful schools in Spring 2025 to support the first cohort of places.

In this context, KCC also commissions The Education People to work with schools and PVI providers to increase the supply of wraparound childcare, so that all parents of primary school-aged children can access childcare from 8am to 6pm (or the equivalent hours with different start and end times if appropriate) if they need it.

Following a national pilot programme of free breakfast clubs in 750 schools, the Government has announced its intention to legislate for the mandatory provision of free breakfast club places in every school.

### **9.2 Early Education and Childcare Provision in Kent**

Early Education and Childcare in Kent is available through a large, diverse and constantly shifting market of maintained, academies, PVIs and childminders, all of which operate as individual businesses and are therefore subject to market forces.

The local authority in Kent (as commissioned through The Education People) is required to work with providers in making available a sufficient range of provision, in the right geographical areas, at the right times and offering flexible sessions to fit with both standard and atypical working patterns.

The DfE provided each local authority with information related to the expansion of funded early education and childcare entitlements and wraparound childcare, as announced in the Spring Budget of 2023. This information included the DfE's analysis of the demand for and supply of childcare places in Kent. The result of this analysis continues to be used to support childcare sufficiency planning carried out by The Education People.

### **9.3 Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency**

The local authority is required to produce an 'Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency', showing the supply of, and demand for, early years and childcare provision across the County, including where there might be over supply and particularly a deficit in provision. Based on any identified gaps and needs, The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service works with providers and potential providers to encourage the establishment of additional provision where it is required.

The Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency for the 2025-2026 academic year makes use of the DfE analysis by using its estimated demand for childcare for 9 month to 36 month-olds combined with the population forecast based demand for childcare for 3 and 4 year olds. The supply of childcare places in Kent is derived from the number of available places that early education and childcare providers state in the annual childcare sufficiency audit.

#### 9.4 Sufficiency of Childcare Places for Children Aged 0-4 Years Old

The assessment of sufficiency is calculated by comparing the total available childcare supply of places with the forecast number of childcare places required in each age group in each planning area and district. Figure 9a shows the anticipated childcare places needed for 0 to 4 year olds in the 2025/2026 academic year.

**Figure 9a: 0 to 4 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2025/2026 Academic Year)**

District	0-4 Year Old Population	0-4 Year Old places required	0-4 Year Old Childcare places available	Surplus / Deficit of Places
Ashford	6,789	4,416	4,350	-67
Canterbury	6,105	4,160	4,809	649
Dartford	7,601	4,542	5,822	1,280
Dover	5,051	3,169	3,416	247
Folkestone & Hythe	4,552	2,971	3,536	565
Gravesham	6,208	3,851	3,629	-222
Maidstone	9,645	5,914	6,778	864
Sevenoaks	5,819	3,636	5,594	1,958
Swale	7,870	5,087	5,662	575
Thanet	6,316	4,034	4,992	958
Tonbridge & Malling	6,540	4,105	5,007	902
Tunbridge Wells	5,358	3,885	5,378	1,492
<b>Total</b>	<b>77,854</b>	<b>49,770</b>	<b>58,970</b>	<b>9,201</b>

With many of the group based early education and childcare providers in Kent offering childcare to 2, 3 and 4 year olds in one room, and to allow for the flexibility in the childcare market within this age group, the sufficiency of childcare places is analysed for under 2 year olds and the 2, 3 and 4 year old age group.

Figure 9b shows the childcare sufficiency of places for under 2 year olds. This will be crucial to monitor given that from September 2025, eligible working parents will be able to increase their access from 15 hours to 30 hours of free childcare per week for children aged 9 months to school age. Figure 9c shows the childcare sufficiency of places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

**Figure 9b: 0 to 2 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2025/2026 Academic Year)**

District	0-2 Year Old Population	0-2 Year Old places required	0-2 Year Old Childcare places available	Surplus / Deficit of Places
Ashford	2,830	813	930	117
Canterbury	2,456	776	1,081	305
Dartford	3,161	930	1,243	313
Dover	2,027	614	716	102
Folkestone & Hythe	1,875	560	760	200
Gravesham	2,578	784	749	-35
Maidstone	3,927	1,145	1,491	346
Sevenoaks	2,364	683	1,338	655
Swale	3,273	982	1,344	362
Thanet	2,601	764	1,022	258
Tonbridge & Malling	2,645	791	1,283	492
Tunbridge Wells	2,211	756	1,290	534
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,948</b>	<b>9,599</b>	<b>13,248</b>	<b>3,649</b>

**Figure 9c: 2, 3 and 4 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2025/2026 Academic Year)**

District	2, 3 and 4 Year Old Population	2, 3 and 4 Year Old places required	2, 3 and 4 Year Old Childcare places available	Surplus / Deficit of Places
Ashford	3,959	3,603	3,419	-184
Canterbury	3,649	3,384	3,728	344
Dartford	4,440	3,612	4,579	967
Dover	3,024	2,554	2,699	145
Folkestone & Hythe	2,677	2,411	2,776	365
Gravesham	3,630	3,067	2,879	-187
Maidstone	5,718	4,769	5,287	518
Sevenoaks	3,455	2,952	4,256	1,303
Swale	4,597	4,105	4,318	213
Thanet	3,715	3,270	3,970	700
Tonbridge & Malling	3,895	3,314	3,724	410
Tunbridge Wells	3,147	3,129	4,087	958
<b>Total</b>	<b>45,906</b>	<b>40,171</b>	<b>45,722</b>	<b>5,551</b>

### 9.5 Sufficiency Estimates by Planning Area

Sufficiency rates have been calculated using primary planning areas. Where some primary planning areas indicate a deficit of 0-4 childcare places, consideration must be given to the fact that neighbouring planning areas may have a surplus of places and children may be travelling to access settings in adjacent areas based on parental preferences and/or travel to work patterns. Equally, where planning areas have more provision than children, children may be drawn from other areas to access these settings.

The percentage of funded three and four year olds accessing a setting within the planning area in which they live can be used to interpret the deficit in each planning area along with qualitative analysis to understand whether the variation in local take up rates are driven by a preference for particular providers, commuting patterns or a lack of places in the local area.

### 9.6 Future Planning

Supporting the sufficiency, sustainability and quality of early years and childcare provision remains crucial in the aim to ensure a long term, sufficient supply of places.

The supply of Free Entitlement places for 9 months to four year olds will be kept under review as planned new housing developments are built and potentially increase the demand for places. Where housing developments are proposed in school planning areas where there is an indicative deficit of places or where the size of a development means that it will require new provision, KCC will engage in discussions with developers to either seek funding to provide nursery provision which may include securing community rental or leasehold accommodation availability for private, voluntary or independent sector providers of 0-4 year old childcare.

When a new school is delivered according to the ESFA Baseline Design, a nursery space is now included in the design. As new schools are planned, KCC will work with the sponsor to identify early years provision and the most appropriate way to deliver this.

## 10. Commissioning Plan Post-16

The academic year 2024/25 has been a difficult one for young people progressing into post-16 education:

- More young people than ever before did not achieve the entry criteria for their own 6th forms, consequently the number of students in 6th forms shrank for the first time.
- Provision for young people needing to study at L2 and below or in specialist settings filled very quickly despite the colleges taking on an additional 1,500 people.
- The 16-18 cohort grew by over 2,000.
- Provision for those outside schools and colleges continued to shrink.

Consequently, the weeks after GCSE results day were very difficult for many learners as many did not have viable alternatives. Our NEET numbers are also significantly higher than previous years. In June 2025 1,625 young people were NEET compared to 1,355 in June 2024, an increase of 20%.

The choice of lower level qualifications for learners outside college has continued to shrink. The number of providers decreased from 18 in 2023/24 to 16 in 2024/25. The number of places shrank slightly from 733 to 720 over the same period.

Work with the DFE to increase places in the county is still ongoing. Last summer, the treasury withdrew an initial offer from the DFE of an additional 450 places and insisted that education providers used existing funding growth methodologies to grow provision. This has not met the need and Colleges and Community Learning and Skills only received 66% of the growth funding requested. This may have implications for next year's provision. Internal discussions are ongoing in the DFE but have not yet led to a resolution.

This situation is now common across most of the country. The discussion is moving away from this being an issue about gaps in provision for NEETs and other vulnerable young people to the sufficiency of places across the whole system for lower achieving learners. The DFE and KCC are both currently working on gaining a clear picture of capacity of post-16 delivery in schools. The DFE does not disaggregate post-16 capacity from the overall school capacity, so KCC is working with the schools to produce a more accurate picture.

A Post-16 White Paper is expected in the Autumn which may impact provision. We are also still awaiting the outcome of the Curriculum and Assessment Review, which could impact on the range of qualifications available to post-16 student.

### 10.1 Pathways for All

The work of Pathways for All, the county's 16-19 review, has continued to move on. The board and the local Collaborative Partnership Areas are very aware of the situation for those transitioning onto post-16 and there has been a focus on improving this.

This was the first year of the 2024 priority document "No young person left behind" and the focus was on identifying the cold spots in provision and support for young people. The Focus in 2025/26 will be to develop plans to resolve these cold spots.

Notable successes on 2024/25 have been:

- The development of a clearing system on the Kentchoices website for learners to see which courses still have places available after GCSE results day.
- Collaborative events in some areas for young people to explore all the post-16 options available to them.
- Collaborative approaches across education providers to support vulnerable learners in the post-16 transition.

The priorities from this document are:

- To secure a mechanism that creates joint ownership of knowledge and skills between providers and employers in Kent and Medway.
- To create relevant and viable Level 3 provision across Kent and Medway that reflects regional skill needs, whilst providing meaningful choice, an outstanding learning experience and strong progression.
- To ensure there is an offer that enable learners who have SEMH needs to reengage with mainstream provision and perform as well as those cohorts that do not.
- To ensure there is an appropriate and local offer to enable learners who have SEND requirement to increase their life choices and meet their full potential.
- To increase the number of learners, including those with SEND, studying at Level 2 from a GCSE base of less than 2 (Level 1 entry criteria).

These are likely to be reviewed this year in the light of changing circumstances and government policy.

## **10.2 The LCPAs and their Priorities**

This year the LCPAs have focussed on identifying cold spots and are beginning to identify actions to resolve these. The areas they have identified to take action on are:

### Ashford

- There is a narrow range of training providers – more providers and a skills centre needed.
- Developing the following courses
  - Multi skills construction courses
  - Catering courses from L1 - 3
  - Retail training

### Maidstone and Malling

- L2 Academic provision – a broad suite of GCSE retake options is needed.
- An increase in vocational and technical courses across participating institutions is needed.
- Post-16 Alternative provision needs to be developed as a collaborative project.

### East Kent – Canterbury/Faversham/Thanet, Dover, Folkestone

- There is a reduced number of providers offering L2 and below courses progressing onto L3.
- A number of students do not have English as their first language. Out of county moves to the area, in particular in Canterbury
- Students not achieving GCSE at L4 in particular for maths and English.
- Vulnerable/at risk young people have limited transition activity in some areas.
- Skills gap – construction.
- Lack of employability provision for those students wanting to go into employment and who a need preparation for employment, life skills and maths and English.
- Students not having a backup plan, following GCSE results and/or applying too late for college. Many college places were oversubscribed and full.
- Rising number of students with mental health barriers. Students drop out of school early, but College is not the right choice for them.

### North Kent

- Students who do not achieve 4 or above in their GCSE English and Maths in their GCSEs in year 11 and are possibly capable of achieving 4s.

- Students who do not achieve 4 or above in their GCSE English and Maths in their GCSES and, will very likely, not achieve this regardless of any potential intervention/support.
- Students who have high pastoral needs for post 16 but cannot stay on at their own school post 16, as they didn't achieve their GCSE English and Maths.
- Students who drop out mid-year for a variety of reasons (health, changing circumstances, wanting to change course).
- Popular vocational courses at North Kent College are heavily oversubscribed e.g. plumbing and car mechanics. Alternatives need to be found.
- Students arriving mid-year 11 who are refugees/EAL who will not achieve level 4 in GCSE Maths and English.
- Students who are electively home educated (EHE) or can't cope in an education environment.
- Students who are keen to work rather than go to a provider.

### Sittingbourne and Sheppey

- Limited availability of courses due to limited college provision and travel issues.
- Students who do not achieve 4 or above in their GCSE English and Maths
- More level 2 options needed for those who will never achieve.
- More level 1 options needed other than work ready programmes.
- Students who have high pastoral needs for post-16 but can't stay on at their own school post-16 as didn't achieve their GCSE English and Maths.
- Students who drop out mid-year for a variety of reasons (health, changing circumstances, wanting to change course, do not like the course).
- Popular vocational courses are oversubscribed and require travel for students. Local alternatives needed.
- Students arriving mid-year 11 who are out of area, usually from abroad and therefore EAL. Rolling provision needed.
- Students who are electively home educated (EHE), CME, hospital schooled or for MH reasons cannot cope in a large education environment.
- Students who are keen to work rather than remain in education.

The Swale LCPA is beginning to identify specific courses needed in the district:

- Plumbing
- Electrical installation
- Engineering
- A range of L1 courses
- Art and music L2

### **10.3 The Post-16 Co-ordination group**

A group has been formed to bring together KCC Departments, including relevant SEND teams and The Education People team that support post-16 learners. The purpose of the group is to provide strategic direction and accountability for achieving KCC strategic outcomes surrounding post-16 education and surrounding projects. The aim of this group is to work towards a post-16 policy, bringing together all of the post-16 interdependencies to ensure they are working towards common goals.

The main outcomes from the group are expected to be:

- The post-16 sector and cohort are represented on all interdependent projects, with input from the coordination group.
- Kent is clear on what it expects from its post-16 provisions.
- The roles of Mainstream (including SRPs) and Special School sixth forms, Further Education Colleges and Specialist Post-16 Institutions are clear.

- Kent is providing appropriate data and intelligence to the sector to ensure planning for future cohorts can be adequately supported.
- There is a forum for ideas, discussion and challenge around future provision for post-16 SEND provision in Kent.

Currently work is being undertaken to:

- Develop key messages from the sector to ensure that all partners understand the current situation and any immediate needs that need to be met.
- Develop a data set to support post-16 commissioning groups. Use of the future planning tool to identify the demand from young people is being explored.
- Ensure that work being undertaken within SEND and mainstream teams has maximum impact for both and does not duplicate.
- To explore how to meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable learners. Initially there will be a focus on co-ordinating work across all departments to reduce NEETs.
- Ascertain clarity from schools in respect of physical buildings capacity for post 16 provision. Using the recent DfE Net Capacity Assessments, Officers will produce a detailed questionnaire to be issued to all schools to better understand how space is being utilised. This can then help inform decisions around additional learning pathways.
- Undertake a root and branch review of all services within CYPE and TEP supporting Post 16 provision, in order to identify efficiencies and develop more cohesive working practices to ensure KCC can strengthen its influence on the Post 16 sector.

## 11. Appendices

### 11.1 Forecasting Methodology Summary

To inform the process of forecasting Primary school pupil numbers, KCC receives information from the Kent Primary Care Agency to track the number of births and location of Pre-school age children. The Pre-school age population is forecast into Primary school rolls according to trend-based intake patterns by ward area. Secondary school forecasts are calculated by projecting forward the Year 6 cohort, also according to trend-based intake patterns. If the size of the Year 6 cohort is forecast to rise, the projected Year 7 cohort size at Secondary schools will also be forecast to rise.

It is recognised that past trends are not always an indication of the future. However, for the Secondary phase, travel to school patterns are firmly established, parental preference is arguably more constant than in the Primary phase and large numbers of pupils are drawn from a wide area. Consequently, forecasts have been found to be accurate.

Pupil forecasts are compared with school capacities to give the projected surplus or deficit of places in each area. It is important to note that where a deficit is identified within the next few years work will already be underway to address the situation.

The forecasting process is trend-based, which means that relative popularity, intake patterns, and inward migration factors from the previous five years are assumed to continue throughout the forecasting period. Migration factors will reflect the trend-based level of house building in an area over the previous five years, but also the general level of in and out migration, including movements into and out of existing housing. An area that has a large positive migration factor may be due to recent large-scale housebuilding, and an area with a large negative migration factor may reflect a net out-migration of families. These migration factors are calculated at Pre-school level by ward area and also at school level for transition between year groups, as the forecasts are progressed.

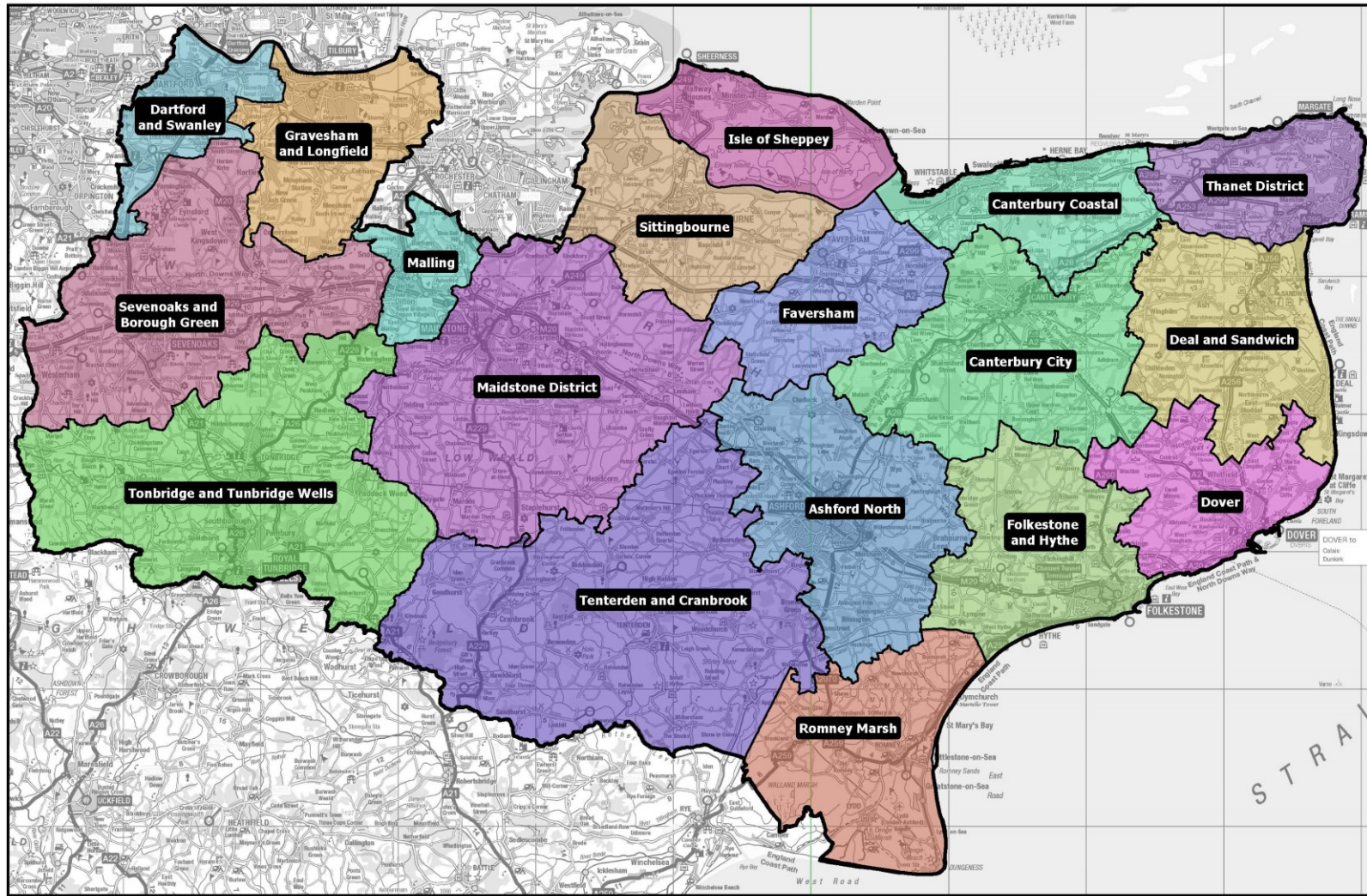
Information about expected levels of new housing, through the yearly Housing Information Audits (HIA) and Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategies is the most accurate reflection of short, medium and long term building projects at the local level. Where a large development is expected, compared with little or no previous house building in the area, a manual adjustment to the forecasts may be required to reflect the likely growth in pupil numbers more accurately.

Pupil product rates (the expected number of pupils from new housebuilding) are informed by the MORI New Build Survey 2005. KCC has developed a system that combines these new-build pupil product rates (PPRs) with the stock housing PPR of the local area to model the impact of new housing developments together with changing local demographics over time. This information is shared with district authorities to inform longer term requirements for education infrastructure and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) discussions at an early stage.

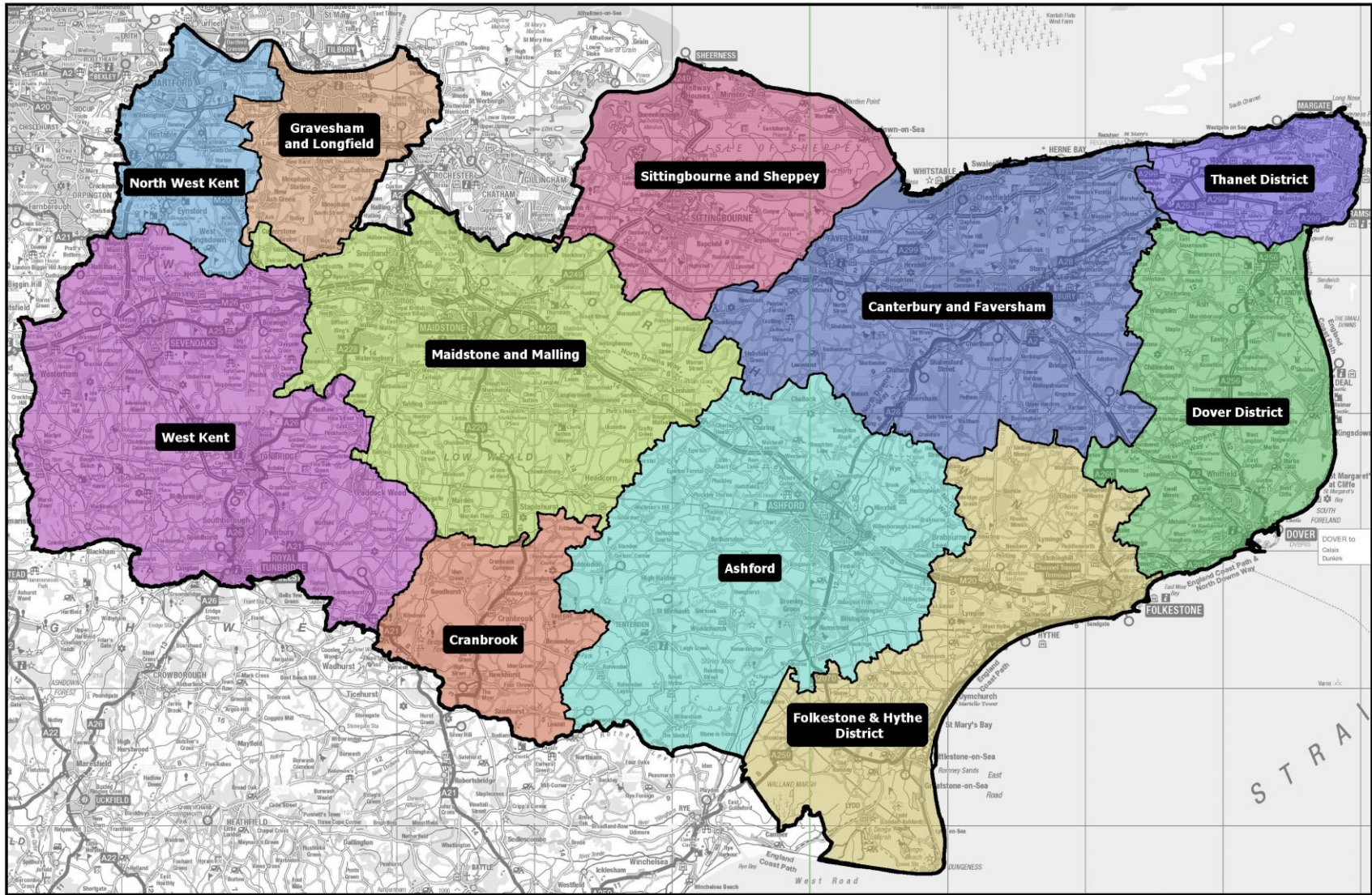
Forecasting future demand for school places can never be completely precise given the broad assumptions which have to be made about movements in and out of any given locality, the pace of individual housing developments, patterns of occupation and not least parental preferences for places at individual schools. This will be a function of geography, school reputation, past and present achievement levels and the availability of alternative provision.

## 11.2 Secondary Planning Group Maps

### Kent Secondary Non Selective Planning Groups



# Kent Secondary Selective Planning Groups



Management Information, KCC, 11/08/2022

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### **11.3 SEND Sufficiency Plan Annual Review**

See SEND Sufficiency Plan in separately appended document.

If you need information in an alternative format, such as braille or a language other than English:

Email: [alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk)

Call: 03000 421 553



## **Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026 - 2030**

