Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent

2027 - 2031













Kent County Council

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2. Foreword

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I am pleased to introduce the latest Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent. It sets out how the County Council will discharge its statutory responsibility to secure sufficient education provision and ensure that children and young people can access an appropriate school place.

My experience of teaching in further education has given me a practical understanding of the challenges faced by education providers and the importance of planning provision around the needs of learners. That includes securing the right number and type of places, supporting inclusion and ensuring that provision remains sustainable.

Kent's education landscape continues to change. Overall primary school rolls are falling, while demand for secondary places remains under pressure in some localities. These countywide trends do not tell the whole story; housing growth, parental preferences and changing patterns of pupil movement mean that some communities will require additional provision, while schools elsewhere face the financial and organisational consequences of declining rolls.

Demand for specialist provision also continues to grow. The County Council must increase capacity where it is needed while supporting schools to meet a broader range of needs within inclusive mainstream settings. This requires careful coordination between place planning, SEND provision, school improvement, transport and wider children's services.

The period covered by this Plan may include significant changes to the structure of local government in Kent and Medway. Throughout any transition, our priority will be to maintain continuity, fulfil our statutory responsibilities and ensure that the long-term planning of education provision remains supported by robust evidence and deliverable plans.

Over the academic years 2027-28 to 2030-29, we expect to commission up to 3 forms of entry (FE) of permanent Year R primary provision, 9.5 FE of permanent Year 7 secondary provision and 975 temporary Year 7 places. These requirements will remain under review as forecasts, housing trajectories and patterns of demand change.

Effective commissioning depends on strong relationships with schools, trusts, dioceses, local communities, district and borough councils, developers and central government. We will continue to make decisions transparently, based on the best available evidence, and to advocate for the investment and support Kent's children and communities need.

I would like to thank teachers, support staff, leaders, governors, trustees and officers across Kent for their continued commitment. Their work is central to maintaining high-quality education while responding to substantial demographic, financial and organisational change.

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 15,710 in 2025. 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. 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, 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 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Ashford					6.3 FE
Canterbury					5 FE
Dartford and Swanley			1 FE		4 FE
Dover					2.3 FE
Folkestone and Hythe					2 FE
Gravesham		1 FE			
Maidstone					2 FE
Sevenoaks					2 FE
Swale					6 FE
Thanet					2 FE
Tonbridge and Malling					2 FE
Tunbridge Wells		1 FE			10 temp Year R Places
Totals	**0 FE**	**2 FE**	**1 FE**	**0 FE**	**33.6 FE 10 Year R temp places**

Total of 36.6 FE 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

Non-Selective Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Ashford North		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	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	
Dover					2 FE
Faversham					
Gravesham and Longfield					
Isle of Sheppey	3 FE	3 FE			
Maidstone District	1FE and Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 60 Year 7 temp places	Up to 90 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	
Sevenoaks and Borough Green	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places		
Sittingbourne	Up to 60 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	6 FE
Thanet	Up to 75 temp Year 7 places	Up to 45 temp Year 7 places	Up to 90 temp Year 7 places	Up to 15 temp Year 7places	2 FE
Selective Planning Group	**By 2027-28**	**By 2028-29**	**By 2029-30**	**By 2030-31**	**Post 2031**
Canterbury and Faversham	0.5 FE				
Gravesham and Longfield and North West Kent		1 FE			
Maidstone and Malling	1 FE				
West Kent	Up to 60 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places		
Total secondary commissioning	**5.5 FE 285 Year 7 temp places**	**4 FE 255 Year 7 temp places**	**0 FE 330 Year 7 temp places**	**0 FE 105 Year 7 temp places**	**12 FE**

Total of 21.5 FE across the forecast period and 975 temporary Year 7 places

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.[1]
- 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.

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.

[1] 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.

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.
- 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 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 2027-2028 and 2028-2029 financial years is based upon the projected need for new places by September 2029 (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.

The comparison table below (figure 5a) shows that, for primary school expansion and refurbishment projects, KCC's average costs from 2020 to 2026 are slightly higher than the National School Delivery South East average costs reported in the 2026 Educational Building and Development Officers Group (EBDOG) report, but are lower than the South East DfE Scorecard benchmark. For primary school new-build projects, KCC's average costs are significantly below the National School Delivery South East regional average but marginally higher than the South East DfE Scorecard figure. The results

show that KCC's average delivery costs fall within the range of the South East National School Delivery average and the South East DfE Scorecard costs for 2026.

Figure 5a: Average costs - National and Kent Primary Education Phase:

Type	National School Delivery Average Costs (EBDOG - 2026)	South East National School Delivery Average Costs (EBDOG - 2026)	South East - DfE Scorecard Cost (2026)	KCC Average Costs (2020 to 2026)
Expansion and Refurbishment	£20,106.81	£22,720.70	£24,266.23	£22,978.25
New Build	£30,027.00	£35,190.31	£28,972.32	£29,532.36

For secondary school expansion and refurbishment projects (see comparison table below - Figure 5b), KCC's average costs for projects delivered between 2020 and 2026 are higher than all the national benchmark figures used. This difference should be considered in the context of the reporting periods. The national EBDOG average includes projects delivered between 2012 and 2025, whereas KCC's average covers projects delivered between 2020 and 2026. The EBDOG report identifies that projects delivered from 2020 onwards experienced increased costs associated with the unique socio-economic impacts of this period.

Figure 5b: Average costs - National and Kent Secondary Education Phase:

Type	National School Delivery Average Costs (EBDOG - 2026)	South East National School Delivery Average Costs (EBDOG - 2026)	South East - DfE Scorecard Cost (2026)	KCC Average Costs (2020 to 2026)
Expansion and Refurbishment	£23,563.56	£23,563.56	£33,375.90	£34,061.07
New Build	None available	None available	£34,345.00	None available

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 2027-28 and 2028-29 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 2028-29 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 1990-2025

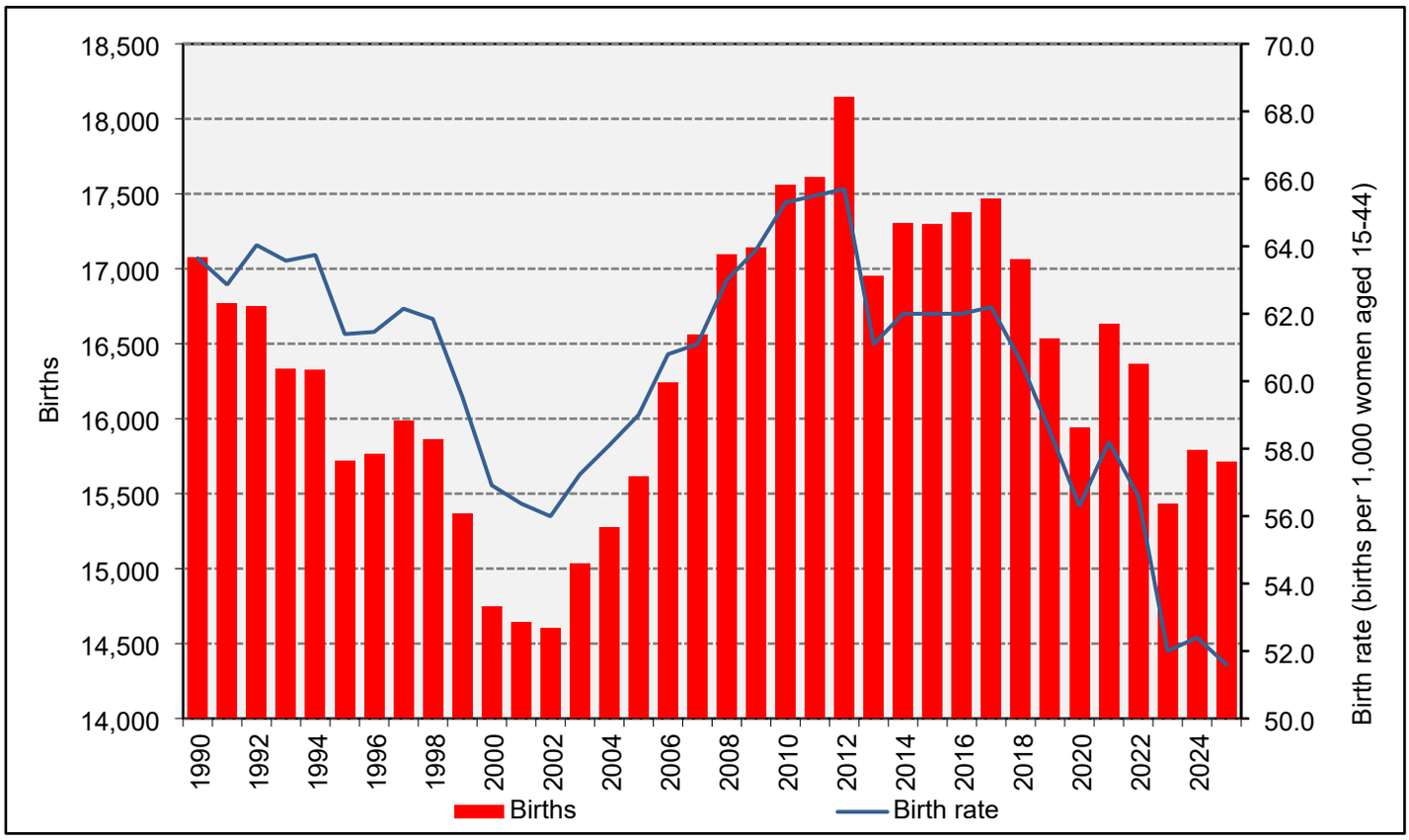


Figure 6b: Housing completions and future housing supply 2005-30

	Completions*				Period 2025-30			
District	**2005-10**	**2010-15**	**2015-20**	**2020-25**	**Extant**	**Allocations**	**Total**	**Grand total 2005-30**
Maidstone	3,528	2,990	6,084	5,765	3,690	608	4,298	22,665
Dartford	2,215	2,274	4,717	3,331	4,907	0	4,907	17,444
Swale	3,693	2,075	3,300	3,991	3,929	0	3,929	16,988
Canterbury	3,747	2,279	2,083	3,524	3,795	462	4,257	15,890
Tonbridge & Malling	3,702	2,270	3,677	2,542	3,208	35	3,243	15,434
Ashford	2,567	2,014	3,921	3,794	2,244	663	2,907	15,203
Thanet	2,955	2,097	1,687	3,342	3,595	705	4,300	14,381
Tunbridge Wells	1,856	827	2,493	2,993	2,083	1,713	3,796	11,965
Dover	1,648	1,236	2,473	2,959	2,804	723	3,527	11,843
Sevenoaks	1,426	1,020	1,784	1,077	3,981	192	4,173	9,480
Folkestone & Hythe	2,054	1,034	2,010	2,087	1,342	548	1,890	9,075
Gravesham	1,462	1,144	1,018	2,488	2,016	150	2,166	8,278
Kent	**30,853**	**21,260**	**35,247**	**37,893**	**37,594**	**5,799**	**43,393**	**168,646**

Source: Housing Information Audit (HIA) 2024-25, Kent Analytics, KCC

Notes:

(1) Housing data relates to financial year (i.e. 2024-25 is the year up to 31st March 2025)

(2) Housing data is shown net of losses i.e. gains - losses = net

(3) The first four 5-year time periods between 2005-25 show actual housing completions

(4) The period 2025-30 shows expected housing completions (extant permissions 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 2025-30, however our school-based forecasts incorporate all consented housing whether that housing was allocated within a Local Plan or not.

On average 5,211 dwellings were built annually in the ten-year period up to 31st March 2015. This increased significantly to 7,314 dwellings per year in period 2015-25. A long-term yearly average of around 8,679 dwellings per year is anticipated for the period 2025-30.

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 the general pattern is one of reduction, with 125,749 in 2025-26.

Figure 6c provides a breakdown of expected surplus or deficit capacity in Year R by district/borough across the ten-year period to 2035-36. 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	2025/26 capacity	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)	2035/35 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Ashford	1,675	230	171	283	225	170	213	227	245	257	268	268	1,641
Canterbury	1,530	142	110	134	134	77	80	91	97	98	101	107	1,470
Dartford	1,785	203	172	186	204	191	125	123	102	71	56	62	1,800
Dover	1,332	261	179	232	274	225	215	199	196	193	195	195	1,310
Folkestone & Hythe	1,261	227	225	242	237	259	239	244	249	250	251	257	1,243
Gravesham	1,456	112	71	114	84	117	72	72	71	62	53	58	1,456
Maidstone	2,154	225	109	162	217	178	137	135	142	150	174	206	2,154
Sevenoaks	1,437	178	184	225	165	236	144	120	76	48	36	32	1,392
Swale	1,970	272	203	176	199	167	163	150	146	144	155	158	1,940
Thanet	1,590	254	116	170	156	201	155	149	150	147	150	159	1,515
Tonbridge & Malling	1,668	201	137	218	148	149	131	114	93	88	93	103	1,644
Tunbridge Wells	1,321	191	198	195	181	214	187	173	175	177	185	198	1,306
Kent	**19,530**	**2,707**	**2,219**	**1,813**	**2,506**	**2,632**	**2,181**	**2,112**	**2,044**	**2,026**	**2,072**	**2,144**	**18,995**

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

The overall number of pupils in Kent secondary schools has risen since 2015-16, from 78,002 pupils to 94,093 in 2025-26, 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 2035-36. 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	2025/26 capacity	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)	2035/35 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Ashford North	968	64	-30	-9	-28	-17	133	59	84	56	140	94	968
Canterbury City	710	23	5	-62	-66	-37	-43	-26	-40	-53	-32	-28	660
Canterbury Coastal	618	87	56	22	39	8	18	59	37	34	67	66	598
Tenterden and Cranbrook	360	39	-4	-11	-10	-12	6	1	2	5	12	17	300
Dartford and Swanley	1,410	100	29	125	153	161	173	197	172	160	203	205	1,590
Dover	450	30	-1	-50	-47	-19	8	16	18	-18	20	49	390
Deal and Sandwich	425	164	76	67	58	64	87	77	84	56	81	83	395
Folkestone and Hythe	595	24	10	-21	-19	29	-15	60	22	25	46	28	595
Faversham	210	49	31	13	25	27	12	28	14	13	0	-7	210
Gravesham and Longfield	1,354	54	37	-3	-4	57	51	59	42	23	53	16	1,389
Maidstone District	1,590	74	-34	-64	-97	-124	-64	-38	30	-69	-10	24	1,560
Malling	543	43	55	12	12	5	30	4	31	8	16	24	543
Romney Marsh	180	-1	15	14	6	13	17	26	24	26	33	43	180
Sevenoaks and Borough Green	610	-16	-22	-24	-16	-19	-9	25	2	15	69	35	610
Isle of Sheppey	360	-1	-12	-21	-12	-17	-15	14	40	28	17	42	330
Sittingbourne	765	-12	13	-70	-52	-38	-52	12	1	-26	27	27	765
Thanet District	1,189	-2	-72	-80	-40	-98	-12	-16	33	-5	30	31	1,099
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells	1,641	235	96	116	120	84	153	156	169	190	221	175	1,586
Kent	**13,978**	**954**	**249**	**-46**	**21**	**68**	**480**	**713**	**765**	**467**	**992**	**923**	**13,768**

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	2025/26 capacity	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)	2035/35 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Ashford	420	0	-2	-7	-13	-10	31	5	12	5	27	14	420
Canterbury and Faversham	645	-18	-3	-51	-32	-21	-26	6	-15	-22	-11	-5	645
North West Kent	720	-3	-8	-27	-37	-36	-24	-5	5	-4	23	26	720
Dover District	440	17	-3	13	12	11	23	20	26	14	16	34	440
Folkestone & Hythe District	330	-9	16	20	15	18	17	20	18	21	21	17	330
Gravesham and Longfield	420	-9	-8	-23	-31	-13	-15	-18	-22	-37	-29	-35	420
Sittingbourne and Sheppey	300	30	35	10	19	14	15	37	35	25	42	41	300
Thanet District	345	45	25	25	35	20	42	40	50	47	54	54	345
Maidstone and Malling	815	14	31	6	-9	-30	-1	-2	27	-16	18	23	815
West Kent	1,264	-19	-31	-54	-27	-28	3	30	47	61	126	102	1,264
Cranbrook	90	1	-2	-11	-8	-14	-12	-3	-13	-5	-3	9	90
Kent	**5,789**	**49**	**49**	**-99**	**-75**	**-90**	**54**	**130**	**170**	**90**	**285**	**281**	**5,789**

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 4,300 pupils across the selective and non-selective sectors combined (excluding out of county pupils), whereas Maidstone has a net inflow of over 1,000 pupils. Dartford had the highest number of out of county pupils with over 2,200 travelling 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 2025)

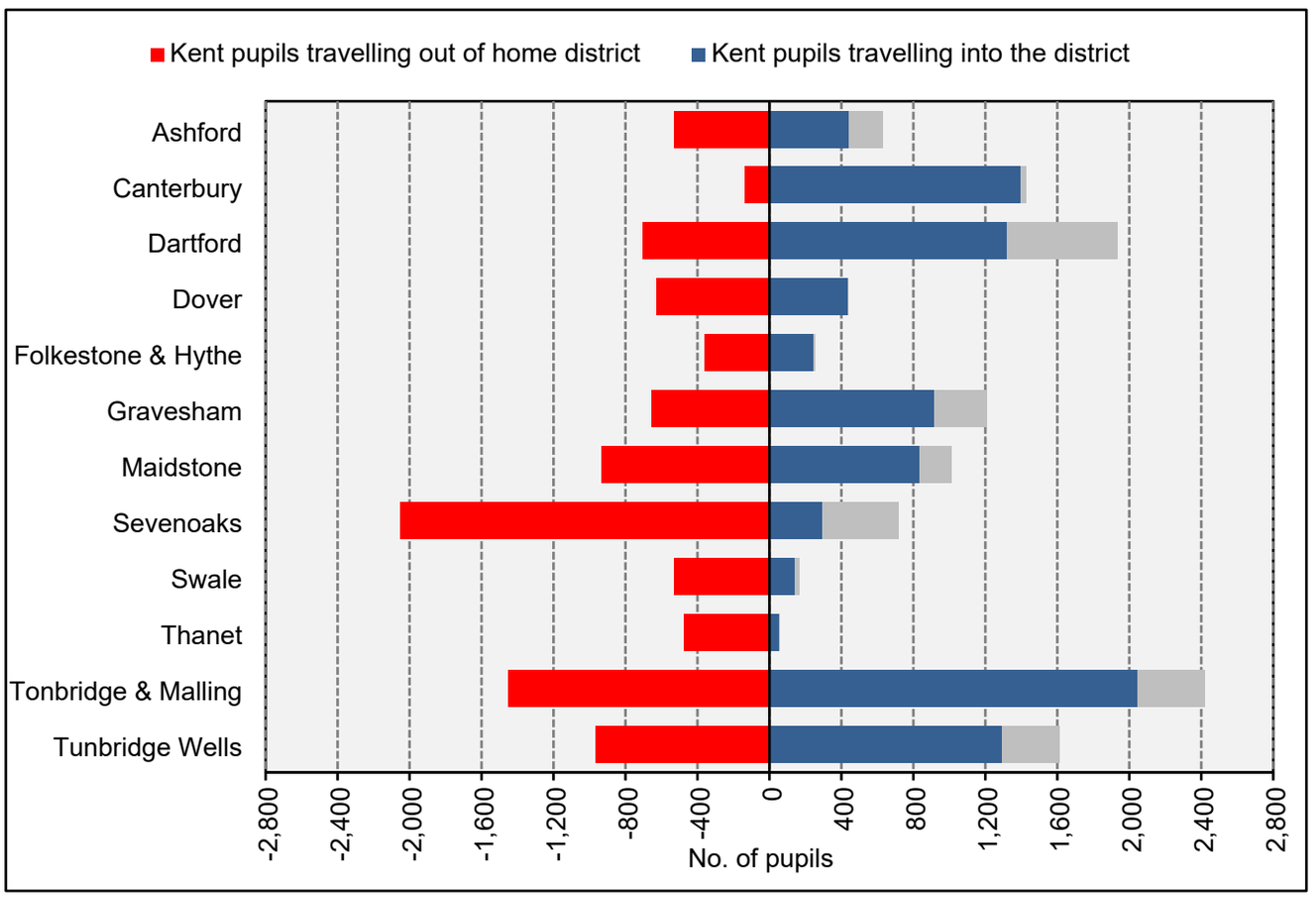
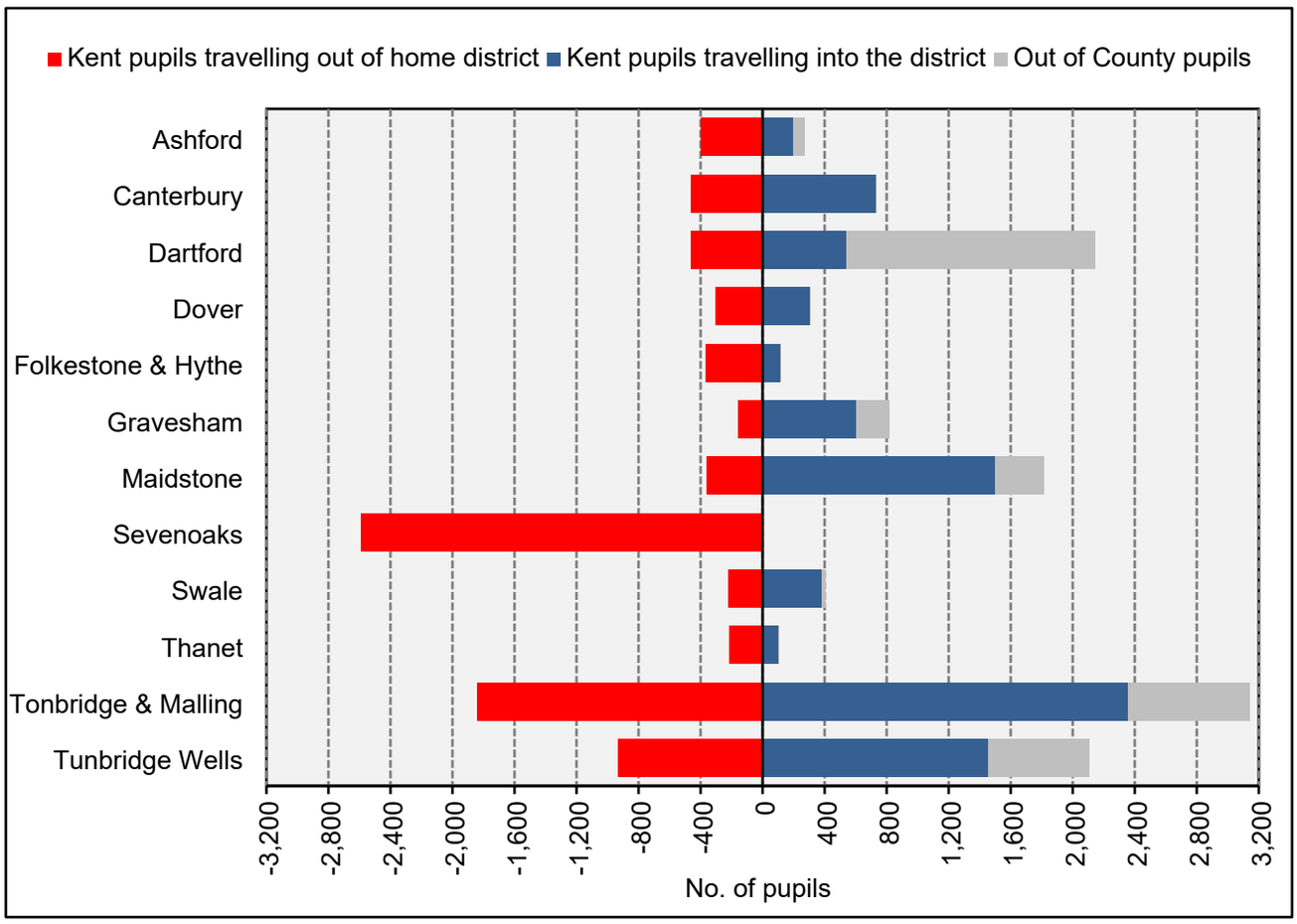


Figure 6g: Travel to school flows for selective grammar pupils (years 7-11) in Kent mainstream schools (Autumn 2025)



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

Notes:
(1) Actual roll data 2025/26 - 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 2024 and 2025. 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 2025

	2024					2025				
District	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere in the UK**	**Total**	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere in the UK**	**Total**
Ashford	-3	-4	41	-34	0	53	12	59	-16	108
Canterbury	40	9	82	-24	107	17	17	83	19	136
Dartford	-107	-25	203	-71	1	-136	-45	143	-48	-86
Dover	13	5	27	-5	40	82	-1	20	-14	87
Folkestone & Hythe	38	-3	55	0	91	-9	7	49	-20	27
Gravesham	-39	-13	87	-43	-8	0	-26	121	-54	41
Maidstone	8	37	136	-40	141	-30	37	140	8	156
Sevenoaks	-38	-4	162	-61	59	-45	-1	175	-50	79
Swale	40	61	94	0	196	1	51	85	9	146
Thanet	25	0	92	-11	105	10	6	52	-10	58
Tonbridge & Malling	18	27	116	-14	147	14	50	108	-20	152
Tunbridge Wells	5	6	123	-35	99	42	-7	118	-60	93
Kent	**0**	**97**	**1,219**	**-338**	**978**	**0**	**99**	**1,156**	**-257**	**997**

Source: Office for National Statistics, Table IM2023-25

Figure 6i: Primary (4-10 year olds) net migration year ending 30th June 2025

	2024					2025				
District	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere**	**Total**	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere**	**Total**
Ashford	-9	11	60	-56	6	20	14	98	-40	92
Canterbury	50	23	118	-22	168	53	21	137	6	216
Dartford	-114	-73	464	-61	216	-208	-64	394	-49	72
Dover	53	3	50	-18	88	127	12	35	-5	169
Folkestone & Hythe	32	0	56	23	111	-23	11	87	-9	65
Gravesham	-20	-46	223	-81	75	-43	-36	172	-83	10
Maidstone	35	69	191	-19	276	21	87	112	-21	199
Sevenoaks	-30	1	267	-44	195	-13	-1	236	-76	145
Swale	29	26	147	-25	177	14	115	162	-24	266
Thanet	-55	8	77	-29	1	-15	22	56	16	79
Tonbridge & Malling	-61	5	134	-15	63	26	33	145	-19	186
Tunbridge Wells	90	5	157	1	254	43	3	158	12	216
Kent	**0**	**31**	**1,945**	**-347**	**1,630**	**0**	**215**	**1,792**	**-292**	**1,715**

Source: Office for National Statistics, Table IM2023-25

Figure 6j: Secondary aged (11-15 year olds) net migration year ending 30th June 2025

	2024					2025				
District	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere**	**Total**	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere**	**Total**
Ashford	3	10	32	-32	12	-5	8	34	-27	11
Canterbury	36	13	78	-11	116	82	14	63	27	186
Dartford	-71	-37	205	-7	90	-84	-32	225	-28	82
Dover	1	1	47	8	57	77	11	37	25	151
Folkestone & Hythe	-18	3	13	-26	-28	-42	4	16	4	-19
Gravesham	1	-22	107	-47	38	-5	-45	90	-19	20
Maidstone	65	41	97	7	209	26	30	83	3	141
Sevenoaks	-61	-7	122	-21	33	-78	-11	168	20	99
Swale	27	57	92	-36	139	-47	75	80	-7	101
Thanet	-9	12	41	-29	16	3	3	22	-19	9
Tonbridge & Malling	-8	16	91	22	121	57	27	105	-7	182
Tunbridge Wells	35	3	106	19	163	17	0	85	16	119
Kent	**0**	**90**	**1,029**	**-154**	**966**	**0**	**84**	**1,008**	**-10**	**1,082**

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.

8. Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts

7.1 Ashford

Borough Commentary

- Birth rates have fallen nationally by 26% between 2011 and 2024. The trend in Ashford mirrors this, although the birth rate of the Borough continues to exceed both Kent and National rates. Indications are the downwards trend was reversed in England, Kent, and Ashford in 2024 with increases in birth rates.

- Despite the falling birth rate, birth numbers in Ashford have not consistently declined in recent years. Future Year R cohorts (births in 2021 and on) vary in size from 1364 births to 1463.

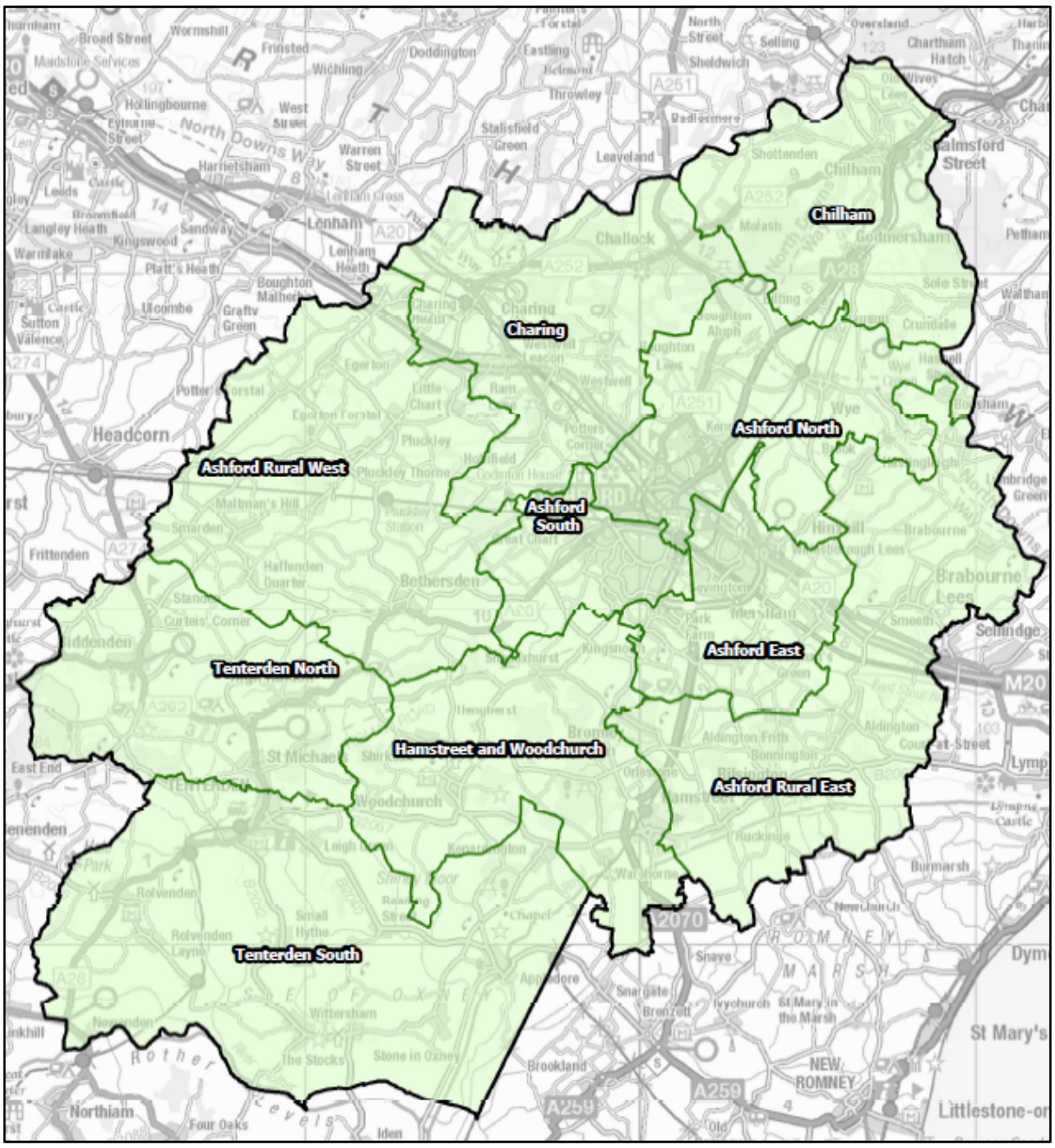
- Primary school rolls fall until 2029/30 then fluctuate. There may be localised pressures as house building resumes following delays in sites coming forwards. If this is the case, we will manage this with schools. In line with Government policy, surplus may also be used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, to provide wraparound care, or to provide more specialist SEN places and inclusion bases to meet the objectives of the SEN Reforms.

- Forecasts suggest a deficit of Year 7 places from 2026/27 to 2029/30 across the three secondary school planning groups. This will be managed within the Borough schools.

- The Local Plan (up to 2030) was adopted in the first quarter of 2019. The 'Stodmarsh' nutrient neutrality issue continues to impact housing delivery. During the period 2015/16 to 2024/25 an average of 771 homes were completed per annum (Kent Analytics Statistical Bulletin May 2026).

- Ashford Borough Council ran a high-level Regulation 18 consultation in Autumn 2025, looking at a new local plan period up to 2042 and potential for an additional 7,300 dwellings in the period. KCC will be working with Ashford colleagues to ensure that additional education infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of the new population are planned for and provided as part of planning permissions.

Map of the Ashford Borough primary planning groups



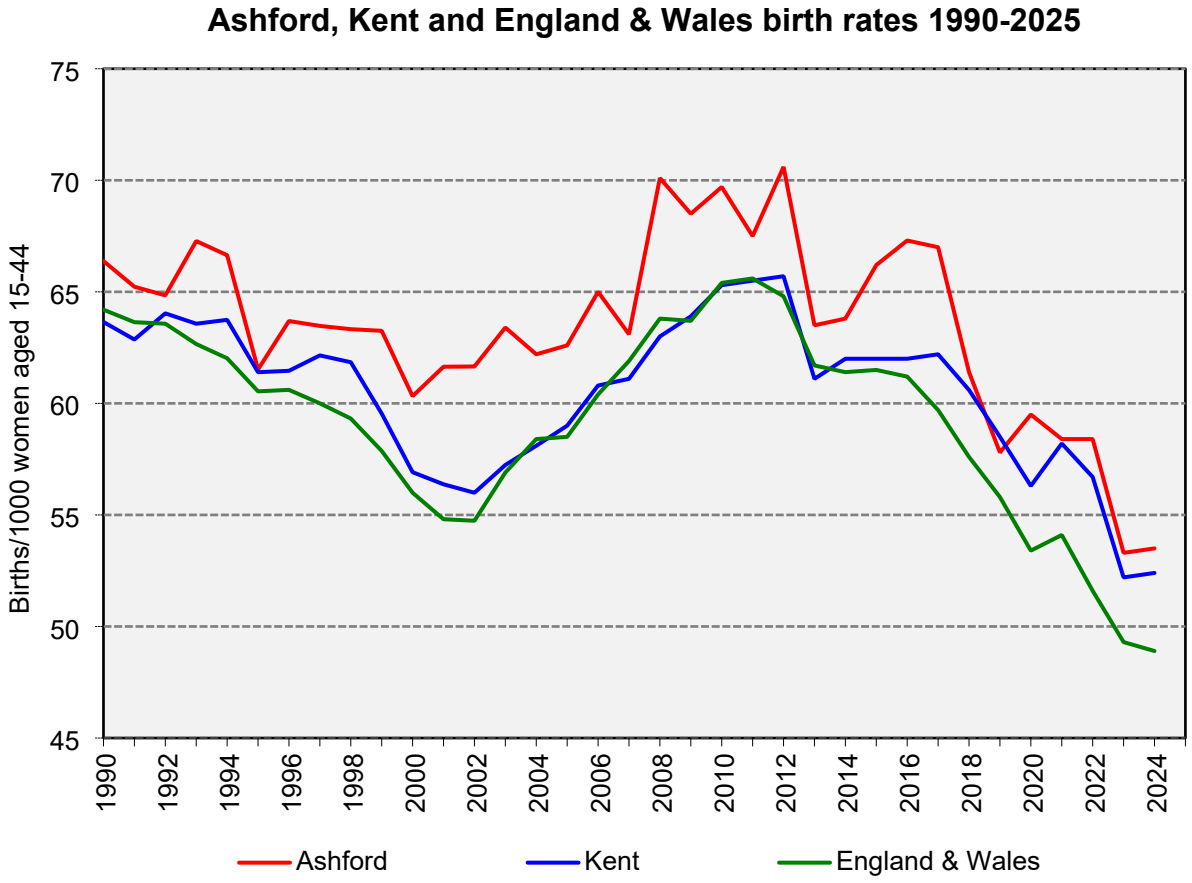
Ashford primary schools by planning group

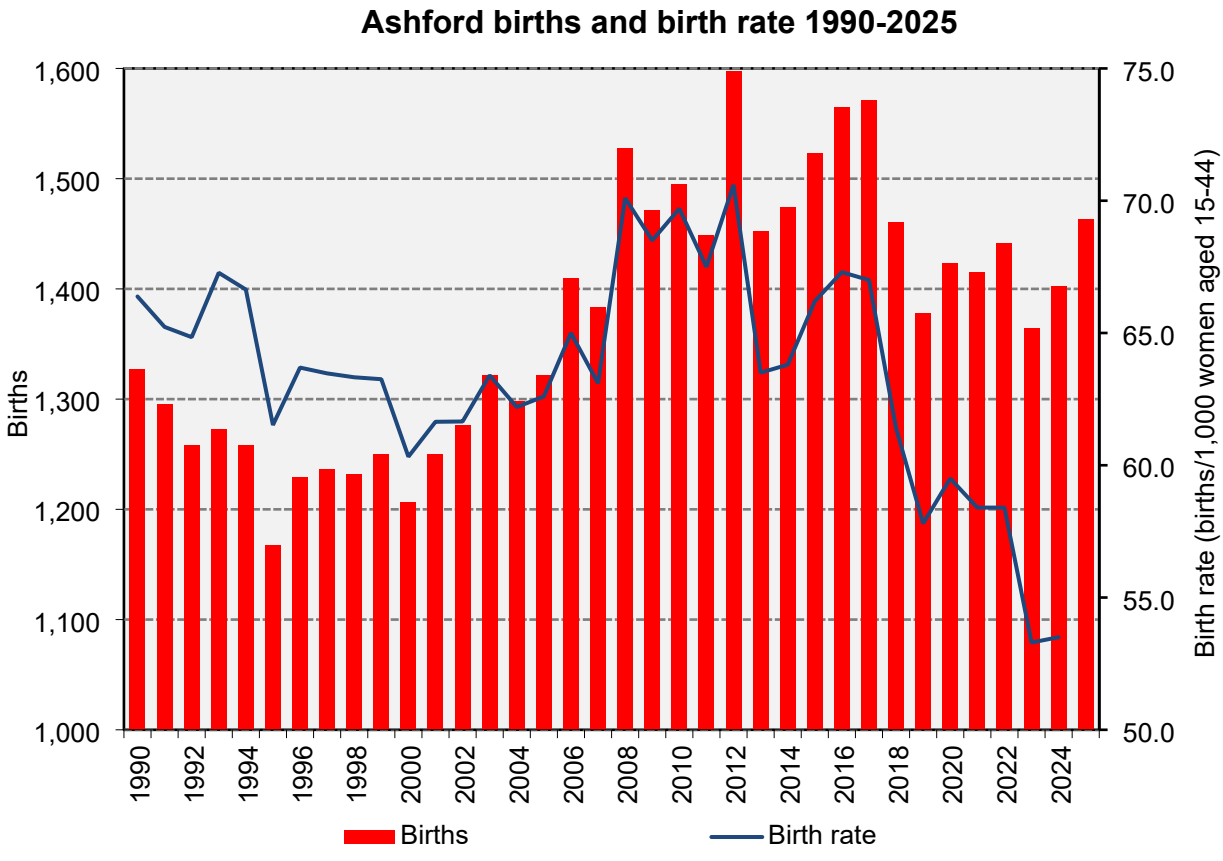
Planning Groups	School	Status
Chilham	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Chilham)	Academy
Charing	Challock Primary School	Foundation
	Charing CE Primary School	Academy
Ashford North	Downs View Infant School	Community
	Goat Lees Primary School	Foundation
	Godinton Primary School	Academy
	Kennington CE Academy	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 Forecasts

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Chilham	15	8	3	7	8	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	15
Challock and Charing	50	-4	1	2	6	1	1	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	50
Ashford North	420	18	33	57	58	27	42	47	52	55	60	64	420
Ashford Rural East	80	9	3	17	6	4	8	9	10	10	11	11	80
Ashford East	410	86	15	35	19	12	21	26	33	37	40	40	380
Ashford South	390	50	49	95	58	55	67	72	77	82	84	83	390
Ashford Rural West	80	5	9	9	10	8	8	8	7	7	7	8	80
Hamstreet and Woodchurch	71	19	15	19	16	11	16	16	16	16	16	17	71
Tenterden North	65	16	6	14	8	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	60
Tenterden South	94	23	37	28	36	37	34	35	35	35	35	35	95
Ashford	**1,675**	**230**	**171**	**283**	**225**	**170**	**213**	**227**	**245**	**257**	**268**	**273**	**1,641**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
NS - Ashford North	968	64	-30	-9	-28	-17	133	59	84	56	140	94	968
NS - Tenterden and Cranbrook	360	39	-4	-11	-10	-12	6	1	2	5	12	17	300
SG - Ashford	420	0	-2	-7	-13	-10	31	5	12	5	27	14	420

Primary Borough Commentary
Across the District we forecast surplus Year R places with 9FE surplus by the end of the Plan period. 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, to provide wraparound care, or to provide more specialist SEN places and inclusion bases to meet the objectives of the SEN Reforms.

Charing and Challock Planning Group
Forecasts suggest there will be no Year R places at the end of the forecast period. The expansion of Charing CE Primary School continues to be the strategic solution for additional primary school places in the planning group. The expansion of the school will be driven by local consented housing developments. It is not expected school places will be required until the next decade.

Ashford North Planning Group
Forecasts suggest 1-2FE of Year R places surplus throughout the Plan period. Planned new developments north of the M20 between Kennington, Willesborough and Eureka Park will increase demand but most are yet to move forward. To support new housing in and around the planning group, the Local Plan makes provision for a new 2FE primary school into the 'Conningbrook Park' development. Should housing come forward as anticipated, the school is likely to be required in the next decade.

Ashford East Planning Group
Although forecasts suggest surplus Year R places across the Plan 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 2-3FE Year R places surplus across the forecast period. The development at Chilmington Green is located within this planning group. It has not come forwards as expected. The surplus capacity will reduce when delivery of housing in the planning group moves forward.

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 Secondary School. We are anticipating a small deficit of Year 7 places from 2026/27 for 4 years. We will collaborate with existing schools to ensure that there are sufficient Year 7 places for all who require one.

Developer contributions to expand Chilmington Green Secondary School by 2FE have been sought. This planned expansion will support planned housing development in the district.

Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective Planning Group
Forecasts indicate a fluctuation between a small deficit and a small surplus of Year 7 places across 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 until 2029/30. We will collaborate with the existing schools to manage this.

Planned Commissioning – Ashford

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Ashford East					2FE of new provision at Court Lodge
Ashford North					2FE New provision at Conningbrook Park
Charing					0.3FE Charing CEPS
Ashford South					2FE of new provision at Chilmington Green
Ashford North Non-Selective		Up to 30 temporary Year 7 places	Up to 30 temporary 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.

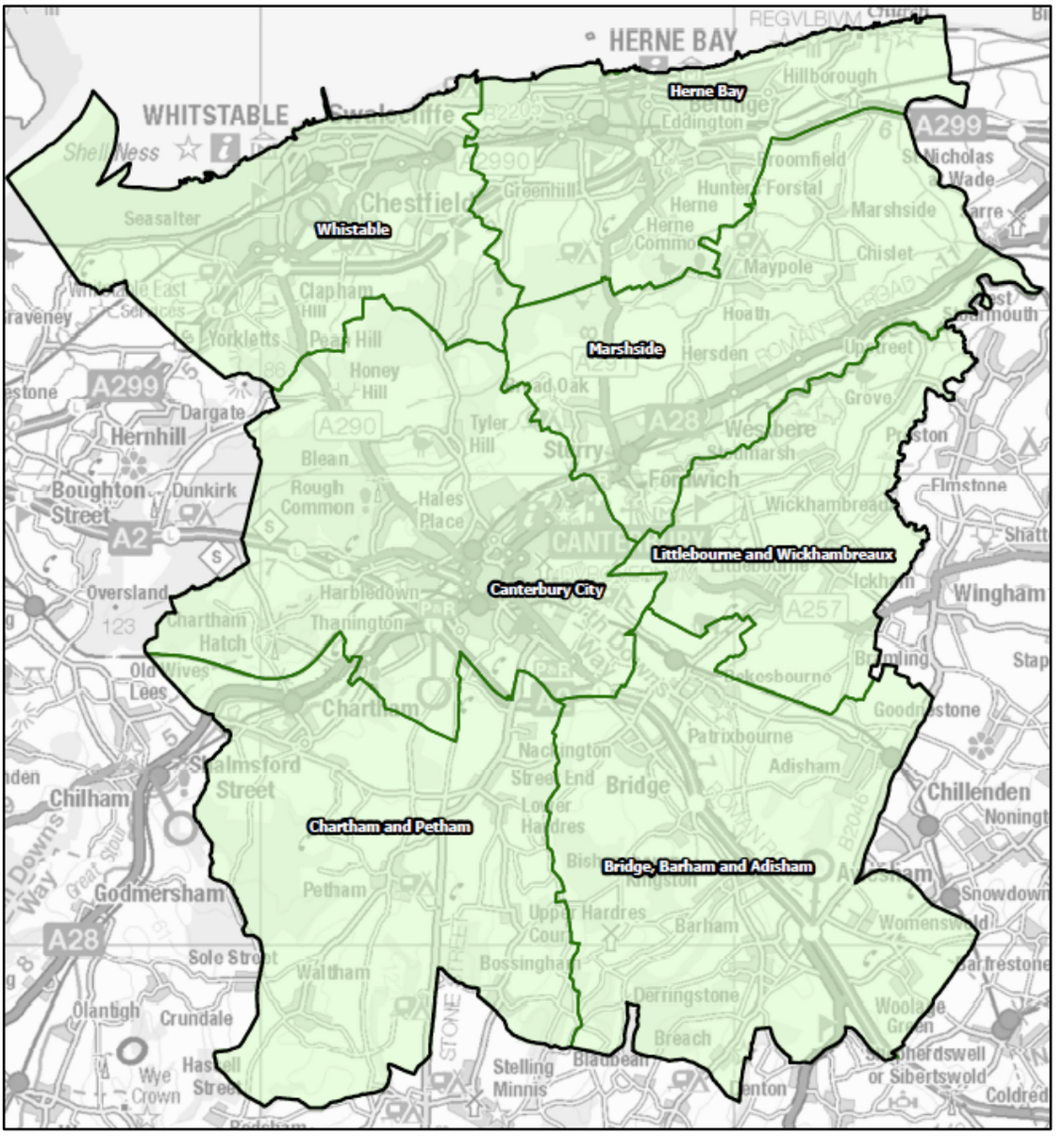
- We forecast surplus primary school places across the district throughout the forecast period, however there are significant differences in the planning groups.

- 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 pressure on places throughout the plan period.

- 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 2015/16 to 2024/25 a total of 5866 houses were completed (NET) with an average of 587 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 at Regulation 18 stage, CCC consulted on a Regulation 19 draft Local Plan in Spring 2026. CCC is currently reviewing the representations received to the Regulation 19 consultation and the draft Local Plan will be submitted for examination in Autumn 2026.

Map of the Canterbury Primary Planning Groups



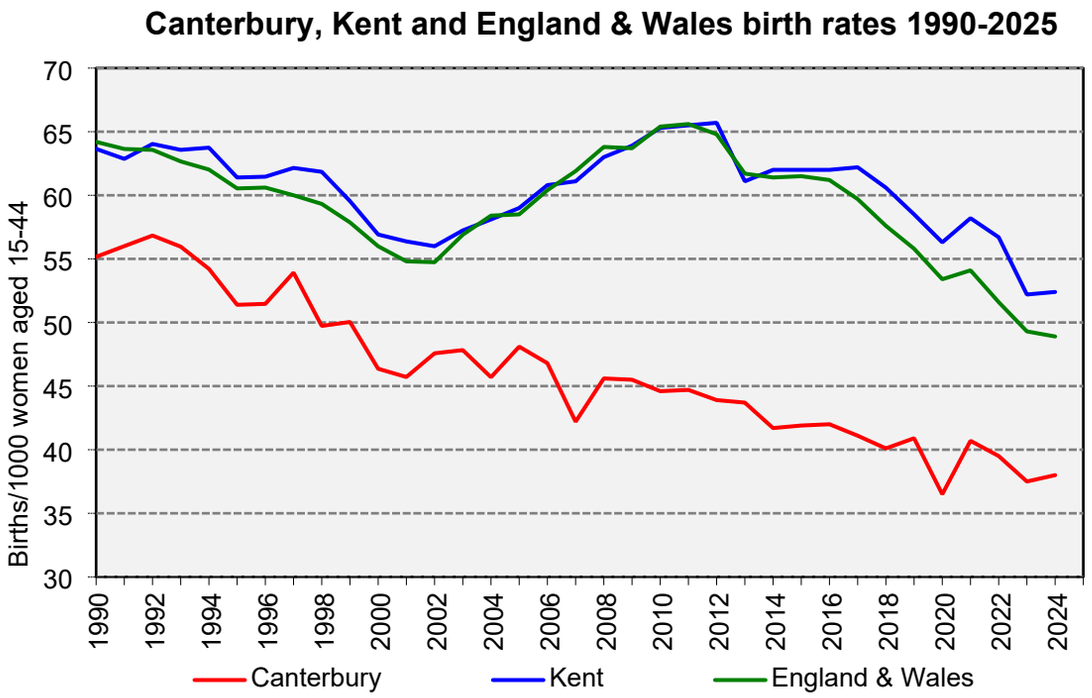
Canterbury Primary Schools by Planning Group

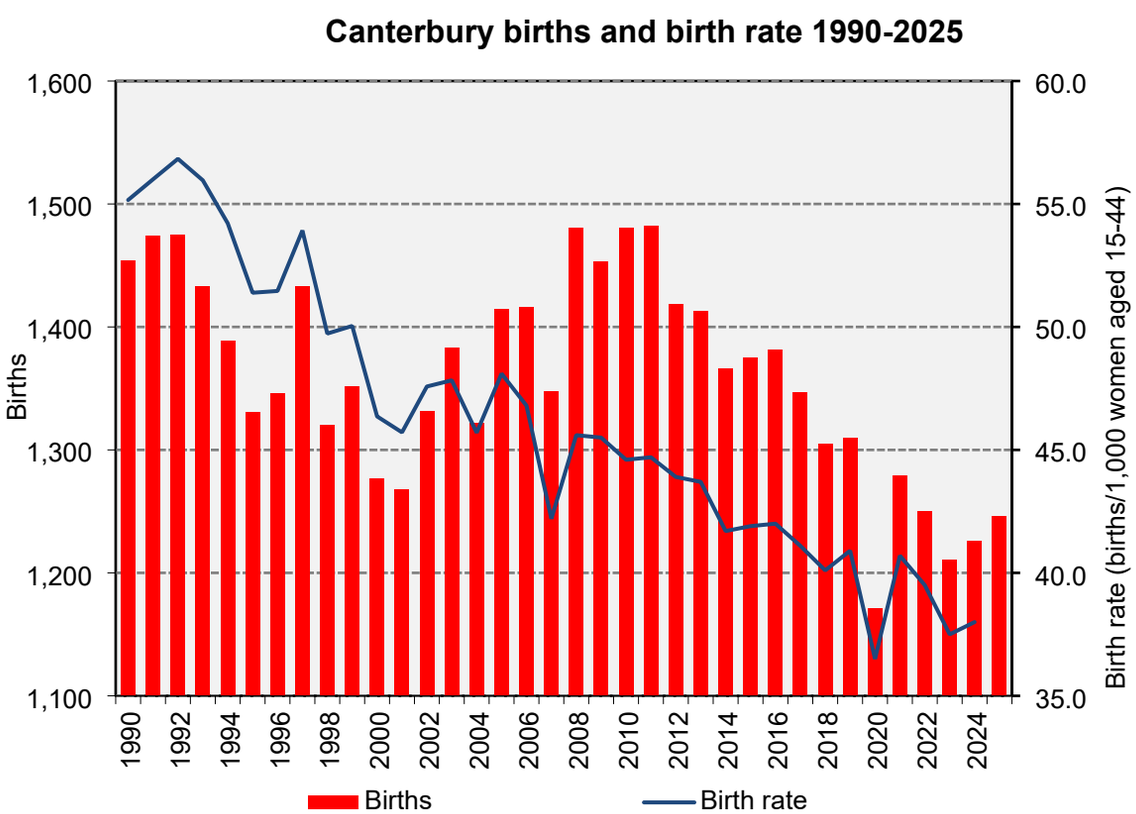
Planning Group	School	Status
Canterbury City	Blean Primary School	Community
	Canterbury Primary School	Academy
	Parkside Community Primary School	Foundation
	Pilgrims' Way Primary School	Academy
	St. John's CE Primary School (Canterbury)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Peter's Methodist Primary School (Canterbury)	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	Academy

Planning Group	School	Status
Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux	Littlebourne CE Primary School	Academy
	Wickhambreaux CE Primary School	Academy
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 Forecasts

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Canterbury City	480	21	39	45	42	35	45	67	86	103	119	136	480
Marshside	120	17	1	-4	-8	-25	-13	-14	-16	-19	-21	-24	120
Bridge, Barham and Adisham	105	1	3	-3	1	8	3	5	7	8	10	12	105
Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux	30	0	2	1	5	4	2	3	3	3	4	4	30
Chartham and Petham	75	20	10	23	29	28	22	23	24	25	25	25	75
Whitstable	330	44	57	40	41	42	31	26	21	17	13	11	300
Herne Bay	390	39	-1	33	24	-15	-11	-19	-28	-39	-49	-56	360
Canterbury	**1,530**	**142**	**110**	**134**	**134**	**77**	**80**	**91**	**97**	**98**	**101**	**107**	**1,470**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Canterbury City Non-Selective	710	23	5	-62	-66	-37	-43	-26	-40	-53	-32	-28	660
Canterbury Coastal Non-Selective	618	87	56	22	39	8	18	59	37	34	67	66	598
Canterbury and Faversham Selective	645	-18	-3	-51	-32	-21	-26	6	-15	-22	-11	-5	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 2027/28, reducing to 3FE for 2031/32 with significant variations across the different Planning Groups.

Canterbury City Planning Group
Forecasts indicate a surplus of places in the planning group of between 1.5FE for Year R in 2027/28 increasing to 2.2FE in 2031/32. A new 2FE primary school is planned to meet the need from new housing developments in the Thanington area, however this will be brought forward when pressures on places are forecast to prevent overcapacity in the planning area.

Marshside Planning Group
Forecasts indicate an increasing pressure of capacity from 0.1FE in 2027/28 to 0.5FE in 2031/32. Initial pressures will be accommodated from surplus capacity in adjacent planning areas, however, later in the forecast period, we plan to expand Water Meadows Primary Academy by 1FE to meet forecast pressures and to serve the housing developments in this planning group.

Herne Bay Planning Group

Forecasts indicate a surplus of places of 1FE in 2027/28, however from 2029/30, the forecast shows an increasing pressure of Year R places throughout the plan period. This is partly due to Herne Bay Infants School reducing its PAN to address the smaller cohorts currently entering school. The capacity has not been lost so this can be reinstated as required. If new housing developments are delivered in line with the Local Plan, additional capacity will be required. 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 2FE from 2027/28 which decreases to 0.8FE in 2031/32. 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. Also, it is partly due to Archbishops Secondary School reducing its PAN to address the smaller cohorts currently entering the school. The capacity has not been lost so this can be reinstated as and when required.

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 Orion Spires.

Year 7 forecasts indicate a fluctuating surplus of places between 0.7FE in 2027/28 to 1.9FE in 2031/32. 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 a decreasing pressure of places in the planning group with a pressure of 1.7FE in 2027/2028 to a small surplus of places in 2031/32 of 0.2FE. We plan a 0.5FE expansion of Simon Langton Girls Grammar School and we will be working with existing school within the planning group to meet any additional need.

Planned Commissioning – Canterbury

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Canterbury City					1FE of new School in Thanington with potential to expand by further 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 30 temporary Y7 places	Up to 30 temporary Y7 places	Up to 30 temporary Y7 places	Up to 30 temporary Y7 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, but although it remains higher than the Kent and national averages, the gap has closed in recent years.

- Dartford primary Reception and secondary Year 7 forecasts will only include consented sites that have been notified to KCC by the Borough Council.

- Current forecasts for Reception-aged pupils indicate that Dartford Borough will maintain a surplus of primary school places throughout the Plan period. However, Borough-wide surplus capacity is forecast to reduce from 203 places in 2025/26 (approximately 6.8FE) to 62 places by 2035/36 (approximately 2FE). While overall capacity remains sufficient at a borough level, forecast pressures become increasingly concentrated within specific planning groups later in the Plan period. In contrast, higher surplus capacity is forecast to remain in other planning groups, helping to offset pressures across the borough. KCC will continue to monitor demand, housing delivery and school admissions and will consider adjustments to PANs and future commissioning activity where necessary.

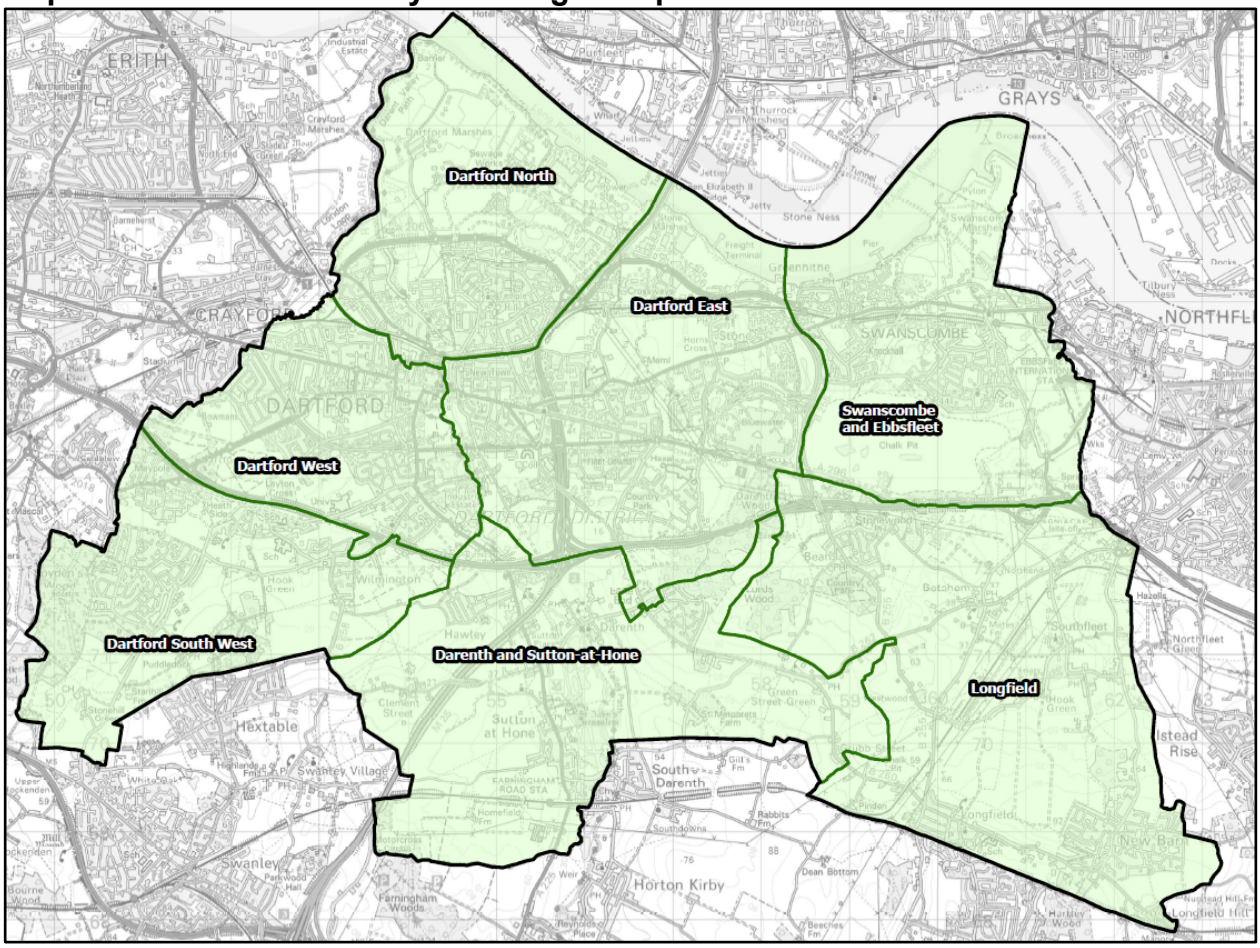
- Current forecasts for secondary non-selective provision indicate no notable pressures arising throughout the period of the Plan. Current forecasts do not identify a need for additional non-selective secondary provision, although KCC will continue to monitor demand and housing growth across the wider North Kent area. In the short/medium term, KCC will work with individual schools to ensure they maintain viability should they not be full in the short/medium term.

- Both the Gravesham and Longfield Selective and North West Kent Selective Planning Groups are forecast to experience pressure on grammar school places during the Plan period. However, the forecast pressure is not as high as indicated in previous commissioning Plans. Expansion opportunities within the existing grammar school estate remain extremely limited, due to site and legislative constraints, though KCC will continue to work with selective schools across North Kent to explore opportunities for additional capacity where feasible, whilst ensuring that sufficient secondary school places are available overall to meet its statutory duty.

- 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. The adopted Dartford Local Plan 2024 requires that 790 dwellings are delivered per annum (totalling 12,640 homes from April 2021 to March 2037).

- The EDC has confirmed that a total 15,000 homes will be built in their area of responsibility alone up to approximately 2040, it should be noted that the figures set out above in the Dartford Local Plan include the proportion of the 15,000 dwellings that fall in the Dartford area, with the remainder being covered in the emerging Gravesham Local Plan. This is not therefore additional development above what is set out in the Local Plans. 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 at this time.

Map of the Dartford Primary Planning Groups



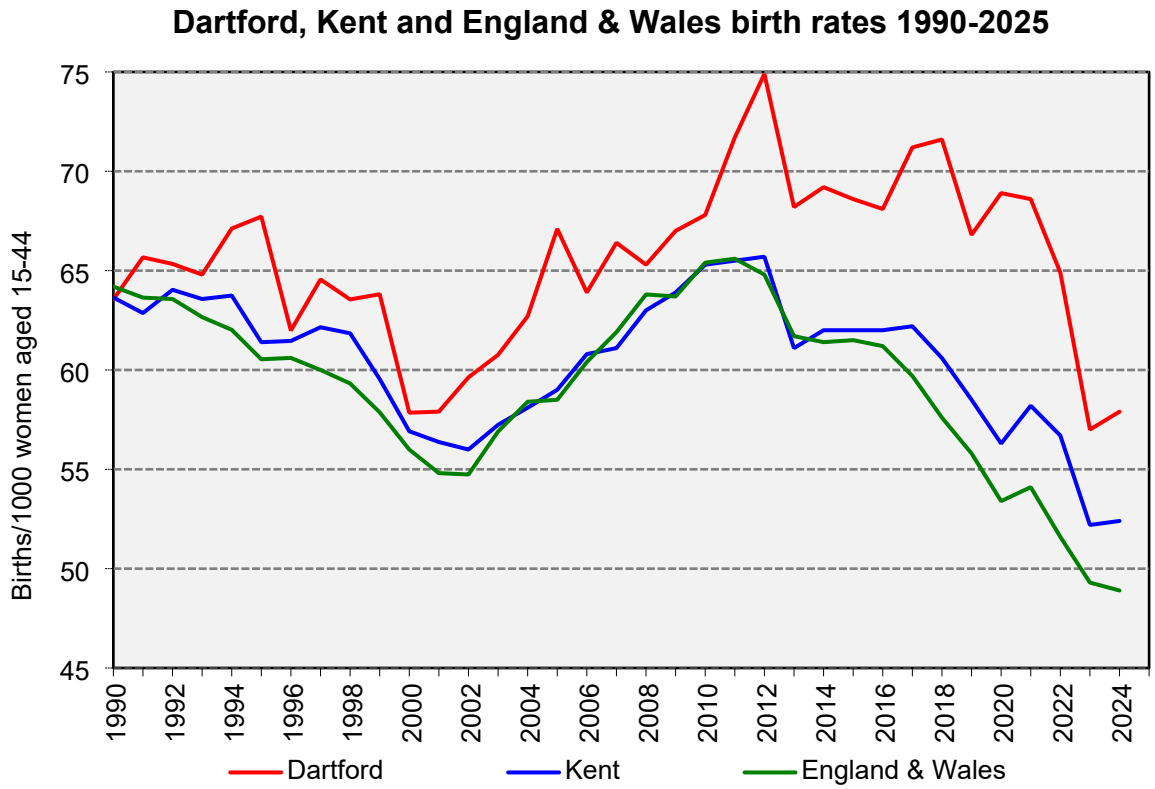
Dartford Primary Schools by Planning Group

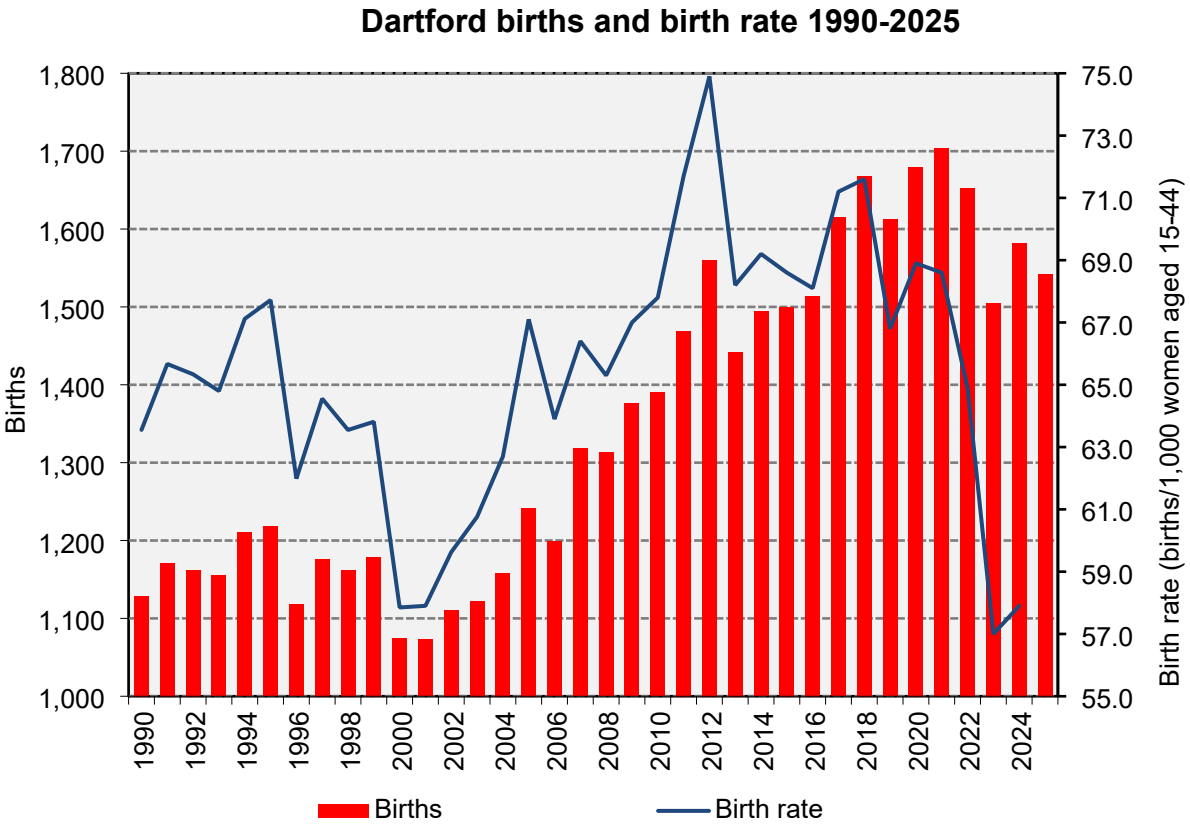
	School	Status
Dartford North	Dartford Bridge Community Primary School	Academy
	Holy Trinity CE Primary School (Dartford)	Voluntary Aided
	River Mill Primary School	Free
	St. Anselm's RC Primary School	Academy
	Temple Hill Primary Academy	Academy
Dartford West	Oakfield Primary Academy	Academy
	Our Lady's RC Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Wentworth Primary School	Academy
	West Hill Primary Academy	Academy
	Westgate Primary School	Academy
Dartford East	The Brent Primary School	Academy
	Leigh Academy Dartford	Academy
	Fleetdown Primary School	Academy
	The 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

	School	Status
Ebbsfleet	Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard	Academy
	Craylands Primary 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	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Dartford North	330	59	68	86	118	117	98	105	110	116	122	128	330
Dartford West	315	23	7	10	-10	21	-1	-2	-9	-14	-12	-8	315
Dartford East	390	6	16	13	7	23	-9	-12	-17	-21	-23	-20	390
Dartford South West	180	28	32	57	49	35	44	45	44	44	45	46	180
Darenth and Sutton-at-Hone	90	19	28	26	26	30	25	25	25	25	25	25	90
Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet	390	45	17	-12	13	-38	-33	-39	-53	-79	-102	-109	420
Longfield	90	23	2	6	1	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	75
Dartford	**1,785**	**203**	**172**	**186**	**204**	**191**	**125**	**123**	**102**	**71**	**56**	**62**	**1,800**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective	1,410	100	29	125	153	161	173	197	172	160	203	205	1,590
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective	1,354	54	37	-3	-4	57	51	59	42	23	53	16	1,389
Gravesham and Longfield Selective	420	-9	-8	-23	-31	-13	-15	-18	-22	-37	-29	-35	420
North West Kent Selective	720	-3	-8	-27	-37	-36	-24	-5	5	-4	23	26	720

Primary Borough commentary

Current forecasts for Reception-aged pupils indicate that Dartford Borough will retain a surplus of primary school places throughout the Plan period. However, the total surplus capacity is forecast to fall from 203 places in 2025/26 to 56 places in 2034/35 before increasing slightly to 62 places in 2035/36. This equates to a reduction from almost 7FE of surplus capacity to around 2FE by the end of the forecast period. Any forecasted demand primarily relates to the Dartford East Planning Group and the Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet Planning Group.

Substantial residential development continues to generate pressure in specific growth locations. Consequently, although no additional primary provision is currently required at a borough-wide level, localised commissioning activity is expected to be necessary to address emerging shortfalls in the areas experiencing the highest levels of housing growth.

Dartford North Planning Group

The Dartford North Planning Group is forecast to maintain the highest level of surplus capacity within the borough throughout the Plan period. This forecast surplus provides resilience for the wider Dartford primary school system and may assist in accommodating demand that cannot be met within neighbouring planning groups. Consideration may be given to adjustments to PANs where appropriate, to support the long-term sustainability of provision and maintain suitable levels of surplus capacity.

Dartford West Planning Group

The Dartford West Planning Group is forecast to experience some pressure on Reception places over the Plan period. Due to the forecast deficit being relatively small, some demand may continue to be accommodated through surplus capacity in neighbouring planning groups.

Dartford East Planning Group

The Dartford East Planning Group is forecast to face increasing pressure on Reception places over the Plan period. Forecasts only show demand consistently exceeding capacity from 2030/31 onwards. The deficit is forecast to increase from 9 places in 2030/31 to 20 places in 2035/36. Based on current forecasts, up to 1FE of additional primary capacity may be required during the latter part of the Plan period.

Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet Planning Group

The Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet Planning Group continues to be the area most significantly affected by the ongoing development of Ebbsfleet Garden City, with surplus capacity expected to reduce rapidly over the forecast period. The planning group moves from a surplus of 45 places in 2025/26 to a deficit of 12 places by 2027/28. Although short-term fluctuations occur, including a temporary surplus of 13 places in 2028/29, the overall trend is one of increasing pressure. Demand is forecast to exceed capacity by 38 places in 2029/30, rising to a deficit of 109 places by 2035/36.

These forecasts already include the first Form of Entry for Alkerden CofE Academy. Despite this additional capacity, continued housing delivery across Ebbsfleet Garden City will generate the need for further primary school places. Future provision associated with Alkerden and the Ashmere and Ebbsfleet Central developments will be progressed when evidence demonstrates that additional capacity is required.

Secondary Borough Commentary

There are two non-selective and two selective planning groups serving Dartford Borough and the surrounding area. See Appendix 11.2 for the secondary planning group maps.

KCC's strategy across North Kent remains one of managing demand across planning group boundaries where necessary. This approach will help ensure that sufficient school places remain available while maintaining a sustainable level of surplus capacity across the wider area.

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.

Forecasts indicate that the planning group will maintain a relatively high level of surplus capacity throughout the Plan period, with no requirement for additional secondary school commissioning. Surplus places are expected to increase from 125 places in 2027/28 to more than 200 places by 2034/35.

The planning group is therefore well placed to accommodate forecast demand arising from existing and future residential development. As development sites continue to mature, KCC may consider adjustments to PANs at individual schools to ensure that surplus capacity remains at an appropriate and sustainable level in the short to medium term, while supporting the long-term viability of provision across the planning group.

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.

Current forecasts indicate a very slight deficit within the planning group, with a shortfall of up to 4 places projected for two consecutive years from 2027/28. The planning group then returns to having a surplus of places. Therefore, demand is expected to be managed through pupil movement across planning group boundaries and utilising available capacity elsewhere within the wider North Kent secondary education system.

Looking beyond the current forecast period, KCC will need to consider the implications of planned growth arising from the emerging Gravesham Local Plan. During consultation on the Local Plan, KCC advised Gravesham Borough Council that any significant new housing growth would need to be supported by the identification of land for additional non-selective secondary school provision. KCC will continue to review forecasts and assess future capacity requirements as the Local Plan progresses and the scale and location of developments becomes clearer.

North West Kent Selective Planning Group

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. Collectively these schools provide 720 Year 7 places annually and serve a wider catchment extending beyond Dartford Borough.

Forecasts indicate that the planning group will remain in deficit for much of the Plan period. The shortfall is expected to increase from 8 places in 2026/27 to just under 1.5FE by 2028/29 before gradually reducing, returning to a small surplus forecast from 2032/33 onwards. The forecast deficits are far lower than those identified in previous Commissioning Plans.

While demand is projected to exceed available places, the scale of the deficit is relatively modest when considered within the context of the wider North Kent selective system. As recognised in previous Kent Commissioning Plans, demand for grammar school places cannot be viewed solely through borough/district boundaries, as pupil movement and parental preferences frequently extend across planning groups. Consequently, forecast pressures are expected to be managed through the wider grammar school network across North Kent.

All four grammar schools within the area have expanded in recent years and therefore opportunities for further expansion are extremely limited. Nevertheless, KCC continues to work with Dartford Grammar School to explore whether a modest expansion (c0.5FE) could be delivered. In addition, recent changes to the admission arrangements at Dartford Grammar School have improved access for Kent-resident pupils, creating additional opportunities for local children without the need for physical expansion.

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. Both schools have previously been expanded and now operate at or close to their practical capacity. Collectively these two schools provide 420 Year 7 places annually and serve a wider catchment extending beyond Dartford Borough.

Forecasts indicate a relatively small but continuing deficit of selective school places throughout the Plan period. The shortfall is expected to increase from around 0.5FE (8 places) in 2026/27 to approximately 1.5FE (37 places) by 2033/34. Demand is projected to remain above 1FE for the remainder of the forecast period.

Following previous expansion projects, opportunities for further growth at the existing grammar schools are now extremely limited. As stated above, any response to this pressure must be considered within the context of the wider North Kent selective system rather than within a single borough/district boundary.

Current legislation continues to prevent the establishment of new grammar schools. Should significant additional selective capacity be required in the future, options would therefore need to be considered at a wider North Kent level, potentially through the development of satellite provision linked to existing grammar schools. However, such proposals would be challenging. Key requirements would include identifying both boys' and girls' grammar schools willing to operate satellite provision, securing a suitable shared site, obtaining DfE approval and securing substantial capital investment. Based on the costs associated with delivering a new 6FE secondary school, the provision of a 3FE boys' grammar satellite and a 3FE girls' grammar satellite could likely require investment in excess of £40 million plus, in addition to the cost of acquiring the necessary land. Provision on a smaller scale is unlikely to be financially viable for a host grammar school to operate effectively.

Given these constraints, 1FE of additional selective commissioning is currently proposed across the North West Kent Selective and Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Groups by 2028/29. KCC will continue to monitor demand across both selective planning groups and review any opportunities to improve access to selective education where feasible.

However, recognising the practical and financial challenges associated with expanding grammar school provision, the Council's primary responsibility remains to ensure that there are sufficient secondary school places available overall to meet demand, regardless of school designation. Consequently, where additional capacity is required in the future, KCC will seek to ensure that sufficient places are available, even where that provision is non-selective.

Planned Commissioning – Dartford

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Dartford East					1FE permanent expansion of existing school
Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet			1FE permanent expansion at Ashmere		2FE Permanent expansion Ebbsfleet Central 1FE permanent expansion at Ashmere
North West Kent Selective and Gravesham and Longfield Selective		1 FE permanent expansion of existing school			

7.4 Dover

District commentary

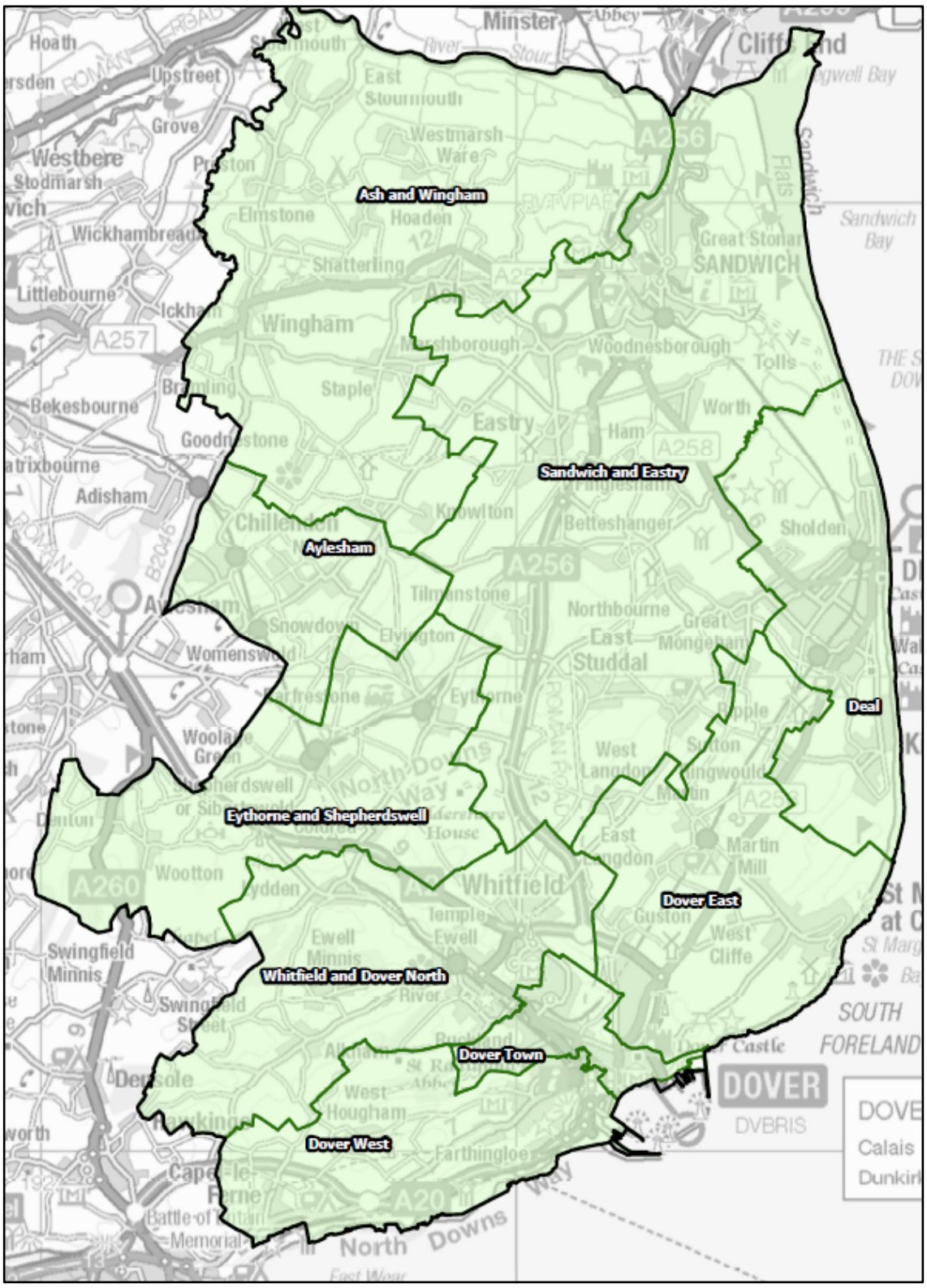
- The Dover District birth rate has been on a downwards trend since a high point in 2012. A 2% uplift in 2024 has brought it in line with the Kent average. The number of births in Dover have followed a similar trend, but there has been a small drop between 2024 and 2025 (6 births).

- Primary school rolls are expected to fluctuate through the forecast period. The current surplus is expected to remain but may be reduced if, in line with Government policy, surplus is used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, wraparound care, or to provide more specialist SEN places and inclusion bases.

- Forecasts suggest that there could be a deficit of Year 7 places in Dover Town in the period 2026/27 to 2029/30. Any need for additional places in the Town during this period will be managed in conversation with existing schools. Across the District as a whole, we forecast there will be sufficient Year 7 places. The impact of planned house building may need to be mitigated at some point via the expansion of existing schools. This will be dependent on the rate of delivery.

- Dover District Council's new Local Plan for the period 2022-2040 was adopted in October 2024. The Plan has provision for 10,998 additional houses. During the period 2015/16 to 2024/25 an average of 548 homes were completed per annum (Kent Analytics Statistical Bulletin May 2026). 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, particularly in the planned strategic developments at Whitfield and Aylesham.

Map of the Dover primary planning groups

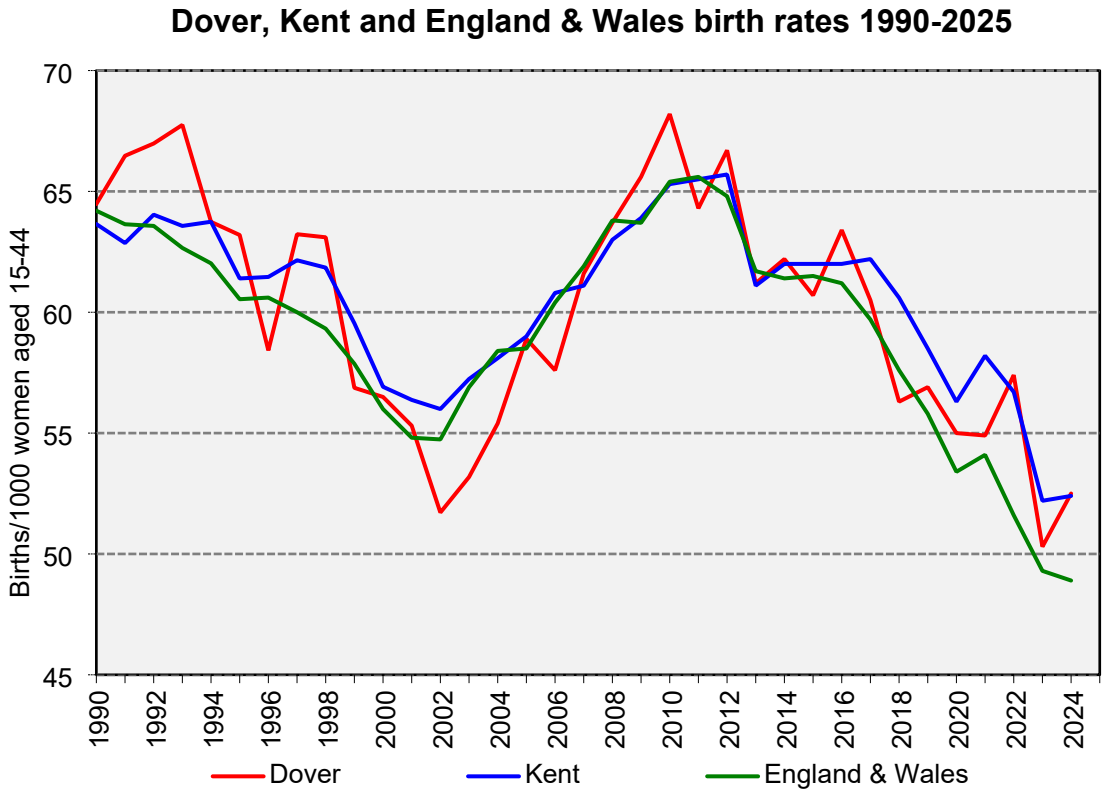


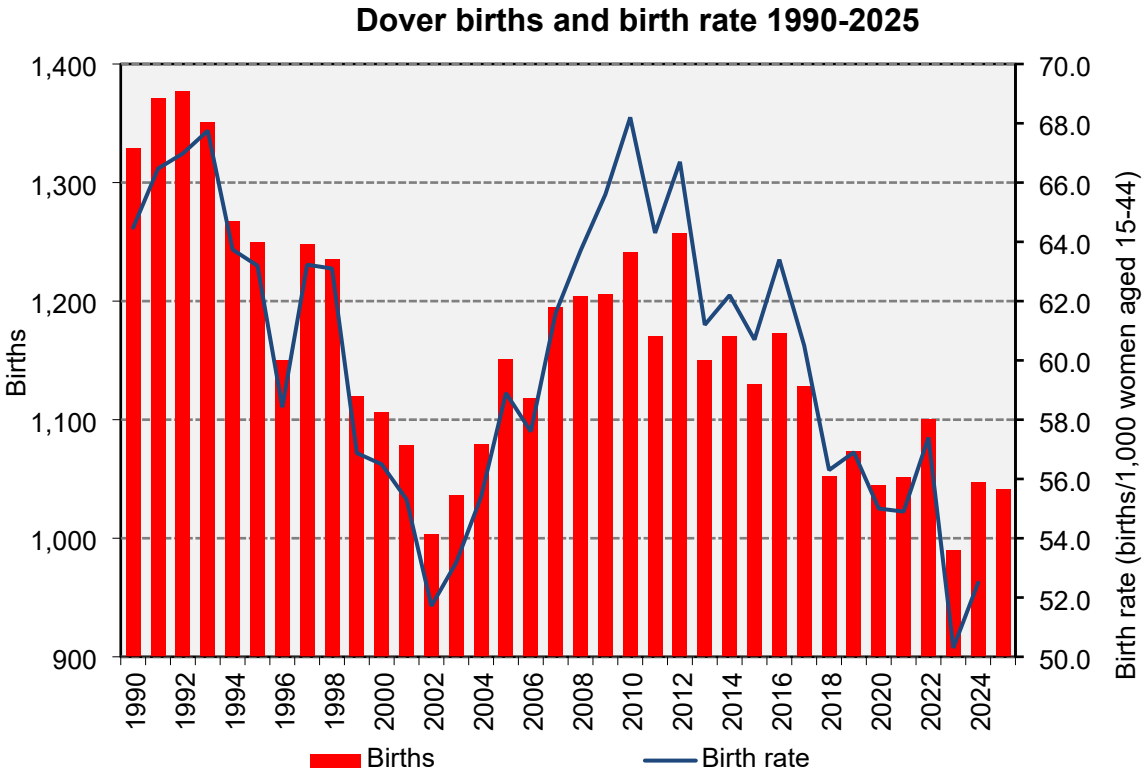
Dover primary schools by planning group

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	Academy
	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 Ringwould 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 District Forecast

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Dover Town	240	52	38	48	70	55	52	53	55	55	56	58	240
Whitfield and Dover North	182	21	-2	-1	24	7	6	5	6	5	5	5	182
Dover West	170	41	48	58	65	60	55	54	56	56	58	59	170
Dover East	67	15	9	19	8	17	13	5	2	1	1	-2	65
Deal	315	59	65	60	66	69	67	64	64	62	60	58	315
Sandwich and Eastry	116	43	3	8	6	-11	-6	-9	-13	-16	-17	-18	101
Ash and Wingham	90	8	9	11	6	3	5	4	5	6	7	8	90
Aylesham	102	22	18	24	24	28	24	24	25	25	26	27	102
Eythorne and Shepherdswell	50	0	-9	4	4	-3	-1	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	45
Dover	**1,332**	**261**	**179**	**232**	**274**	**225**	**215**	**199**	**196**	**193**	**195**	**195**	**1,310**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Dover Non-Selective	450	30	-1	-50	-47	-19	8	16	18	-18	20	49	390
Deal and Sandwich Non-Selective	425	164	76	67	58	64	87	77	84	56	81	83	395
Dover District Selective	440	17	-3	13	12	11	23	20	26	14	16	34	440

Primary District Commentary

Across the District we forecast a peak of just under 9FE of surplus Year R places, which reduces to 6.5FE surplus the end of the plan period. We will continue to collaborate with schools to manage 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, to provide wraparound care, or to provide more specialist SEN places and inclusion bases to meet the objectives of the SEN Reforms.

Whitfield and Dover North Planning Group
We forecast a small deficit of places in the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years. 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 with a further 600 allocated via the Local Plan to 2040. To provide sufficient primary school places the provision of three 2FE primary schools were included within the Master Plan, of which the expansion of Whitfield Aspen on to a satellite site at Richmond Way provides one of these.

We are working with Dover District Council officers to plan for the impact of the additional 600 dwellings and to identify when and where the second and third primary schools will be located and come forward.

Sandwich and Eastry Planning Group
A deficit of up to 0.5FE of Year R places is forecast from 2029/30 onwards. This is due to Eastry CE Primary School reducing PAN to address the smaller cohorts currently entering school. The capacity has not been lost so this can be reinstated as and when appropriate.

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.

Aylesham Planning Group
Developer contributions are secured to support the expansion of provision in the planning group. We will continue monitor pupil numbers and will expand provision when required.

Eythorne and Shepherdswell
A small deficit of places is forecast which can be managed in existing schools. This is due to Eythorne Primary School reducing PAN to address the smaller cohorts currently entering school. The capacity has not been lost so this can be reinstated as and when appropriate.

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. Forecasts suggest that Year 7 places will be required across the four academic years 2026/27 to 2029/30. There were sufficient Year 7 places available on National Offer Day for the 2026/27 cohort and should there be a need for additional Year 7 places in 2027/28, 2028/29 and 2029/30 as forecast, we will work with existing schools to ensure places are provided.

The Whitfield Urban Expansion will, over time, increase the pressure on local secondary schools. When additional places are required, this will be via the expansion of 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. Land has been 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 Grammar School for Boys, Dover Grammar School for Girls and Sir Roger Manwood's Grammar School. There is forecast to be sufficient places in this sector throughout the forecast period.

Planned Commissioning – Dover

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Whitfield and North Dover					Expansion of Whitfield Aspen by 1FE
Aylesham					0.3FE expansion in Aylesham
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 saw a small uplift between 2023-24, but the overarching downward trend which commenced in 2011 remains. The rate remains below the County average but is higher than the National rate. The number of recorded births rose by 48 between 2023 and 2024, before falling by 33 in 2025.

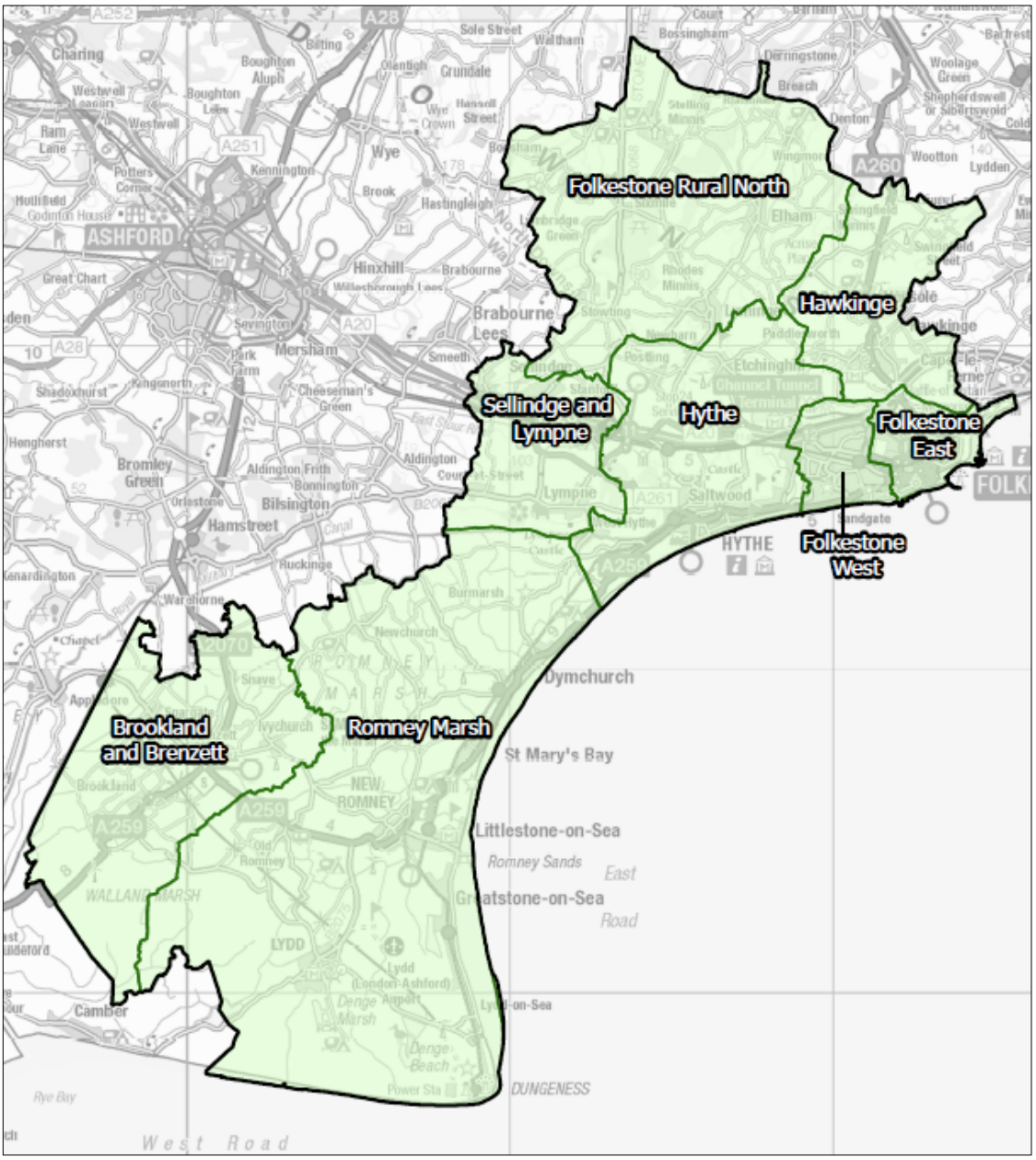
- We forecast that the current high level of surplus Year R school places across the District will remain throughout the Plan period. In line with Government policy, surplus may also be used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, to provide wraparound care, or to provide more specialist SEN places and inclusion bases to meet the objectives of the SEN Reforms.

- Within the secondary sector, we forecast a small deficit of non-selective secondary school places in Folkestone and Hythe in three of the academic years. Should this be the case, we will collaborate 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 2015/16 to 2024/25 an average of 410 homes were completed per annum (Kent Analytics Statistical Bulletin May 2026).

- Plans for the Garden Village at Otterpool Park continue to progress. A significant amount of educational infrastructure will be required within the development to meet the needs of this new community. This infrastructure will need to cover the primary and secondary phases, plus Early Years and the specialist sector. We continue to work with the District Council and the promoter of the site to identify when new provision will be required.

Map of the Folkestone and Hythe primary planning groups



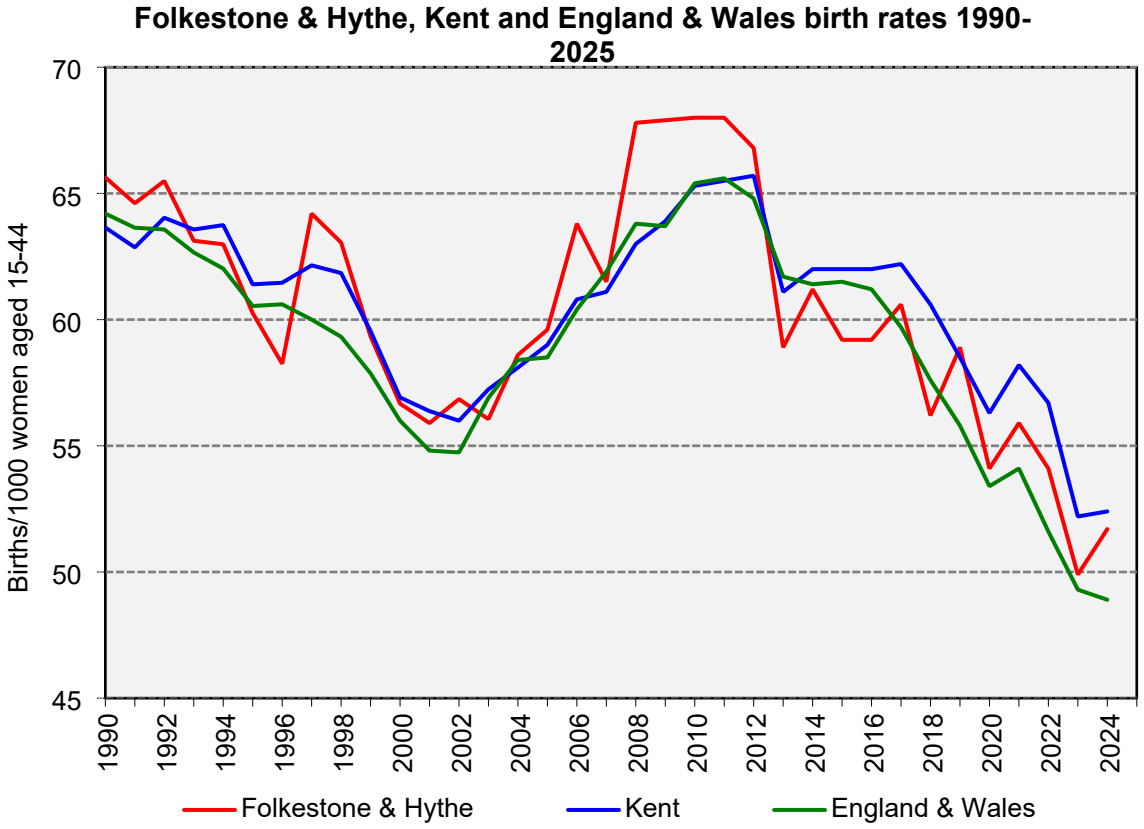
Folkestone and Hythe primary schools by planning group

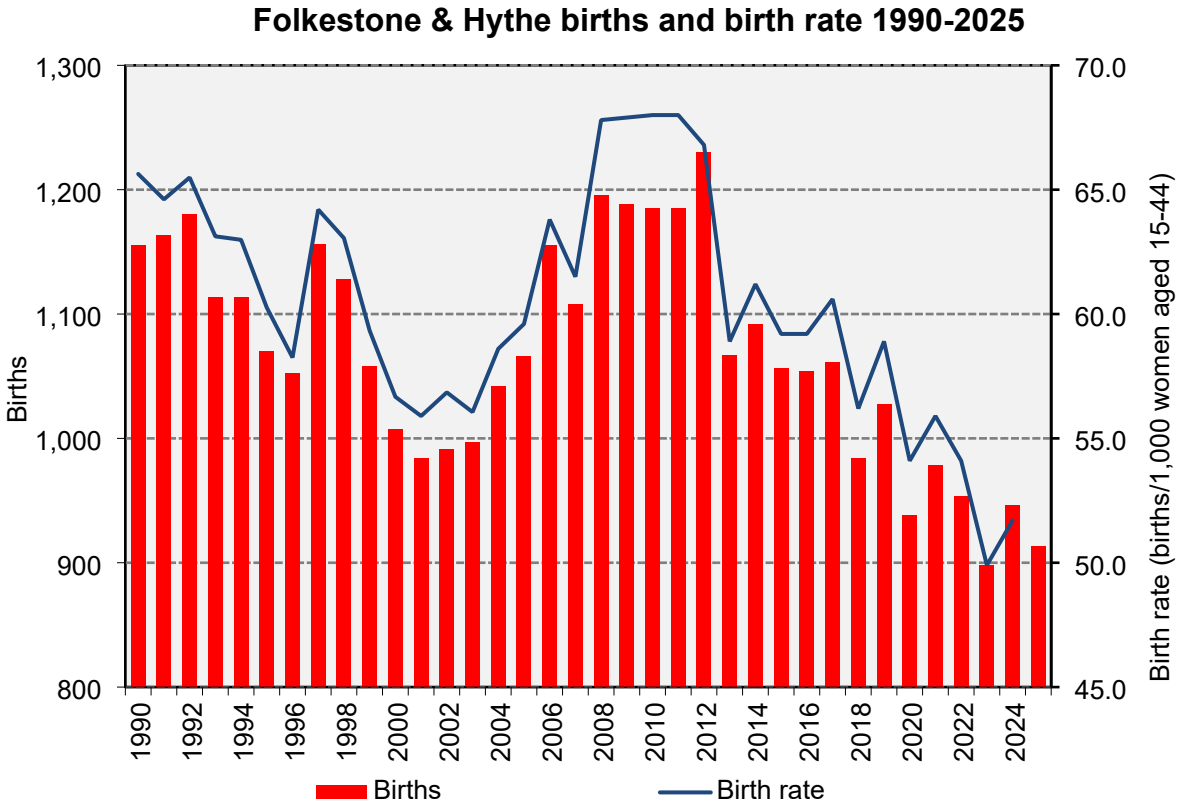
Planning Groups	School	Status
Folkestone East	Castle Hill Community Primary School	Community
	Christ Church CE Academy	Academy
	Folkestone Primary Academy	Academy
	Martello Primary School	Academy
	Mundella Primary School	Academy
	St. Eanswythe's CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Mary's CE Primary Academy (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	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Folkestone East	373	57	100	93	96	124	98	101	103	102	102	103	373
Folkestone West	255	31	29	28	3	27	22	22	24	25	26	28	255
Hawkinge	135	27	28	25	37	35	32	33	33	33	33	33	135
Folkestone Rural North	88	26	6	22	21	24	18	19	20	20	20	20	85
Hythe	150	40	23	29	17	22	22	22	23	24	24	25	135
Sellindge and Lympne	60	7	-4	-2	0	-10	-5	-6	-6	-7	-8	-9	60
Romney Marsh	165	32	39	42	50	34	45	46	46	46	47	48	165
Brookland and Brenzett	35	7	3	4	12	3	6	7	7	7	7	8	35
Folkestone & Hythe	**1,261**	**227**	**225**	**242**	**237**	**259**	**239**	**244**	**249**	**250**	**251**	**257**	**1,243**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Folkestone and Hythe Non-Selective	595	24	10	-21	-19	29	-15	60	22	25	46	28	595
Romney Marsh Non-Selective	180	-1	15	14	6	13	17	26	24	26	33	43	180
Folkestone & Hythe District Selective	330	-9	16	20	15	18	17	20	18	21	21	17	330

Primary District Commentary

Folkestone and Hythe District Analysis - Primary

Across the District we forecast around 8FE of Year R places will be surplus throughout the forecast period. 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, to provide wraparound care, or to provide more specialist SEN places and inclusion bases to meet the objectives of the SEN Reforms.

Folkestone East Planning Group

Forecasts suggest over 3FE of Year R places will be surplus throughout the plan period. This is not sustainable and as such, we will collaborate with schools to manage the high levels of surplus provision.

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 small deficit of Year R places from 2026-27 onwards. 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 to 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.

In three academic years we forecast a small 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. We will collaborate 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 throughout the Plan period.

Planned Commissioning – Folkestone and Hythe

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Folkestone West Primary					2FE new provision in Shorncliffe

7.6 Gravesham

Borough Summary

- The Gravesham birth rate has remained consistently above both the Kent and England averages, although the overall trend has been downward since the peak in 2012. In more recent years the gap between Gravesham and Kent/National averages has actually widened again.

- Gravesham primary Reception and secondary Year 7 forecasts do not include any additional housing growth that may arise from the emerging Gravesham Borough Local Plan where details have yet to be confirmed to KCC.

- Current forecasts indicate that Gravesham Borough will maintain an overall surplus of Reception places throughout the Plan period. Borough-wide surplus capacity is forecast to fluctuate between 53 and 117 places, demonstrating that sufficient primary capacity exists overall despite some localised pressures.

- Small deficits emerge within the Northfleet Planning Group from 2028/29 onwards and within Gravesend West towards the end of the forecast period. These pressures can be addressed through the relocation and expansion of Rosherville CE Primary Academy at Cable Wharf, which will increase provision from the current PAN of 20 to a full 2FE primary school over time.

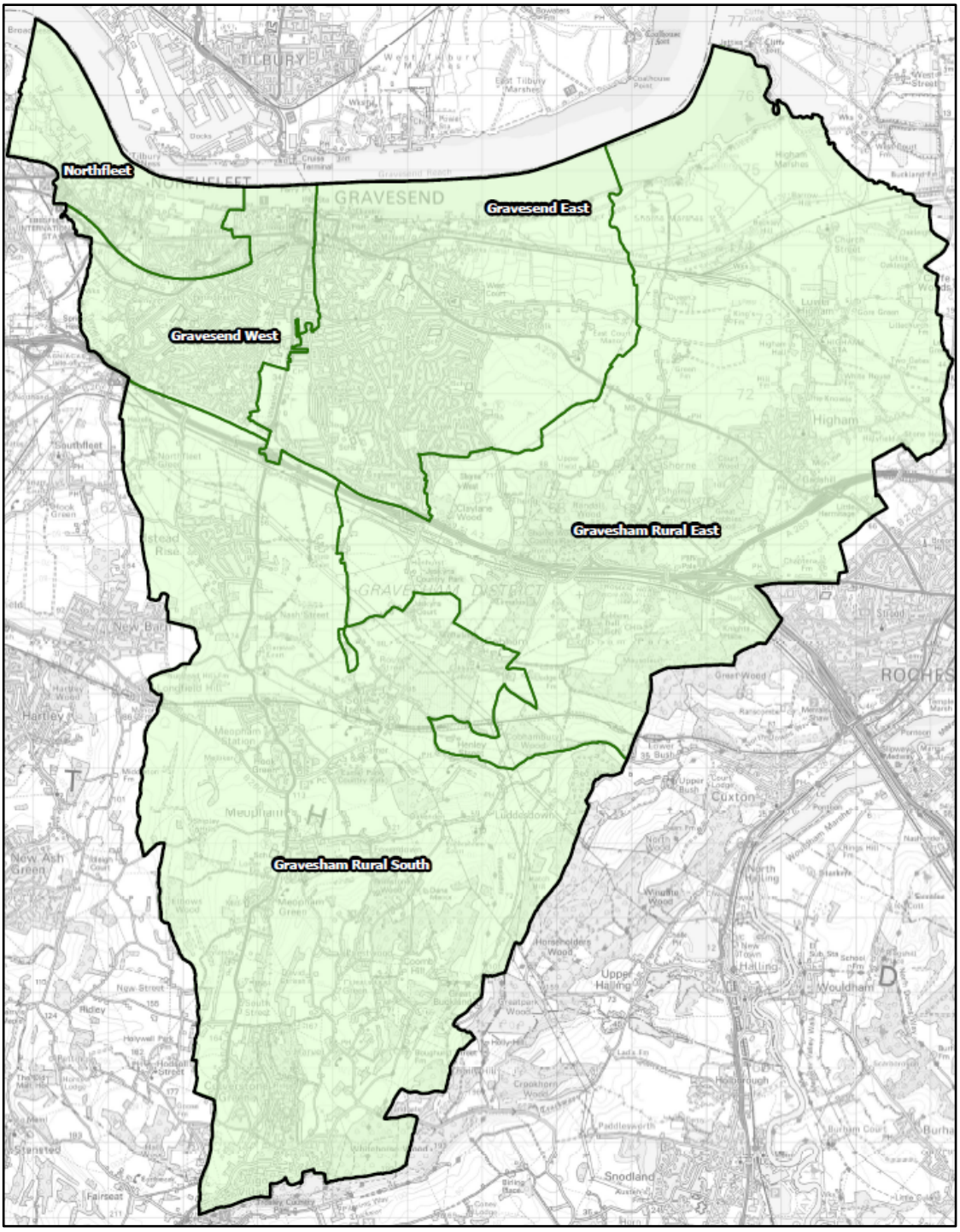
- The Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group will experience a small deficit of up to 4 places during 2027/28 and 2028/29 before returning to surplus capacity for the remainder of the Plan period. This is a marked change from previous forecasts which indicated greater pressures in the Borough.

- The Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group is forecast to remain in deficit throughout the Plan period, with shortfalls ranging from 8 places in 2026/27 to a peak of 37 places in 2033/34. Opportunities to increase grammar school capacity remain extremely limited following previous expansion projects.

- Gravesham Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan extending to 2042. Significant housing growth proposed at locations including at Ebbsfleet Central, Northfleet Embankment, Gravesend Canal Basin and the town centre will have implications for future school place planning in the urban area. Proposed allocations at in Higham and Meopham, Istead Rise and on land adjacent to the Medway border will have significant implications for school place planning in the rural areas of the Borough.

- Migration from London and neighbouring urban areas continues to influence pupil demand, particularly within secondary-age cohorts, where family movement patterns can create demand pressures that exceed trends suggested by local birth rates alone.

Gravesham Primary Schools by Planning Group

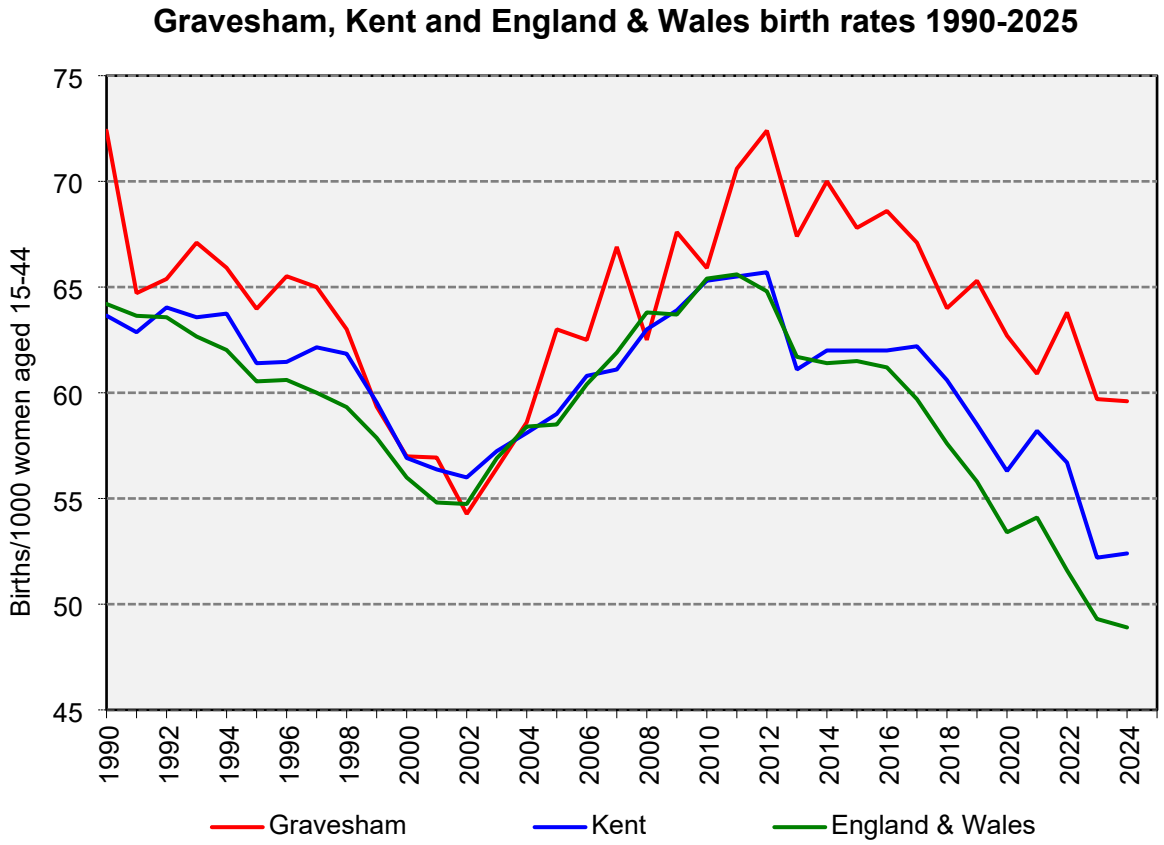


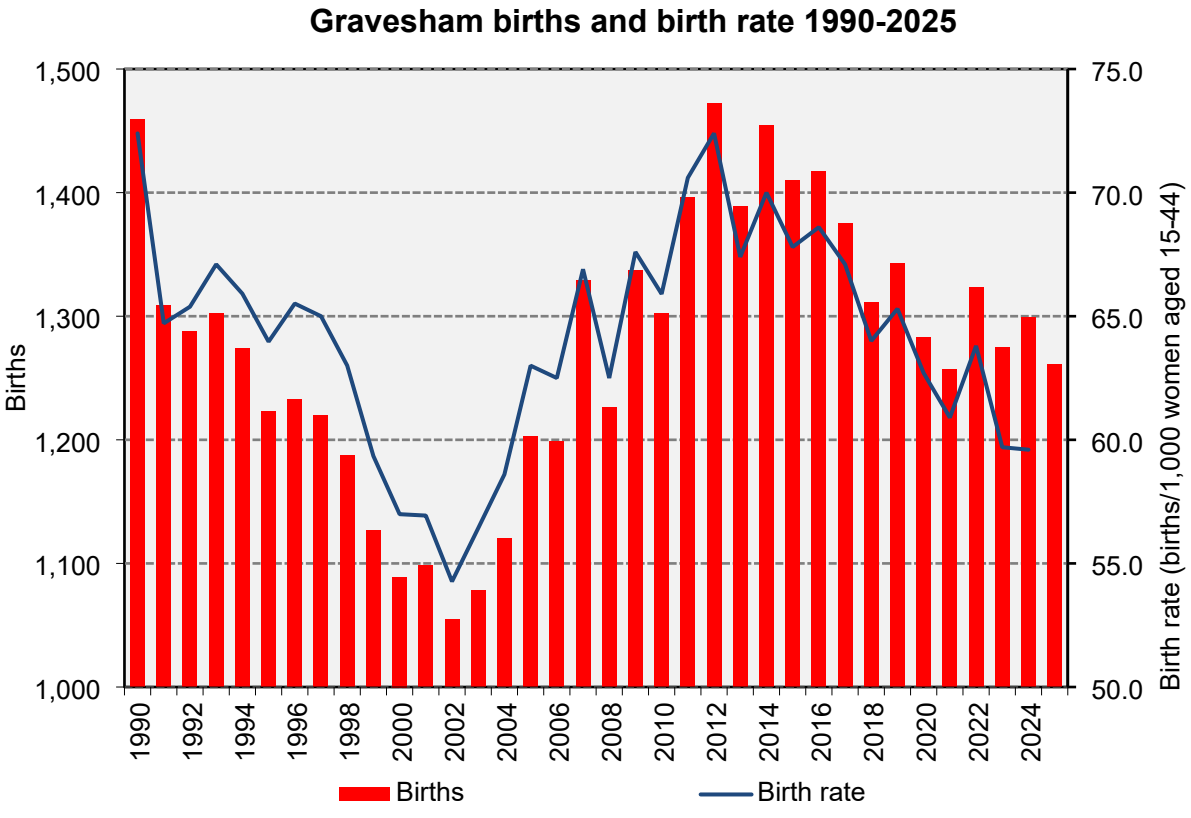
Planning Group	School	Status
Gravesend East	Chantry Community Primary School	Academy
	Holy Trinity CE Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	Kings Farm Primary School	Community
	The Riverview Academy	Academy
	Singlewell Primary School	Community
	St. John's RC Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	Tymberwood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

Planning Group	School	Status
Gravesend West	Cecil Road Primary School	Community
	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
Northfleet	Lawn Primary School	Community
	Rosherville CE Primary Academy	Academy
	St. Botolph's CE Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	St. Joseph's RC Primary School (Northfleet)	Academy
Gravesham Rural East	Higham Primary School	Community
	Shorne CE Primary School	Academy
Gravesham Rural South	Cobham Primary School	Community
	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 Forecasts

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Gravesend East	622	88	48	71	58	64	54	56	56	54	53	59	622
Gravesend West	444	12	17	19	6	19	0	1	1	-1	-7	-7	444
Northfleet	150	0	1	3	-19	-9	-11	-14	-17	-20	-24	-24	150
Gravesham Rural East	60	-1	10	8	5	12	9	10	10	10	10	11	60
Gravesham Rural South	180	13	-5	13	33	29	20	20	21	20	20	20	180
Gravesham	**1,456**	**112**	**71**	**114**	**84**	**117**	**72**	**72**	**71**	**62**	**53**	**58**	**1,456**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective	1,354	54	37	-3	-4	57	51	59	42	23	53	16	1,389
Gravesham and Longfield Selective	420	-9	-8	-23	-31	-13	-15	-18	-22	-37	-29	-35	420

Primary Borough commentary

Current forecasts for Reception-aged pupils which do not include any additional housing growth that may arise from the emerging Gravesham Borough Local Plan, indicate that Gravesham Borough will maintain an overall surplus of primary school places throughout the Plan period. Borough-wide surplus capacity is forecast to fluctuate between 53 and 117 places, reflecting a generally stable position despite localised variations in demand across the planning groups.

However, significant housing growth could still impact the Borough's education provision during the Plan period. Gravesham Borough Council is progressing a new Local Plan to 2042 which seeks to accommodate approximately 11,492 additional homes. Development in Northfleet, Gravesend Canal Basin and other regeneration sites along the Thames Riverside are expected to generate additional demand for primary school places, particularly within the western parts of the Borough.

To support this growth, KCC has already secured the relocation and expansion of Rosherville CE Primary Academy to the Cable Wharf development. The school will expand from its current PAN of 20 and ultimately provide 2FE of primary provision in the future. This additional capacity is expected to accommodate existing forecast demand arising from housing growth in Northfleet and help mitigate the small deficits forecast within both the Northfleet and Gravesend West Planning Groups later in the Plan period.

Although current forecasts indicate that sufficient primary capacity exists across Gravesham, future demand will be influenced by the pace, scale and housing mix of developments delivered through the emerging Local Plan. Should growth exceed current expectations, additional commissioning options, including the expansion of existing schools or the safeguarding of land for future education provision, would need to be considered.

Gravesend West

The Gravesend West Planning Group currently maintains a broadly balanced position throughout most of the Plan period.

The planned relocation and expansion of Rosherville CE Primary Academy at Cable Wharf will provide additional capacity within the neighbouring Northfleet Planning Group and is expected to provide wider flexibility across western Gravesham. This additional provision will help mitigate the small forecast deficits in Gravesend West and support demand generated by both existing communities and new housing developments.

Furthermore, Shears Green Infant School previously reduced its PAN from 120 to 90 places in response to lower levels of demand. This provides an opportunity to reinstate capacity should pupil numbers increase beyond current expectations. Consequently, KCC does not anticipate the need for additional permanent primary provision within the planning group.

Northfleet Planning Group

The Northfleet Planning Group forecasts indicate that Northfleet will experience the greatest level of pressure within the Gravesham primary sector. Following a balanced position in 2025/26, the planning group moves into deficit from 2028/29 onwards.

These pressures are largely attributable to continued housing growth within and around Northfleet, particularly on Northfleet Embankment and other riverside regeneration sites. Together, these developments are expected to generate additional demand for primary school places throughout the Plan period.

To address this demand, KCC secured the relocation and expansion of Rosherville CE Primary Academy to the Cable Wharf development. The school will expand from its current PAN of 20 and will ultimately operate as a full 2FE primary school in this Plan period. The additional capacity created through this project is expected to accommodate forecast demand arising from both existing communities and planned housing growth, while also providing flexibility to support neighbouring planning groups.

Secondary Borough Commentary

There is one selective and one non-selective planning group that cover the Gravesham area. See Appendix 11.2 for the secondary planning group maps.

Current forecasts for Year 7-aged pupils which do not include any additional housing growth that may arise from the emerging Gravesham Borough Local Plan where details have yet to be confirmed to KCC, indicate secondary provision remains more constrained than the primary sector; however, current forecasts present a more balanced position than previous years.

While falling birth rates are beginning to influence future secondary demand, current Year 7 forecasts continue to be affected by larger historic birth cohorts and patterns of inward migration across North Kent.

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.

Current forecasts indicate a very slight deficit within the planning group, with a shortfall of up to 4 places projected for two consecutive years from 2027/28. The planning group then returns to having a surplus of places. Therefore, demand is expected to be managed through pupil movement across planning group boundaries and utilising available capacity elsewhere within the wider North Kent secondary education system.

Looking beyond the current forecast period, KCC will need to consider the implications of planned growth arising from the emerging Gravesham Local Plan. During consultation on the Local Plan, KCC advised Gravesham Borough Council that any significant new housing growth would need to be supported by the identification of land for additional non-selective secondary school provision. KCC will continue to review forecasts and assess future capacity requirements as the Local Plan progresses and the scale and location of developments becomes clearer.

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. Both schools have previously been expanded and now operate at or close to their practical capacity. Collectively these two schools provide 420 Year 7 places annually and serve a wider catchment extending beyond Dartford Borough.

Forecasts indicate a relatively small but continuing deficit of selective school places throughout the Plan period. The shortfall is expected to increase from around 0.5FE (8 places) in 2026/27 to approximately 1.5FE (37 places) by 2033/34. Demand is projected to remain above 1FE for the remainder of the forecast period.

Following previous expansion projects, opportunities for further growth at the existing grammar

schools are now extremely limited. As a result, forecast demand cannot currently be accommodated through additional expansion of existing provision within the planning group. Therefore, any response to this pressure must be considered within the context of the wider North Kent selective system rather than within a single borough/district boundary.

Should significant additional selective capacity be required in the future, the most viable option would be the development of satellite grammar school provision linked to existing grammar schools, as current Government legislation prohibits the introduction of new selective schools. However, delivering such provision would be challenging. Key constraints include identifying suitable boys' and girls' grammar schools willing to operate satellite provision, securing an appropriate site, obtaining DfE, and securing the significant capital investment required. Based on the cost of delivering a new 6FE secondary school, the creation of a 3FE boys' grammar satellite and a 3FE girls' grammar satellite would be expected to require investment of approximately £40 million plus, in addition to the cost of acquiring the necessary land. Provision on a smaller scale is unlikely to be financially viable for a host grammar school to operate.

Given these constraints, 1FE of additional selective commissioning is currently proposed across the Gravesham and Longfield Selective and North West Kent Selective Planning Groups by 2028/29. KCC will continue to monitor demand across both selective planning groups and review any opportunities to improve access to selective education where feasible. However, recognising the practical and financial challenges associated with expanding grammar school provision, the Council's primary responsibility remains to ensure that there are sufficient secondary school places available overall to meet demand, regardless of school designation. Consequently, where additional capacity is required in the future, KCC will seek to ensure that sufficient places are available, even where that provision is non-selective.

Planned Commissioning – Gravesham

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Northfleet		1FE Permanent Expansion Rosherville CE Primary Academy			
North West Kent Selective and Gravesham and Longfield Selective		1FE permanent expansion of an existing school			

7.7 Maidstone

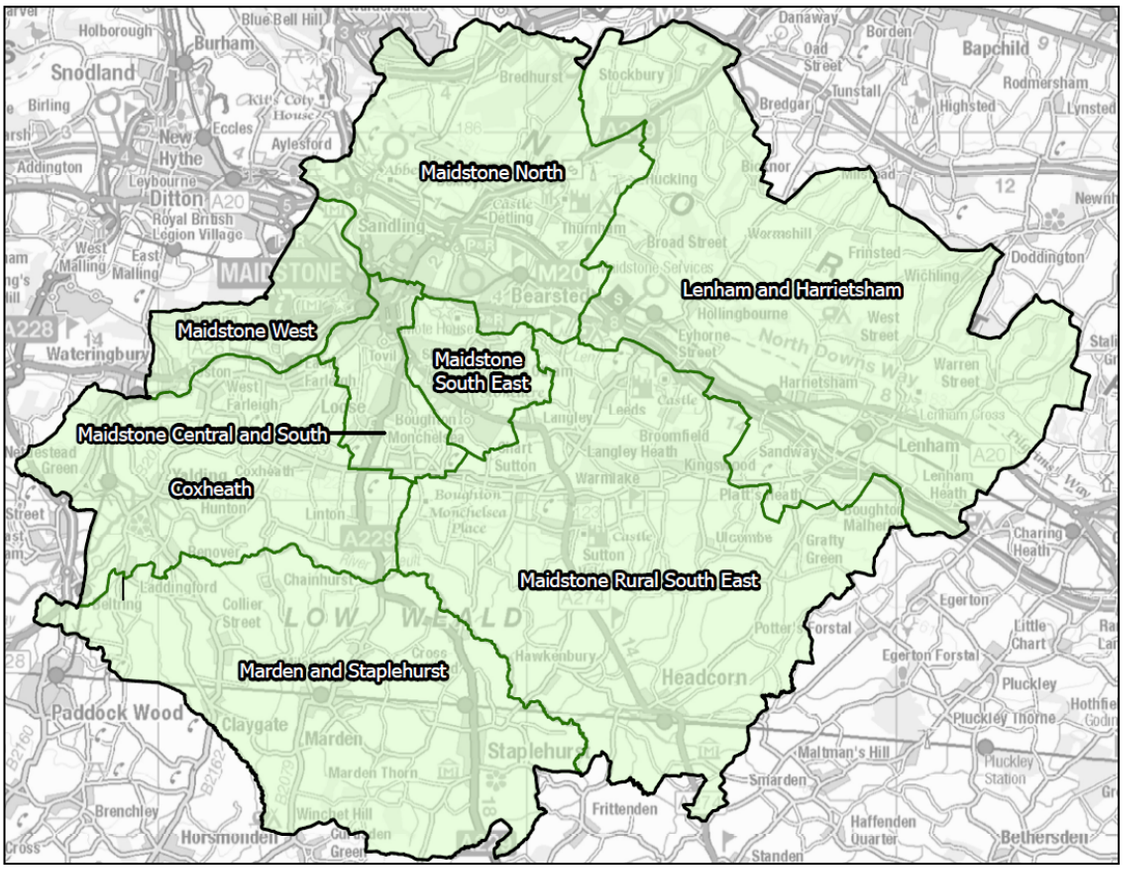
Borough commentary

- The birth rate in Maidstone dropped sharply in 2019 and 2020, but then recovered significantly in 2021, before dropping back again in the subsequent years. However, it remains above the county and national averages. The number of births in Maidstone has been consistently high over the past three years.

- 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



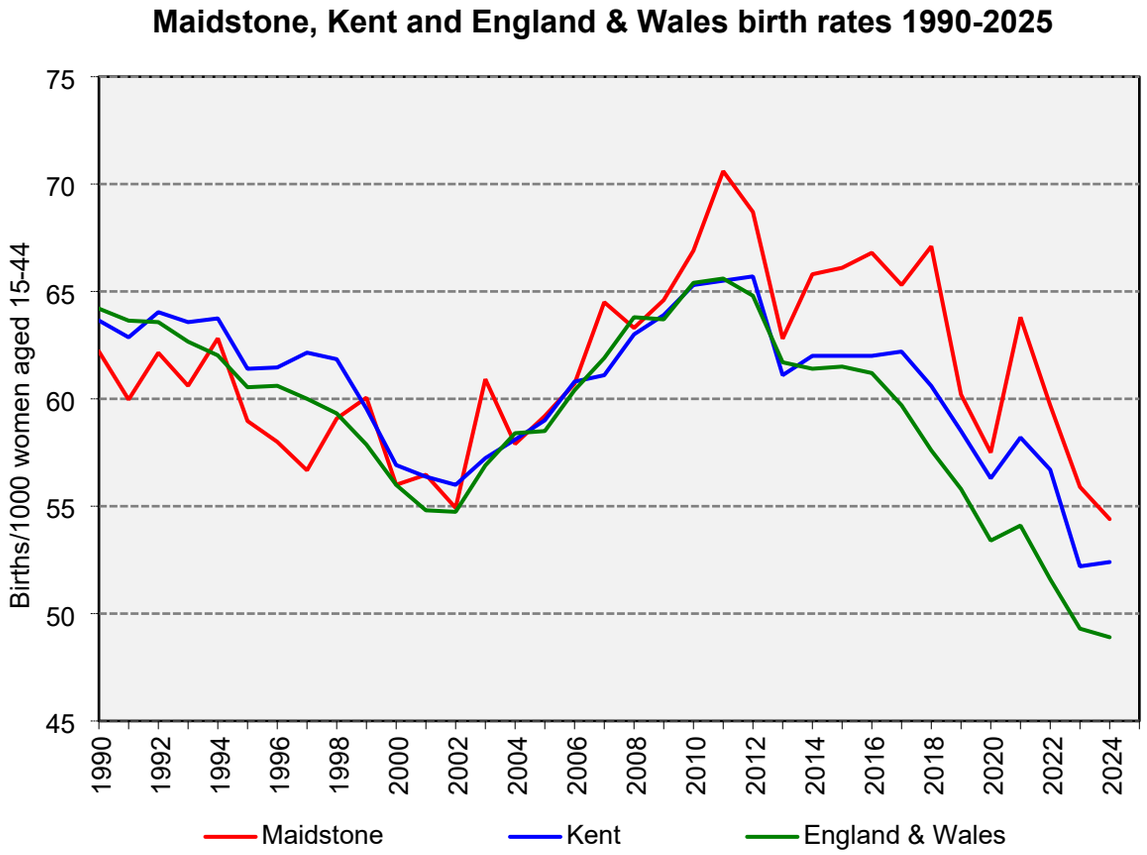
Maidstone Primary Schools by Planning Group

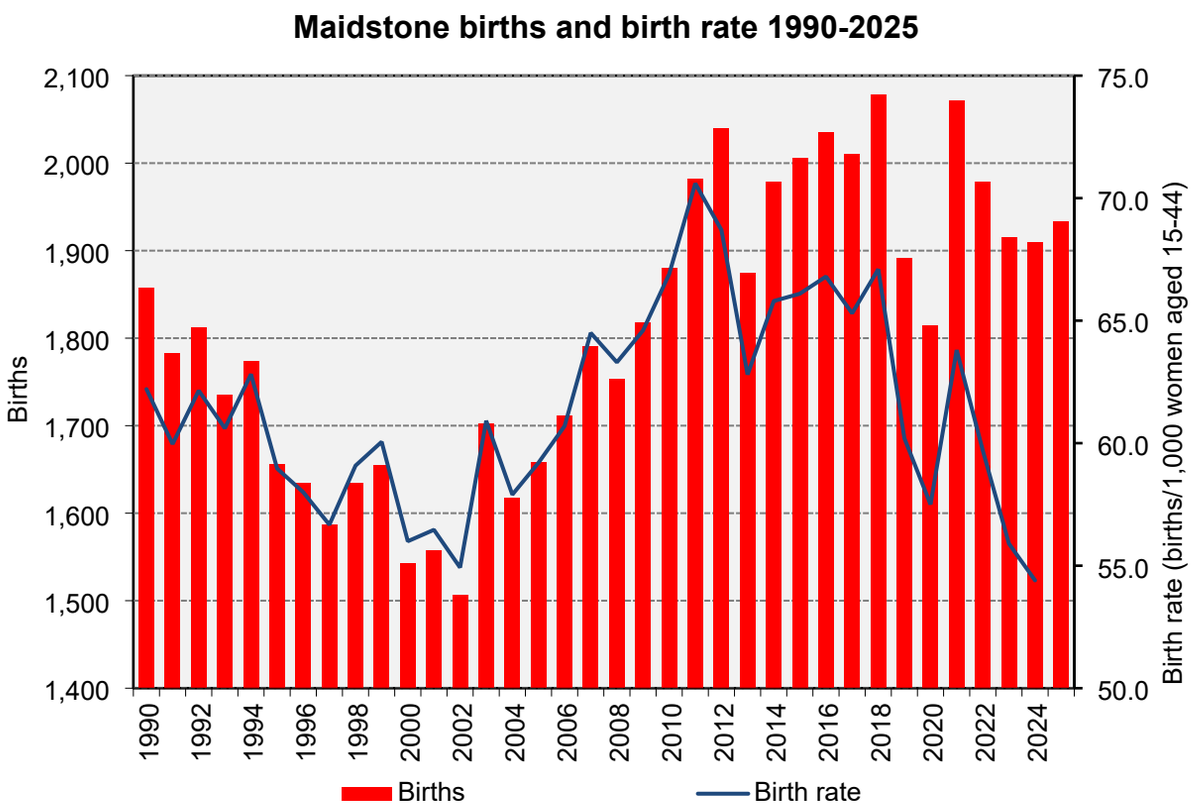
Planning Groups	School	Status
Maidstone Central and South	Archbishop Courtenay CE Primary School	Academy
	Boughton Monchelsea Primary School	Community
	Loose Primary School	Community
	South Borough Primary School	Academy
	Tiger Primary School	Free
Maidstone North	Bearsted Primary Academy	Free
	Bredhurst 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 Catholic Primary School	Academy
	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	Academy
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 Forecasts

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Maidstone Central and South	285	20	13	13	9	-13	-6	-7	-6	-6	-2	4	285
Maidstone North	530	77	44	73	70	74	62	61	62	63	67	72	530
Maidstone West	460	39	3	28	57	36	24	27	33	40	50	61	460
Maidstone South East	327	24	-18	-2	-3	-15	-11	-12	-11	-9	-5	1	327
Lenham and Harrietsham	118	17	17	20	20	24	17	15	14	12	12	12	118
Coxheath	129	9	2	-1	7	18	6	6	7	6	7	8	129
Marden and Staplehurst	165	8	24	19	27	33	25	25	26	27	28	29	165
Maidstone Rural South East	140	31	23	13	30	21	20	18	17	17	18	19	140
Maidstone	**2,154**	**225**	**109**	**162**	**217**	**178**	**137**	**135**	**142**	**150**	**174**	**206**	**2,154**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Maidstone Non-Selective	1,590	74	-34	-64	-97	-124	-64	-38	30	-69	-10	24	1,560
Maidstone and Malling Selective	815	14	31	6	-9	-30	-1	-2	27	-16	18	23	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 Central and South and the South East 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
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
There is a 1 place deficit forecast for 2027-28 which we anticipate can be accommodated within neighbouring planning groups.

Maidstone South East Planning Group
There are forecast deficits throughout the Plan period that range from -2 and -3 in 2027-28 and 2028-29 respectively, to -15 in 2029-30. 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.

Maidstone Central and South
There are small deficits forecast from 2029-30. 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 11.2 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 has growing deficits from -34 places in 2026-27 which increases by circa 1 FE per year to a peak of -124 deficit in 2029-30. The deficit then reduces until 2031-32 and subsequently fluctuates between surplus and deficit for the remainder of the Plan period.

In recent years, schools within this planning group have admitted over PAN, creating additional capacity. We anticipate that some of the deficit can be accommodated via existing schools admitting over or by temporary bulge provision commissioned by the County Council. However, up to 1 FE of permanent provision within the existing Secondary schools will be needed to meet the demand for places from 2027-28.

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 and 2027-28, albeit only a 6 place surplus in 2027-28; however, from 2028-29 there will be fluctuating deficits. In recent years additional places have been provided in the planning group via the expansion of Maidstone Grammar School for Girls and consequently the only spare capacity is for girl's selective provision. To provide sufficient places across the Plan period and ensure there is equality of the places between girls and boys selective provision, we have commissioned the permanent expansion of Oakwood Park Grammar School by 1 FE from September 2027.

Planned Commissioning – Maidstone

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Maidstone West					New 2FE School on East of Hermitage Lane
Maidstone Non-Selective Planning Group	Up to 1 FE permanent expansion of existing school Up to 30 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	Up to 60 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	And Up to 90 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	Up to 30 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	
Maidstone and Malling Selective Planning Group	1 FE permanent expansion of existing school				

7.8 Sevenoaks

District Summary

- Births in Sevenoaks have fallen from a peak of 1,383 in 2012 to 1,092 in 2023, a reduction of 21.0%. Whilst a small increase was recorded in 2024 (1,109 births), the overall trend remains downward and is reflected in a lower demand for Reception intakes across much of the district. The Sevenoaks birth rate remains above both Kent and England averages, although the gap has narrowed considerably since 2021.

- There remains a surplus of Year R places across the district throughout the Plan period. District-wide surplus capacity is forecast to increase from 178 places in 2025/26 to a peak of 236 places in 2029/30 before reducing progressively to 32 places (1FE) by 2035/36. Deficits are forecast in Sevenoaks Rural North from 2028/29, Edenbridge from 2031/32 and the Sevenoaks Planning Group from 2032/33. These forecast deficits emerge despite the significant decline in births recorded across the district in recent years and are expected to be driven primarily by consented residential development and housing growth and changes in migration between administrative boundaries, rather than underlying demographic change. At present, no additional primary provision is proposed until 2031 at the earliest.

- The Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Secondary Planning Group is forecast to experience a small deficit of Year 7 places during the early years of the Plan period, peaking at 24 places (1FE) in 2027/28, before returning to surplus from 2031/32 onwards. KCC will seek up to 1FE of temporary additional capacity from September 2027, subject to annual review of demand.

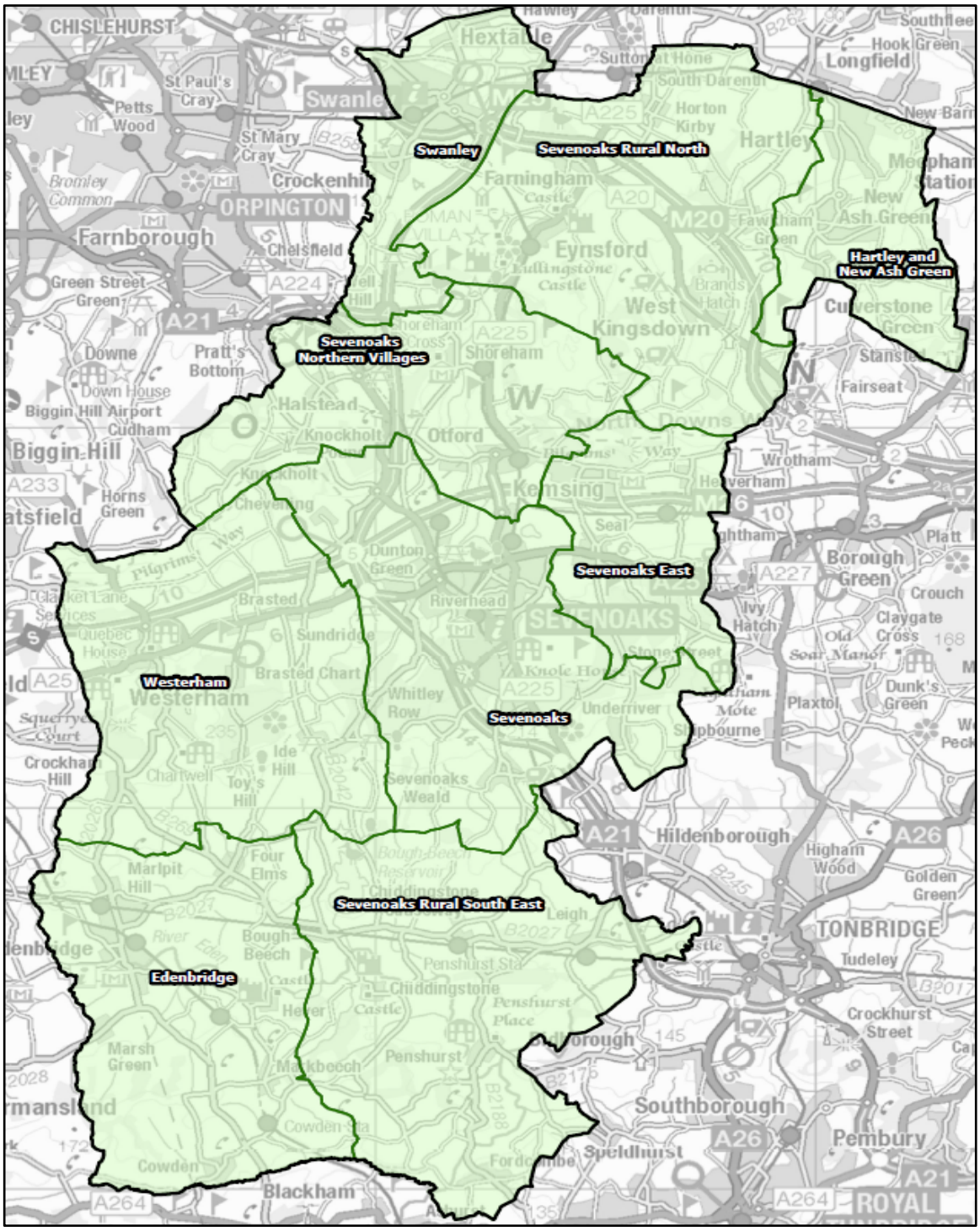
- For all of the Plan period in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group, there is a surplus in Year 7 places. The surplus is forecast to fluctuate between a 1FE to 6.5FE. However, house building in Dartford Borough continues at pace and not all planned sites have yet been consented and therefore not included in the current projections.

- The West Kent Selective Planning Group is also forecast to experience short-term pressure during the early years of the Plan period and there may be a need for temporary provision.. Current forecasts do not indicate a need for permanent additional secondary provision, although demand will continue to be monitored closely, particularly in light of the emerging Sevenoaks Local Plan and associated housing growth proposals.

- Sevenoaks District Council is progressing a new Local Plan which proposes approximately 17,460 dwellings across the district to 2042. Key strategic allocations include Pedham Place near Swanley, where around 2,600 homes are proposed alongside education and community infrastructure. Other significant growth locations are in and around Sevenoaks Town and Edenbridge.

- As the Local Plan has not yet been adopted, the timing, scale and distribution of development remain subject to the statutory plan-making process. Consequently, current pupil forecasts should be considered within the context of this emerging growth agenda.

Map of the Sevenoaks Primary Planning Groups



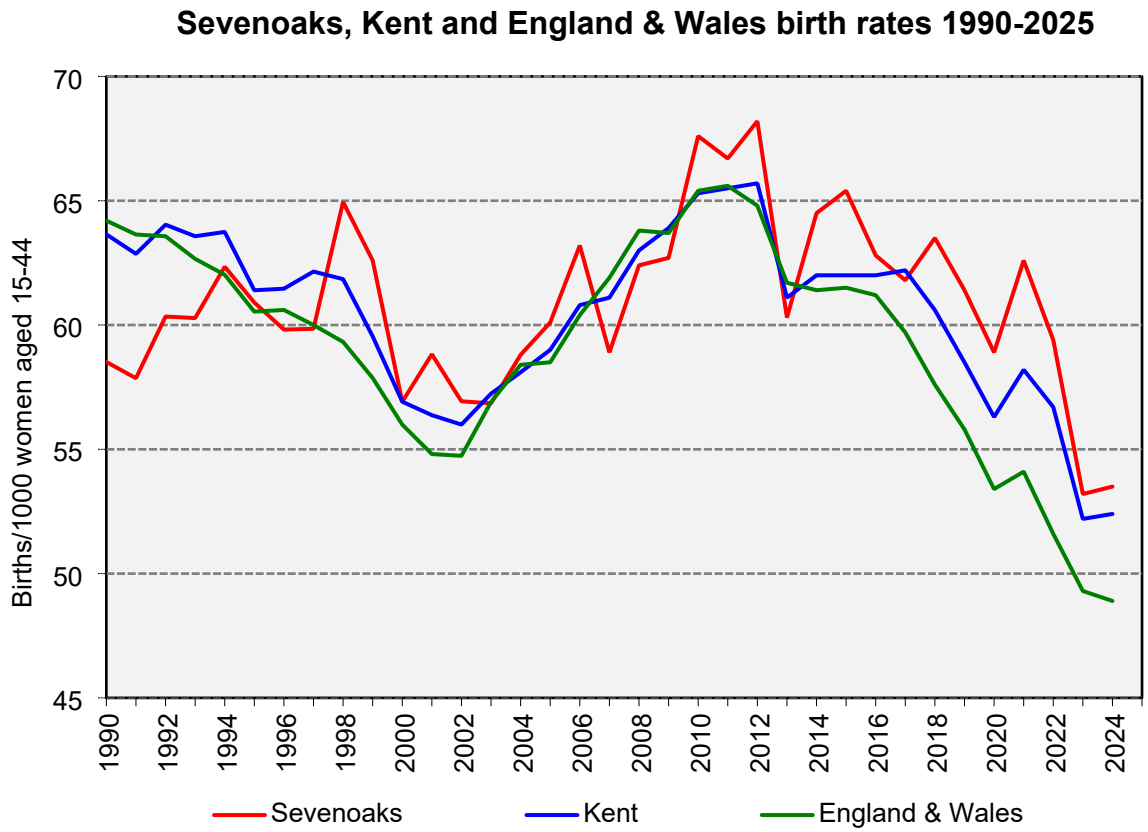
Sevenoaks Primary Schools by Planning Group

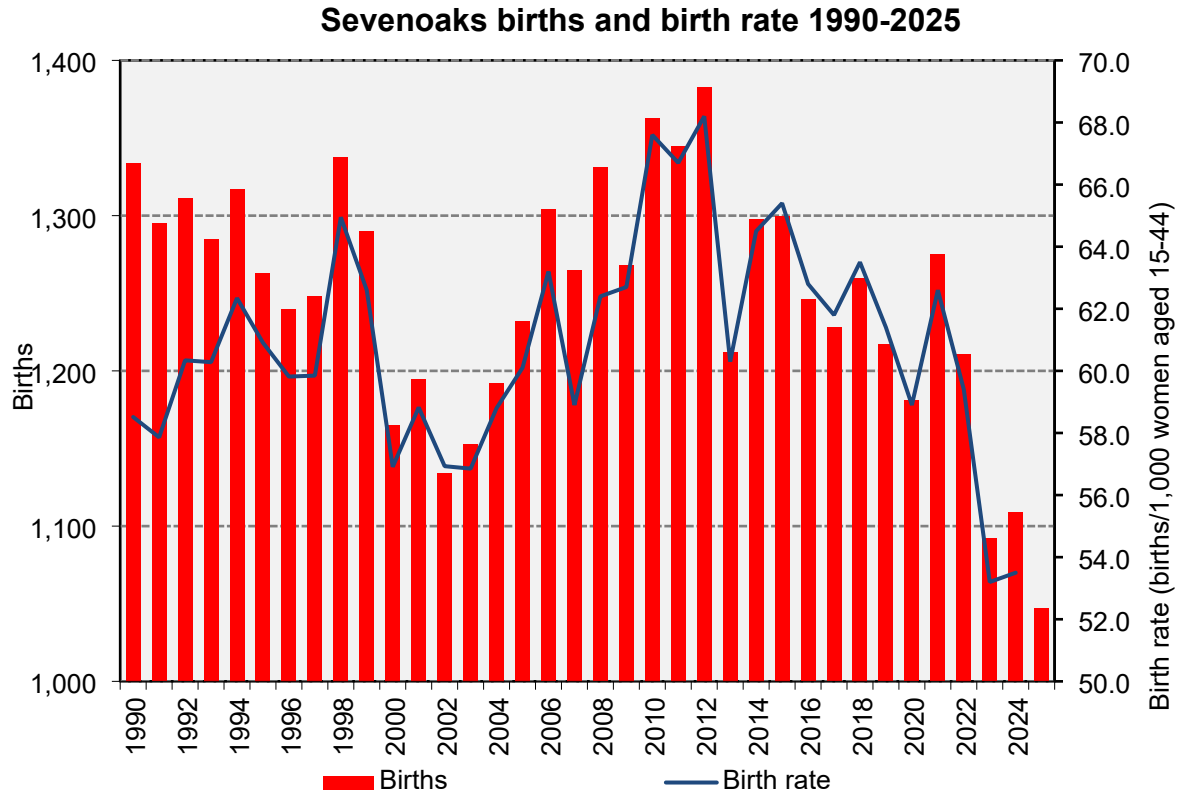
Planning group	School	Status
Swanley	Crockenhill Primary School	Community
	Downsview Community Primary School	Community
	Hextable Primary School	Community
	High Firs Primary School	Community
	Horizon Primary Academy	Academy
	St. Bartholomew's RC Primary School	Academy
	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Swanley)	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	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Swanley	300	22	13	39	35	56	29	26	22	22	23	25	300
Sevenoaks Rural North	120	2	0	4	-6	7	-4	-5	-7	-7	-7	-6	105
Hartley and New Ash Green	150	1	20	14	4	21	11	10	9	7	6	6	150
Sevenoaks Northern Villages	100	29	35	38	30	35	33	31	29	28	27	27	100
Sevenoaks East	102	19	22	28	13	27	22	22	21	21	21	21	102
Sevenoaks	390	66	43	57	45	37	15	4	-19	-40	-55	-61	360
Westerham	87	6	19	13	10	13	11	9	7	6	6	7	87
Edenbridge	105	5	7	4	3	9	0	-4	-10	-12	-11	-11	105
Sevenoaks Rural South East	83	28	24	29	31	30	27	26	25	24	25	25	83
Sevenoaks	**1,437**	**178**	**184**	**225**	**165**	**236**	**144**	**120**	**76**	**48**	**36**	**32**	**1,392**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
NS - Dartford and Swanley	1,410	100	29	125	153	161	173	197	172	160	203	205	1,590
NS - Sevenoaks and Borough Green	610	-16	-22	-24	-16	-19	-9	25	2	15	69	35	610
SG - West Kent	1,264	-19	-31	-54	-27	-28	3	30	47	61	126	102	1,264

Primary District commentary

Current forecasts for Reception-aged pupils, which do not include any additional housing growth that may arise from the emerging Sevenoaks District Local Plan, which has not yet been consented, indicate no additional primary capacity is required before 2032.

The level of surplus varies between planning groups and is forecast to reduce over time. Several planning groups move towards a more balanced position, and deficits begin to emerge in Sevenoaks Rural North, Edenbridge and the Sevenoaks Planning Group towards the end of the forecast period.

Consented developments at Fort Halstead, Sevenoaks Quarry and Four Elms Road in Edenbridge are expected to contribute in generating additional demand for primary school places in the future. Current forecasts indicate that this demand can be accommodated within existing provision in the medium term, although the position will be kept under review as housing delivery progresses.

KCC will continue to monitor pupil forecasts, housing delivery and the progression of the Local Plan. In the first instance, where additional capacity is required, the Council will seek to maximise the use of existing surplus built capacity and, where appropriate, the use of surplus places in neighbouring planning groups. Should demand exceed available capacity, options may include the expansion of existing schools or the delivery of new school provision.

Sevenoaks Planning Group

The Sevenoaks Planning Group contains the largest concentration of primary provision within the district and is forecast to experience the most significant change during the Plan period. Although the planning group begins with a substantial surplus of 66 places in 2025/26, this gradually reduces as forecast pupil numbers increase, moving into deficit from 2032/33 and reaching a projected shortfall of 61 places by 2035/36. This represents just over 2FE of pressure by the end of the forecast period.

Secondary District Commentary

Current forecasts for Year 7-aged pupils, which do not include any additional housing growth that may arise from the emerging Sevenoaks Local Plan, that is not yet consented, indicate secondary provision is broadly sufficient to meet forecast demand across the Plan period. Short-term pressures are forecast in some planning groups, but these can be managed through temporary commissioning activity where required.

There are three non-selective and two selective secondary planning groups that are fully or partially within Sevenoaks District. See Appendix 11.2 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. It is clear forecasts will change significantly in the future once the New Sevenoaks Local Plan is adopted.

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, Leigh Academy Ebbsfleet, Leigh UTC Dartford, 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.

Forecasts indicate that the planning group will maintain a relatively high level of surplus capacity throughout the Plan period, with no requirement for additional secondary school commissioning. Surplus places are expected to increase from 125 places in 2027/28 to more than 200 places by 2034/35. The planning group is therefore well placed to accommodate forecast demand arising from existing housing commitments and from developments still to be consented.

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. Collectively these three schools provide 610 Year 7 places annually.

Forecasts indicate a small short-term deficit, peaking at 24 places in 2027/28, before the planning group returns to surplus from 2031/32 onwards. To manage this pressure, KCC will seek up to 1FE of temporary additional capacity from September 2027 for up to three years, subject to annual review of demand.

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 deficit of 31 places in 2026-27 that rises to 54 in 2027-28 and then returns to just under 1FE for 2028-29 and 2029-30. 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 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Sevenoaks					2FE permanent expansion of an existing school
Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places		
West Kent Selective	Up to 60 temporary places	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.

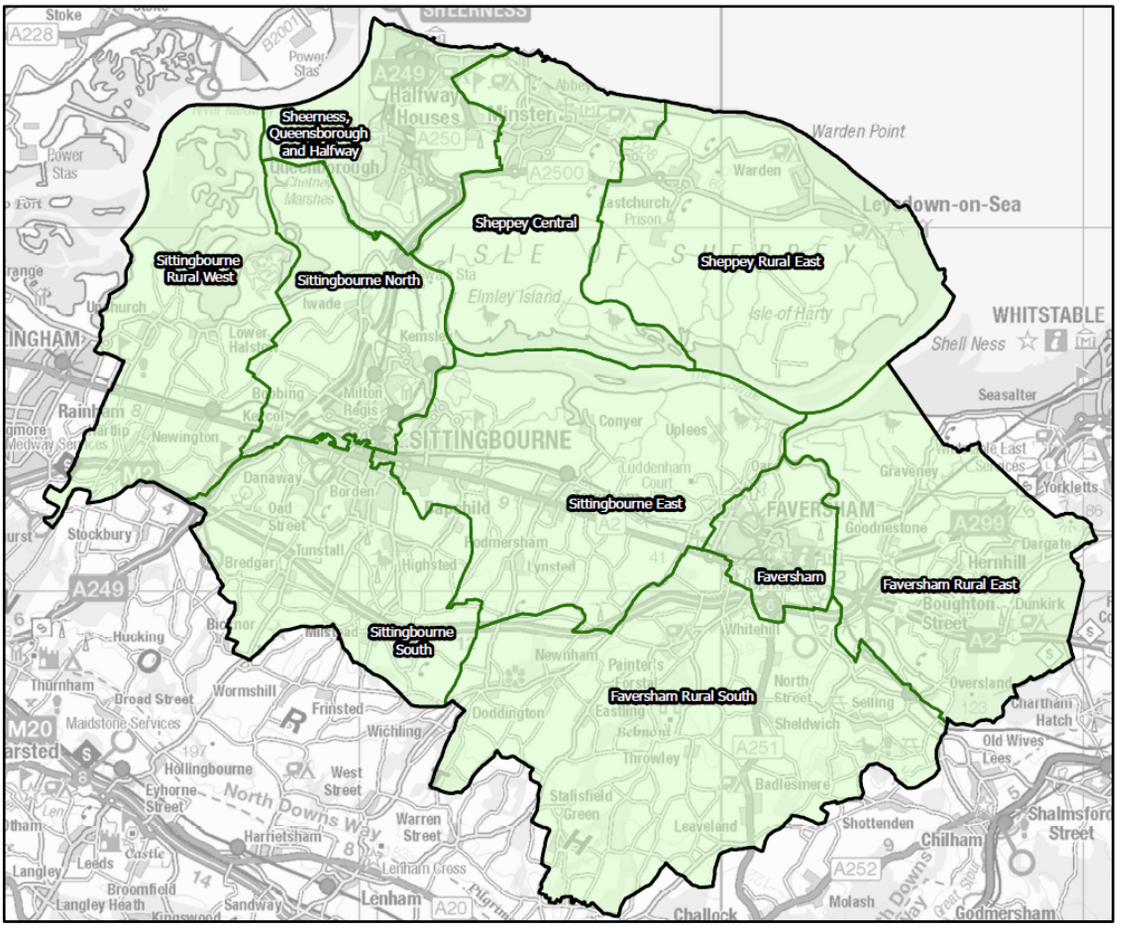
- We forecast surplus primary places across the District throughout the plan period however there are variances across the different planning groups.

- 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 non-selective planning group. Whilst Faversham non-selective and Sittingbourne and Sheppey selective planning groups 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.

- Swale Borough Council is in the process of reviewing their current local plan and have agreed the Local Development Scheme (LDS) agreed with members on the 30th July 2025. The LDS is the formal document that sets out the timetable for the Council's Local Plan Review and in line with the document, a draft Plan Regulation 18 consultation was carried out in the first quarter of 2026, with a Regulation 19 consultation taking place in the third quarter of 2026 and submission of the Council's Local Plan for examination at the end of the fourth quarter in 2026.

Map of the Swale Primary Planning Groups



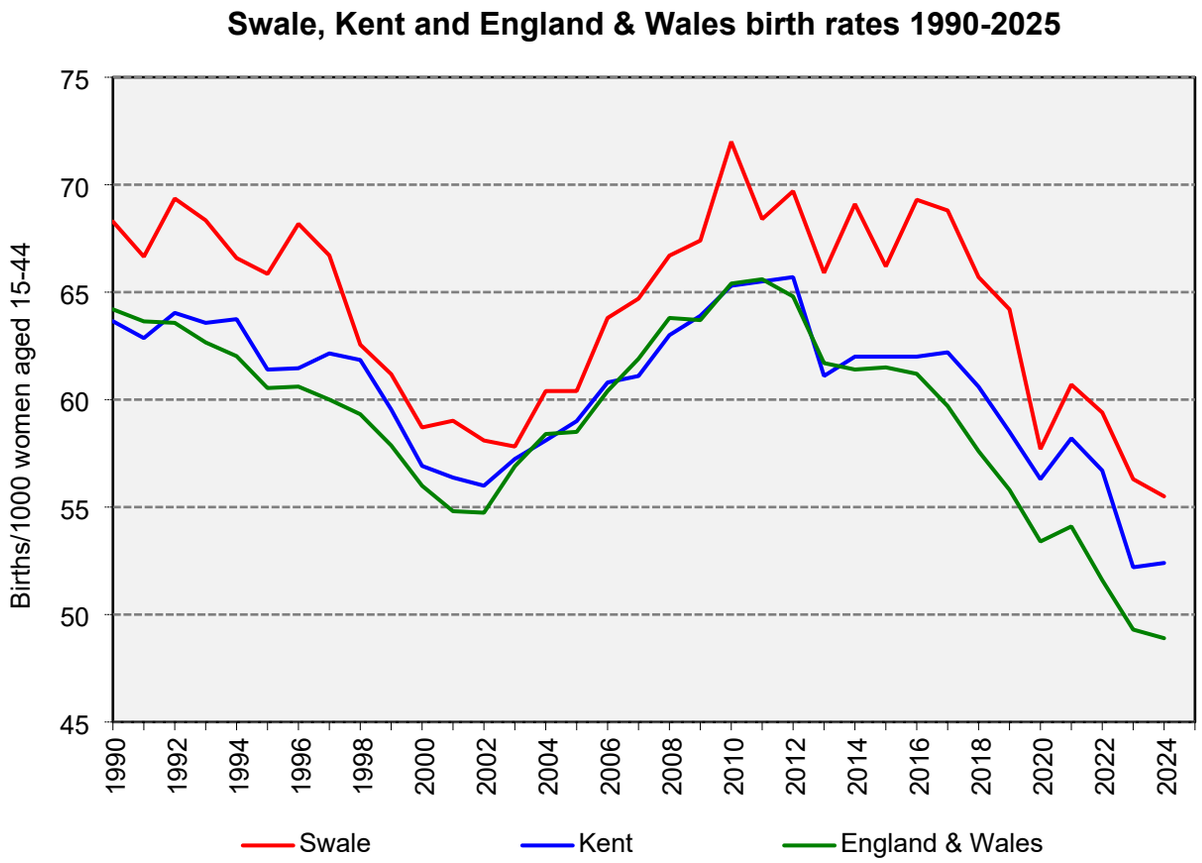
Swale Primary Schools by Planning Group

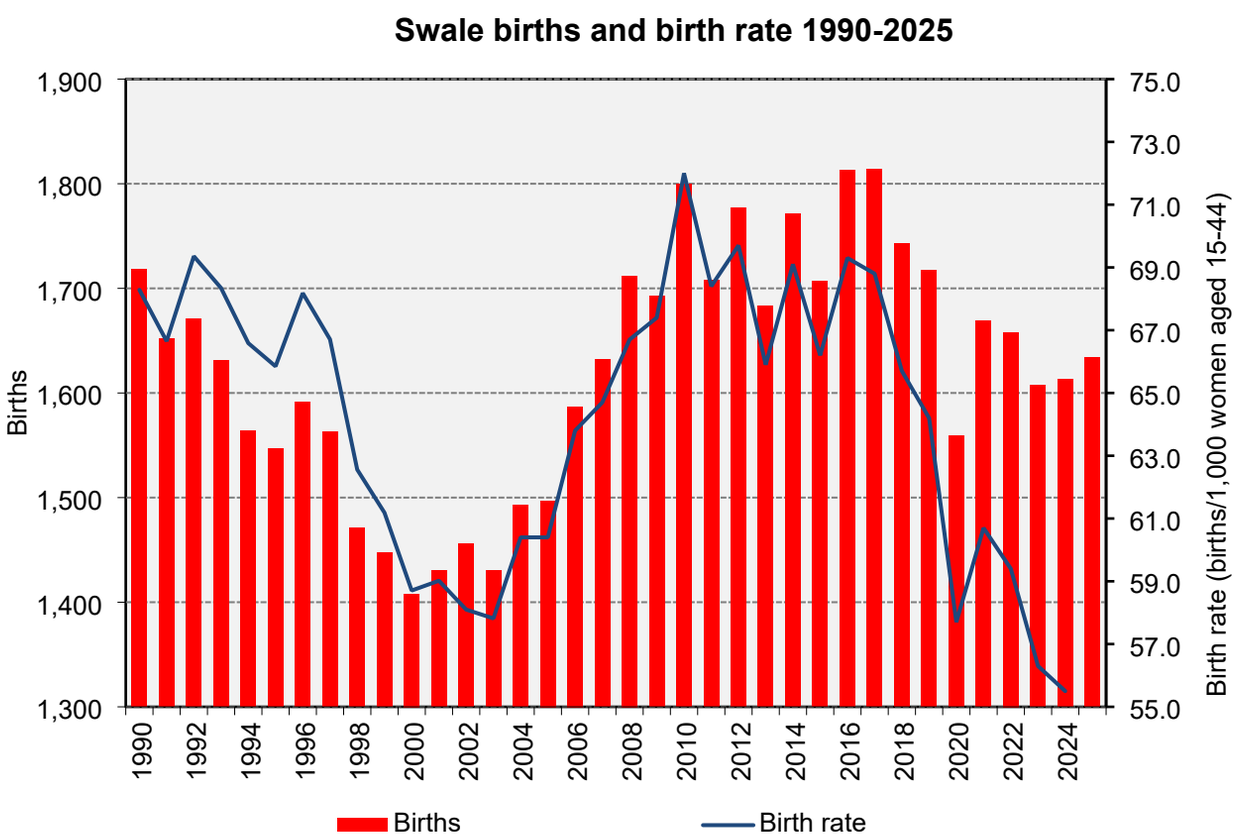
Planning groups	School	Status
Faversham	Bysing Wood Primary School	Academy
	Davington Primary School	Community
	Ethelbert Road Primary School	Community
	Luddenham School	Academy
	Ospringe CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Mary of Charity CE Primary School	Academy
Faversham Rural East	Boughton-under-Blean 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
	Teynham Parochial CE Primary School	Academy
Sittingbourne South	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	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Faversham	240	36	30	-21	-34	-25	-18	-22	-23	-22	-19	-19	210
Faversham Rural East	75	3	-7	-3	-4	-3	-3	-3	-3	-2	-2	-2	75
Faversham Rural South	60	7	8	4	10	5	6	6	6	6	6	7	60
Sittingbourne East	255	24	57	68	58	68	60	59	59	59	62	63	285
Sittingbourne South	305	10	4	31	3	10	-4	-9	-15	-22	-24	-25	305
Sittingbourne North	330	57	20	47	58	38	43	44	46	47	50	51	330
Sittingbourne Rural West	105	3	11	-8	12	5	0	-1	-4	-5	-5	-5	105
Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway	330	71	30	13	50	23	37	41	46	50	56	57	300
Sheppey Central	210	37	38	31	24	26	24	20	19	18	18	17	210
Sheppey Rural East	60	24	12	14	24	19	17	17	16	15	15	14	60
Swale	**1,970**	**272**	**203**	**176**	**199**	**167**	**163**	**150**	**146**	**144**	**155**	**158**	**1,940**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Faversham Non-Selective	210	49	31	13	25	27	12	28	14	13	0	-7	210
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	360	-1	-12	-21	-12	-17	-15	14	40	28	17	42	330
Sittingbourne Non-Selective	765	-12	13	-70	-52	-38	-52	12	1	-26	27	27	765
Canterbury and Faversham Selective	645	-18	-3	-51	-32	-21	-26	6	-15	-22	-11	-5	645
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	300	30	35	10	19	14	15	37	35	25	42	41	300

Primary District Commentary

Forecasts indicate that across Swale district there will be surplus capacity for Year R throughout the plan period. The surplus for Year R fluctuates throughout the forecast period from 5.8FE surplus for 2027/28 to 5FE for 2031/32 with significant variations across the different Planning Groups.

Faversham Planning Group
Forecasts indicate from 2027/2028 a pressure on places for Year R of 0.7FE, which is sustained throughout the plan period. This is due to Bysing Wood Primary School reducing its PAN to address the smaller cohorts currently entering school. The capacity has not been lost so this can be reinstated as and when required. 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. Land has been secured through the local plan process for a new 3FE primary school to support the places required for the consented Duchy of Cornwall housing development of 2,500 new homes in Faversham.

Sittingbourne South planning Group
Forecasts indicate a decreasing surplus of places across the planning period. From 2030, the forecasts indicate a slight pressure. Initially this can be met through surplus capacity in adjoining planning groups, however as new housing developments are built out and occupied, a new 2FE primary school will be established to service the need from the Wises Lane housing development.

Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway, Sheppey Central and Sheppey Rural East Planning Groups
Forecasts indicate an ongoing surplus of places of over 2FE 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. As new housing sites are approved and built out including the Duchy of Cornwall housing development in Faversham, an expansion of The Abbey School will be required to meet the need for school places.

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 2027/28 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 number 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 additional

Year 7 places in the short term and long term, which may include permanent expansions at both schools.

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 2027/28 forecasts show a deficit of 2.3FE. 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 2027/28 and 2028/2029 prior to meeting 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 to meet the need from new housing developments in Sittingbourne.

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 a decreasing pressure of places in the planning group with a pressure of 1.7FE in 2027/2028 to a small surplus of places in 2031/32 of 0.2FE. We plan a 0.5FE expansion of Simon Langton Girls Grammar School and we will be working with existing school within the planning group to meet additional need.

Planned Commissioning – Swale

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Faversham					1FE expansion of St Mary's of Charity 3FE primary school Duchy development
Sittingbourne South					2FE new Primary School at Wises Lane
Faversham Non-Selective					1FE expansion of Abbey School
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	Up to 3FE temporary expansion	Up to 3FE permanent expansion			
Sittingbourne Non-selective	Up to 60 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places	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 rate was higher than the national average up until 2020, but has fallen below the county average since 2023. The number of births has similarly decreased since 2015 from a high of 1677 to a low of 1251 in 2023 but has now levelled.

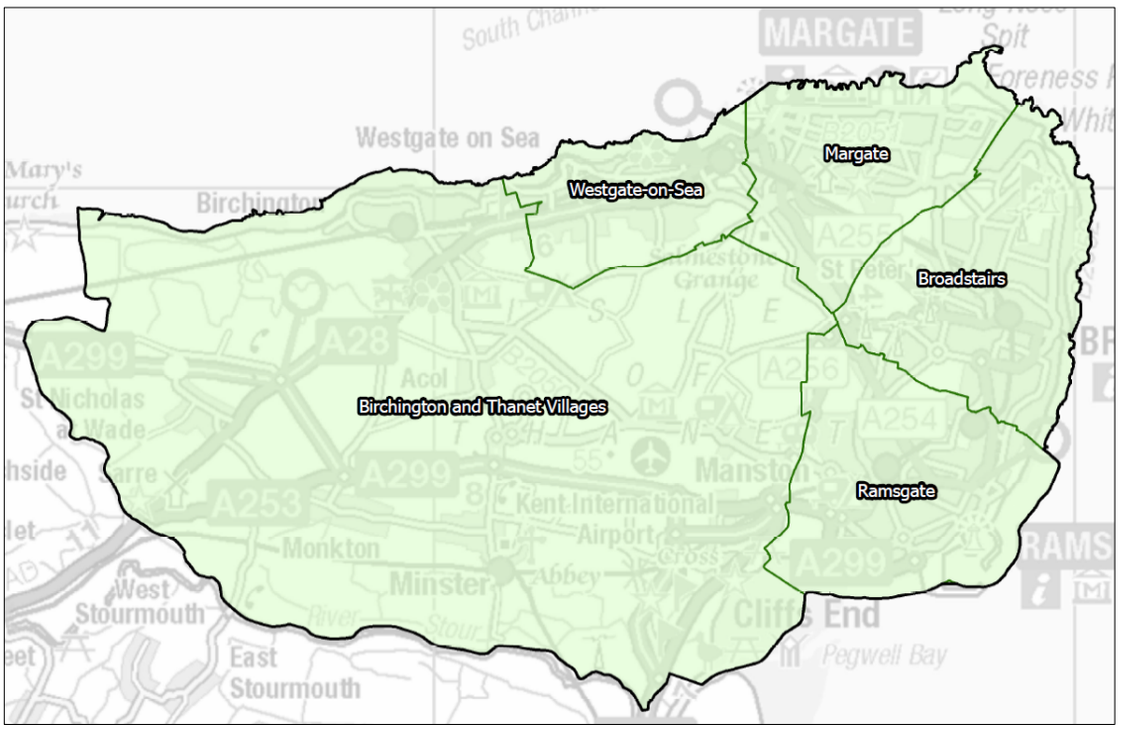
- We forecast surplus primary school places across the district throughout the plan period with a peak in 2029/2030, however there are significant differences in the planning groups.

- 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 2015/16 to 2024/25 a total of 5,096 houses were completed (NET) with an average of 510 per year.

- Thanet District Council has published its Notice to Commence Local Plan preparation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, on 12 June 2026. The Scoping Consultation (Regulation 20) will commence on 24 August until 9 October 2026. The 30-month plan preparation process will begin on 30 October 2026 at Gateway 1 under the new regulations, and the full local plan timetable is available to view on the council's website.

Map of the Thanet Primary Planning Groups



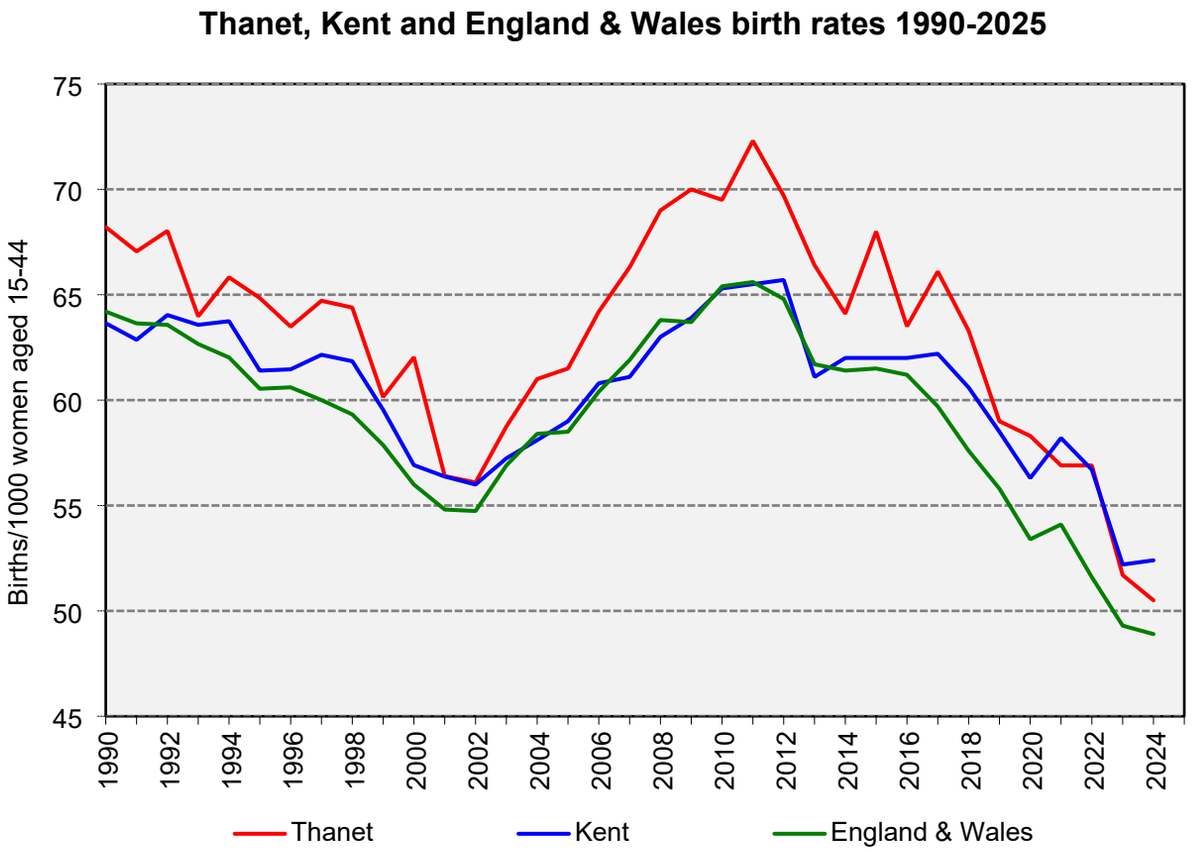
Thanet Primary Schools by Planning Group

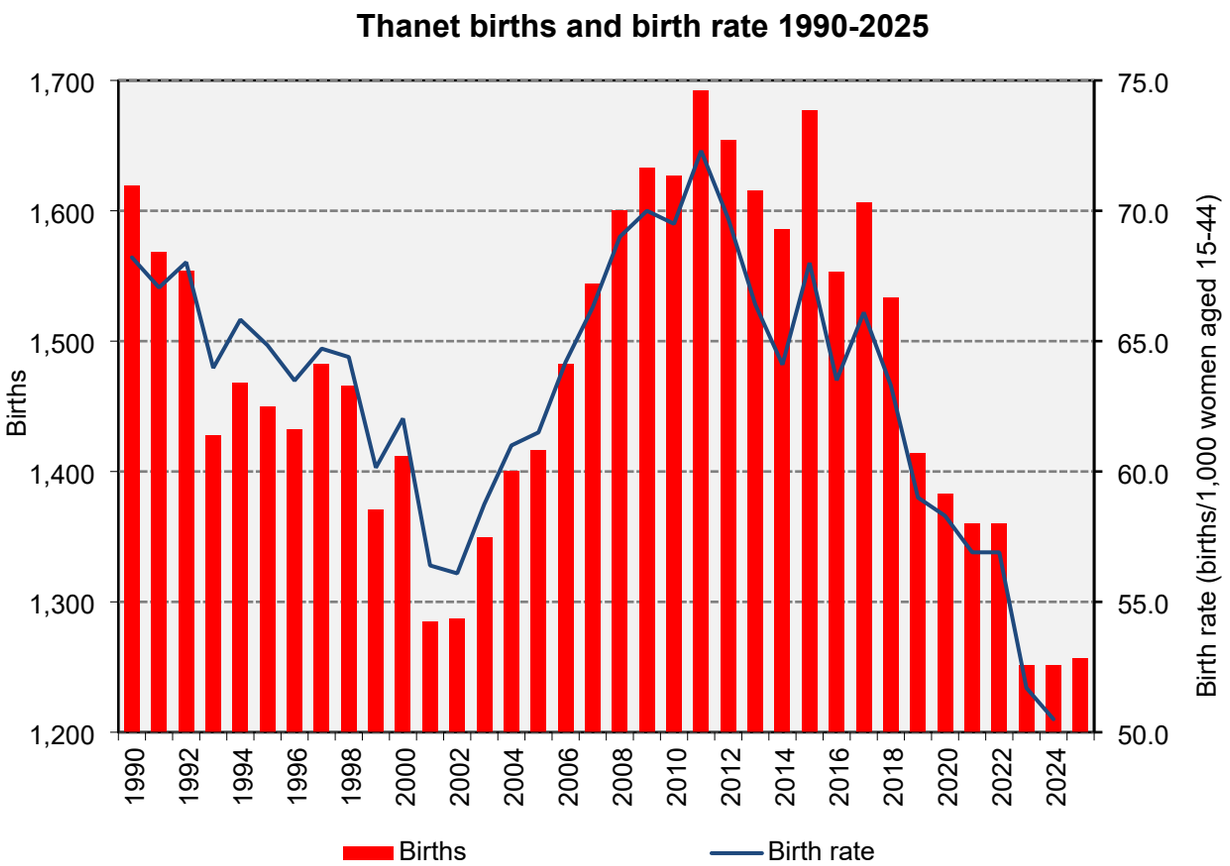
Planning Group	School	Status
Margate	Cliftonville Primary School	Academy
	Drapers Mills Primary Academy	Academy
	Holy Trinity and St. John's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Northdown Primary School	Academy
	Palm Bay Primary School	Academy
	Salmestone Primary School	Academy
	St. Gregory's RC Primary School	Academy
Westgate-on-Sea	Garlinge Primary School	Community
	St. Crispin's Community Infant School	Academy
	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
	St. Peter-in-Thanet CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided

Planning Group	School	Status
	Upton Junior School	Academy
Birchington and Thanet Villages	Birchington CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Minster CE Primary School	Academy
	Monkton CE Primary School	Academy
	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 Forecasts

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Margate	420	83	21	62	58	107	73	77	82	87	94	100	390
Westgate-on-Sea	180	29	30	27	37	38	32	33	34	36	37	40	180
Ramsgate	495	122	48	72	56	63	49	43	40	36	36	37	465
Broadstairs	330	15	20	23	16	23	22	20	21	19	19	19	315
Birchington and Thanet Villages	165	5	-2	-13	-10	-30	-20	-24	-27	-31	-36	-37	165
Thanet	**1,590**	**254**	**116**	**170**	**156**	**201**	**155**	**149**	**150**	**147**	**150**	**159**	**1,515**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Thanet Non-Selective	1,189	-2	-72	-80	-40	-98	-12	-16	33	-5	30	31	1,099
Thanet Selective	345	45	25	25	35	20	42	40	50	47	54	54	345

Primary District Commentary

Forecasts indicate that Thanet district has surplus capacity for Year R places across the Plan period. Surplus capacity ranges between 5.6FE in 2027/28 to a peak of 6.7FE in 2029/30.

There are differences within the individual planning groups, with Margate showing high levels of surplus capacity. Ramsgate, Westgate-on-sea and Broadstairs showing some capacity whilst Birchington and Thanet Villages planning group showing a deficit of places across the plan period. Discussions will continue to take place with the schools on options to manage surplus capacity in the planning groups.

Margate and Ramsgate Planning Groups
Forecasts indicate surplus Year R places across the plan period 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 an increasing pressure of places from 0.4FE in 2027/28 to 0.8FE in 2031/32. Initial pressures can be accommodated in adjacent planning groups due to the surplus capacity available. This is partly due to Birchington Primary School reducing its PAN to address the smaller cohorts currently entering school. The capacity has not been lost so this can be reinstated as and when required. New primary school provision to serve any new housing developments in the planning group may be required later in the plan period 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 2.6FE from 2027/28 which decreased to 0.5FE in 2031/32. 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 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Birchington and Thanet Villages/ Westgate-on-Sea					2FE new primary in Birchington and /or Westgate on Sea
Thanet Non-selective	Up to 75 temporary Y7 places	Up to 45 temporary Y7 places	Up to 90 temporary Y7 places	Up to 15 temporary Y7 places	

7.11 Tonbridge and Malling

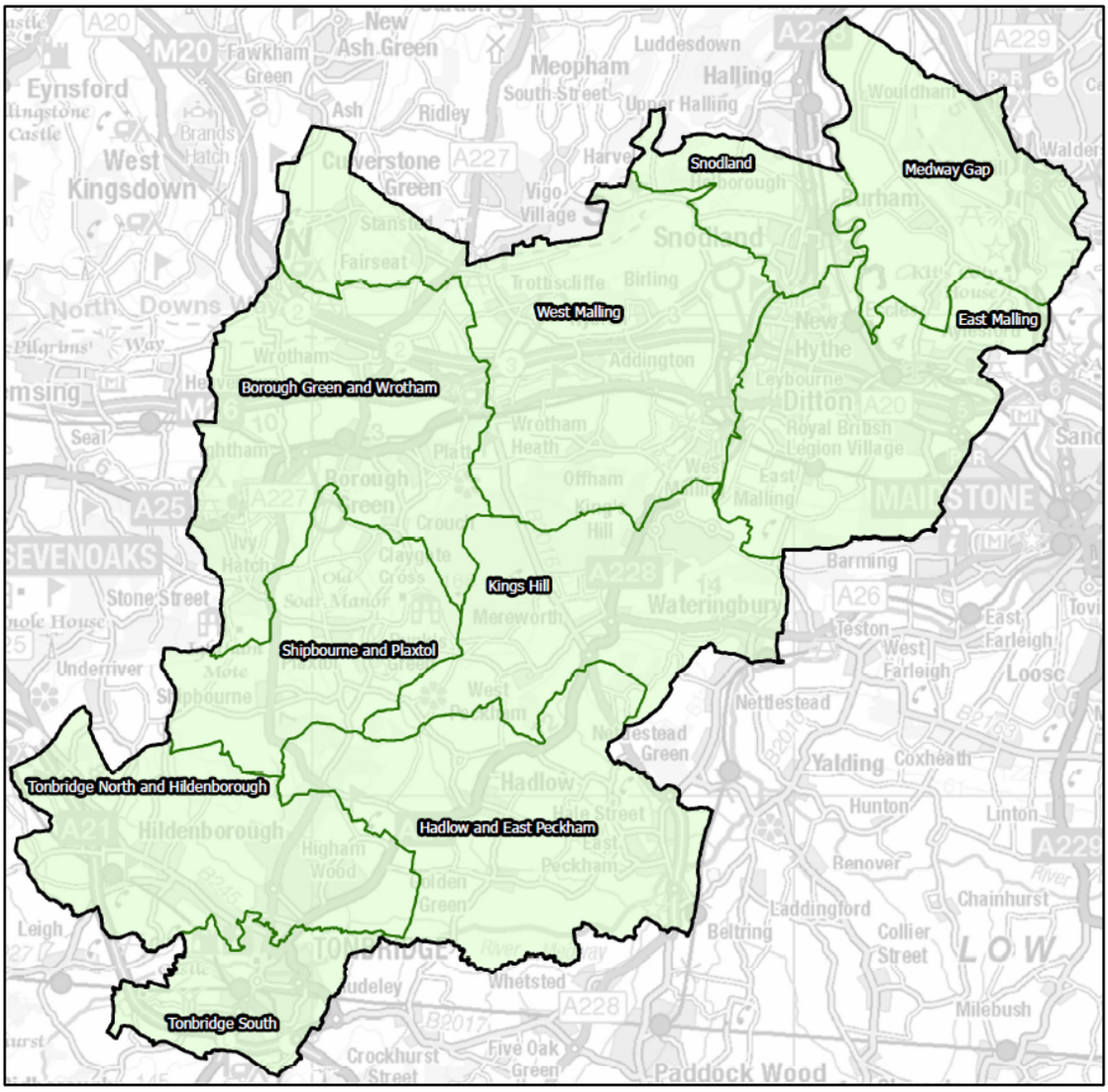
Borough commentary

- The birth rate for Tonbridge and Malling dropped markedly from 2018 to 2023, before recovering slightly in 2024. The number of births followed a similar pattern, dropping significantly in 2023 to 1,253 births which is the lowest since 2013. The number of births moderately recovered in 2024 and 2025, but can still be considered 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 may need to be addressed. Within the Non-Selective secondary planning groups, we anticipate sufficient places during the Plan period within the Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells group but there are deficits in the initial years within Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective that may need to be addressed. The West Kent Selective planning group has small deficits forecast for the initial years of the Plan period.

- On 11 September 2026 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council started a consultation on their Regulation 19 Local Plan, the final version before the Borough Council submits its proposed plan to Government. 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 unless they also have planning consent.

Map of the Tonbridge and Malling Primary Planning Groups



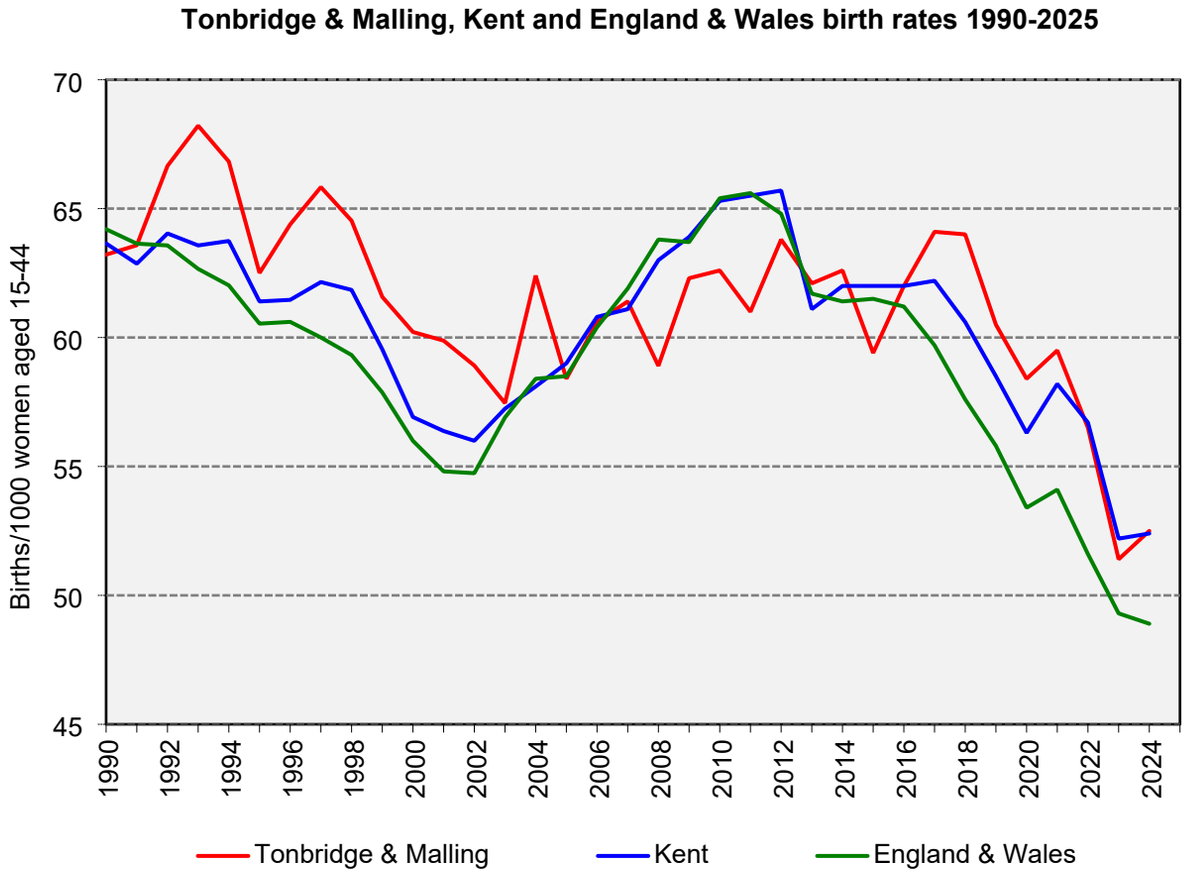
Tonbridge and Malling Primary Schools by Planning Group

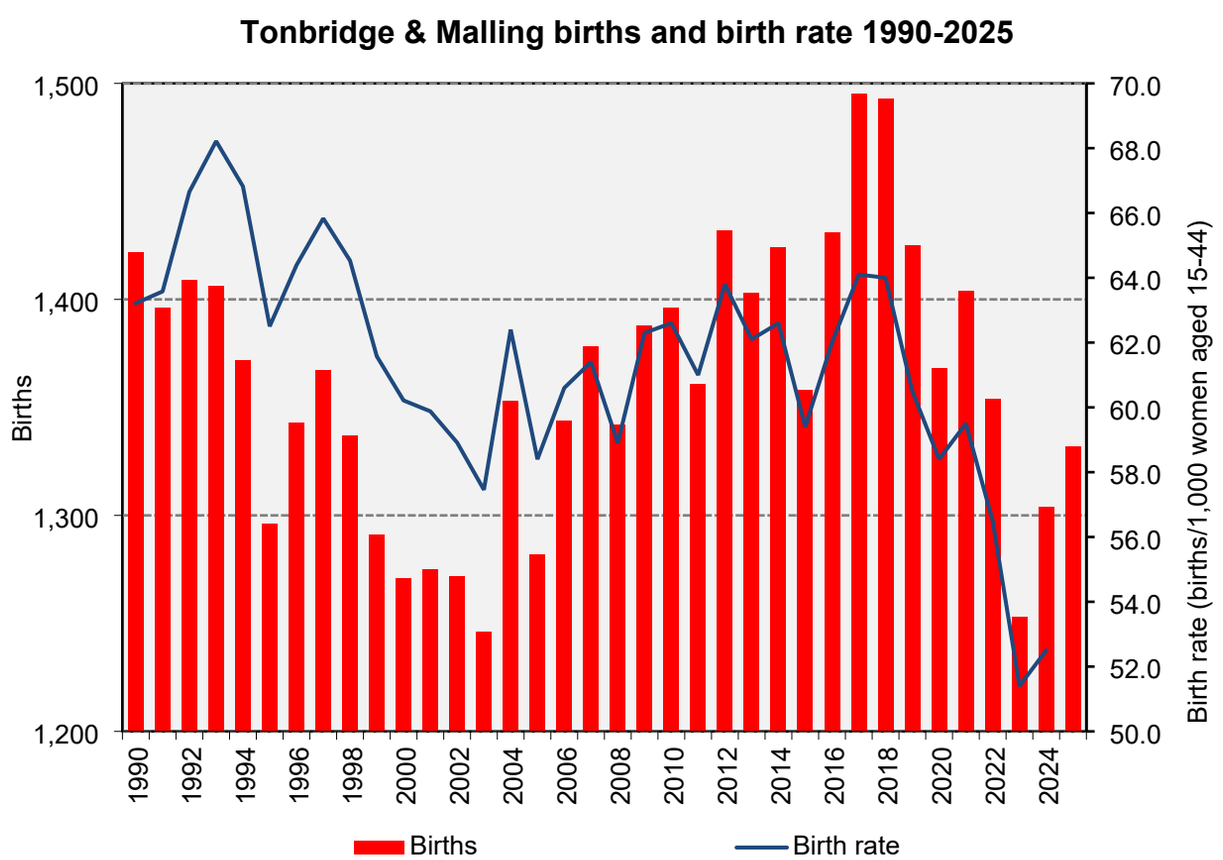
Planning Groups	School	Status
Tonbridge South	Bishop Chavasse CE Primary School	Free
	Royal Rise Primary School	Academy
	Slade Primary School	Community
	Sussex Road Community Primary School	Community
Tonbridge North and Hildenborough	Cage Green Primary School	Academy
	Hildenborough CE Primary School	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
	Trottiscliffe 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	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Tonbridge South	210	7	4	42	34	28	21	20	20	22	26	31	210
Tonbridge North and Hildenborough	225	36	42	35	41	52	42	41	39	40	41	43	225
Hadlow and East Peckham	60	2	14	5	4	15	7	8	7	7	8	9	60
Shipbourne and Plaxtol	24	11	10	10	10	12	11	11	11	11	11	12	24
Kings Hill	240	17	3	23	-22	4	0	-5	-11	-13	-15	-15	225
Borough Green and Wrotham	135	40	30	42	24	34	28	27	27	27	28	29	120
West Malling	162	28	9	38	31	27	25	25	24	25	26	28	162
East Malling	294	43	20	31	23	2	6	-1	-11	-18	-21	-23	300
Snodland	150	1	14	-5	18	-3	7	9	11	13	16	18	150
Medway Gap	168	16	-9	-3	-15	-23	-17	-21	-24	-26	-27	-28	168
Tonbridge & Malling	**1,668**	**201**	**137**	**218**	**148**	**149**	**131**	**114**	**93**	**88**	**93**	**103**	**1,644**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Malling Non-Selective	543	43	55	12	12	5	30	4	31	8	16	24	543
Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective	610	-16	-22	-24	-16	-19	-9	25	2	15	69	35	610
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective	1,641	235	96	116	120	84	153	156	169	190	221	175	1,586
West Kent Selective	1,264	-19	-31	-54	-27	-28	3	30	47	61	126	102	1,264

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.

Kings Hill Planning Group
There are small surpluses in the early years of the Plan period, apart from 2028-29 when a 22 place deficit is forecast. From 2031-32 onwards we forecast small deficits. 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 if the forecast deficits are increased by housing development.

East Malling Planning Group
There are small, but increasing, deficits forecast from 2031-32 through to the end 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.

Snodland Group
Forecasts for Snodland show small deficits in 2027-28 and 2029-30 that can be accommodated in the adjacent East and West Malling planning groups.

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 11.2 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: Knole Academy, Wrotham School and Trinity School.

Forecasts indicate a small short-term deficit, peaking at 24 places in 2027/28, before the planning group returns to surplus from 2031/32 onwards. To manage this pressure, KCC will seek up to 1FE of temporary additional capacity from September 2027 for up to three years, subject to annual review of demand.

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 deficit of 31 places in 2026-27 that rises to 54 in 2027-28 and then returns to just under 1FE for 2028-29 and 2029-30. 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

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Kings Hill					1FE Expansion of Existing School
Medway Gap					1FE Expansion of Existing School
Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective	Up to 30 Yr 7 temporary places	Up to 30 Yr 7 temporary places	Up to 30 Yr 7 temporary places		
West Kent Selective	Up to 60 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places		

7.12 Tunbridge Wells

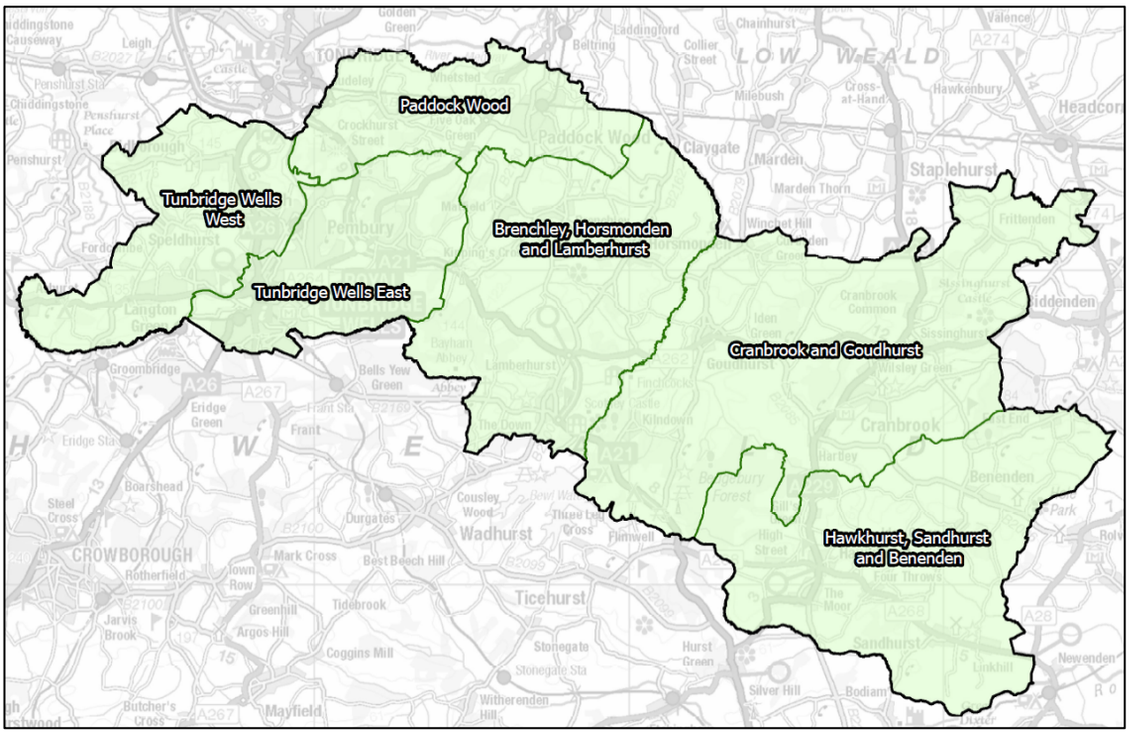
Borough Commentary

- The birth rate for Tunbridge Wells has in general been falling since 2010 and continued to drop in 2025. 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 1,041 in 2025, which is the lowest for more than 20 years.

- 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, 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 and Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective group (in spite of the latter having small deficits forecast in the initial years). The Cranbrook Selective group has small deficits throughout the Plan period and the West Kent Selective planning group as has small deficits forecast until 2030-31 when it reverts to surpluses.

- The new Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local Plan 2020-2038 was adopted by Full Council on Wednesday 10 December 2025. The assessed housing need for the Borough within the 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

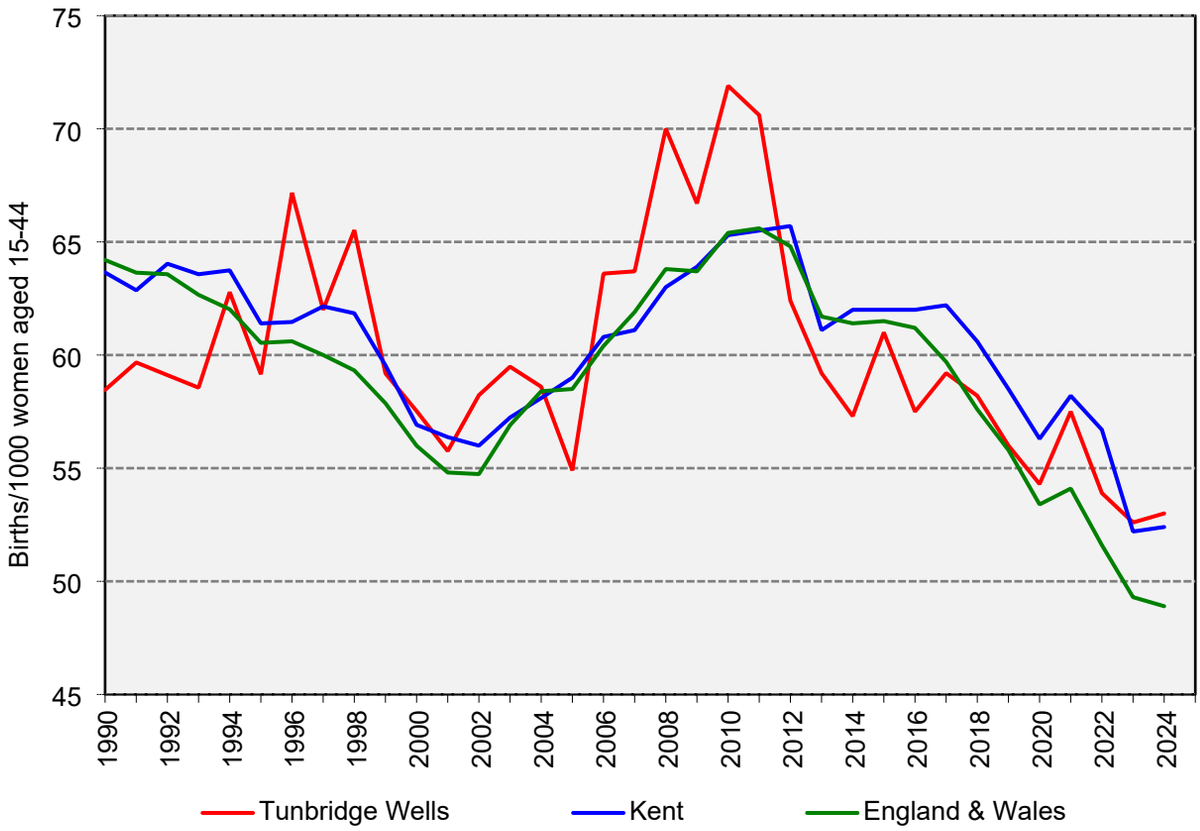
Planning Groups	School	Status
Tunbridge Wells East	Broadwater Down Primary School	Community
	Claremont Primary School	Community
	Pembury School	Community
	Skinners' Kent Primary School	Academy
	St. Barnabas CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. James' CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Mark's CE Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Academy
	St. Peter's CE Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Voluntary Controlled
	Skinners 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
	St. Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School	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

Planning Groups	School	Status
	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

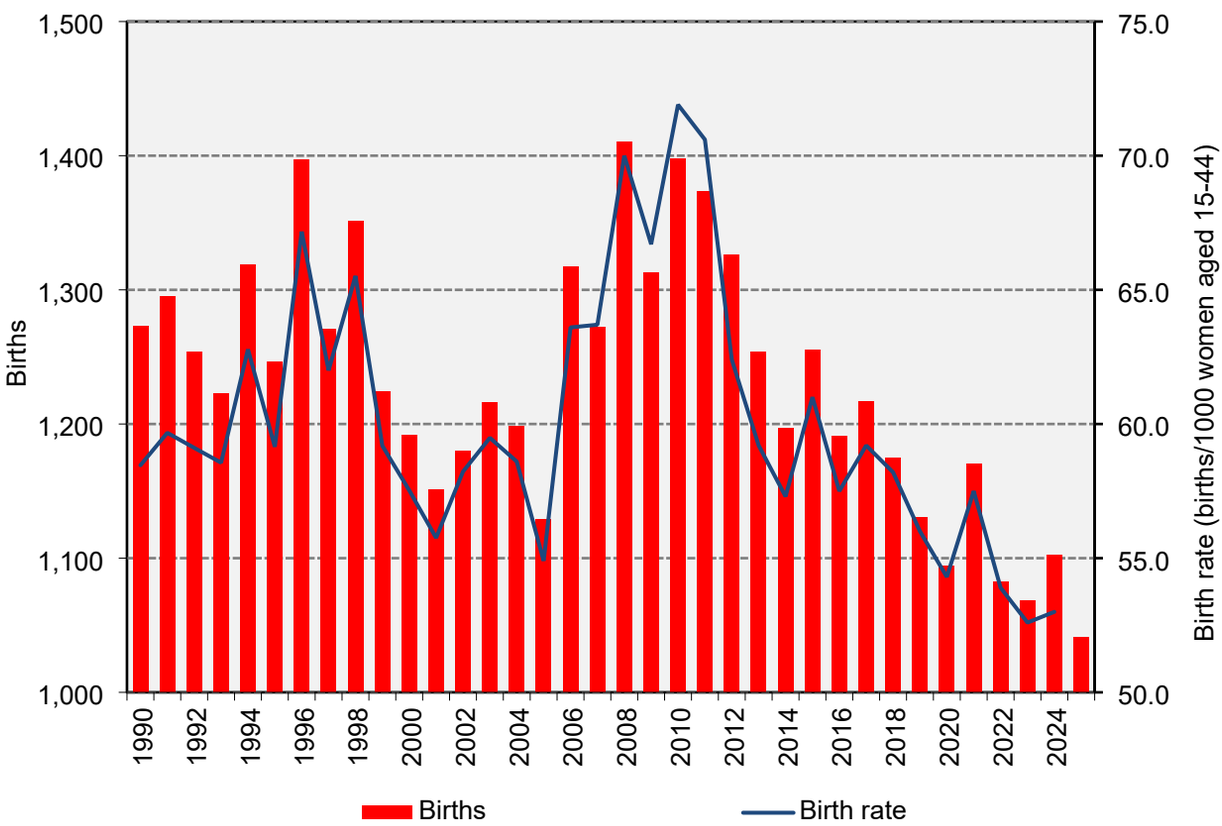
Birth Rate Analysis

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 1990-2025



Tunbridge Wells births and birth rate 1990-2025



Tunbridge Wells Forecasts

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Tunbridge Wells East	450	86	85	64	67	89	77	80	88	96	104	114	435
Tunbridge Wells West	450	85	97	139	131	145	128	127	129	130	132	133	450
Paddock Wood	120	7	-4	-30	-60	-63	-37	-44	-47	-50	-50	-50	120
Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst	90	5	2	7	5	8	4	2	1	0	-1	-1	90
Cranbrook and Goudhurst	121	3	6	7	19	9	3	-2	-4	-5	-7	-7	121
Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden	90	5	11	8	20	26	12	10	8	7	7	7	90
Tunbridge Wells	**1,321**	**191**	**198**	**195**	**181**	**214**	**187**	**173**	**175**	**177**	**185**	**198**	**1,306**

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

Planning Group name	2025/26 capacity	2025/26 (A)	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)	2035/36 (F)	2035/36 capacity
Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective	360	39	-4	-11	-10	-12	6	1	2	5	12	17	300
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective	1,641	235	96	116	120	84	153	156	169	190	221	175	1,586
Cranbrook Selective	90	1	-2	-11	-8	-14	-12	-3	-13	-5	-3	9	90
West Kent Selective	1,264	-19	-31	-54	-27	-28	3	30	47	61	126	102	1,264

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, and the Cranbrook and Goudhurst planning groups

The Year R surplus in Tunbridge Wells town (Tunbridge Wells East and West planning groups combined) 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 process for establishing a new school. The school will initially open with a 1 FE PAN and core facilities sufficient for 2 FE to support future expansion when needed.

Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst Planning Group
The planning group is forecast to have small deficits towards the end of the Plan period. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups.

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.

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 11.2 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 decreased its PAN from September 2026 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 forecast for 2026-27, 2027-28, 2028-29 and 2029-30. 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. Small deficits are forecast throughout the Plan period. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or via an existing school offering over PAN.

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 deficit of 31 places in 2026-27 that rises to 54 in 2027-28 and then returns to just under 1FE for 2028-29 and 2029-30. 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

Planning Group	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	By 2030-31	Post 2031
Cranbrook and Goudhurst Planning Group					Up to 10 temporary places
Paddock Wood		1FE Through Establishment of New Primary School			
West Kent Selective	Up to 60 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places		

8. Commissioning Special Education Needs

KCC's ambition is that every child and young person should have access to high-quality education and the opportunity to achieve and thrive.

A strategy for education in Kent 2025–2030 sets out three qualities at the heart of KCC's vision for education: ambition, curiosity and resilience. These apply to all children and young people.

Kent's SEND Strategy sets out the local area's approach to developing an inclusive education system and meeting its responsibilities to children and young people with SEND. The SEND Sufficiency Plan supports these ambitions by translating them into decisions about the type, number and location of education places Kent will need.

Demand for SEND support has grown significantly. Autism is a particularly important factor in planning future provision: 10,648 children and young people with EHCPs in Kent have autism recorded as their primary need, representing 49% of the total.

Kent's approach seeks to strengthen the ability of mainstream schools to meet a wider range of needs. This includes consistent implementation of the Mainstream Core Standards and programmes such as Partnerships for the Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS), which supports inclusive practice for neurodivergent children. KCC's Mainstream Core Standards set out what schools must do to support children and young people with SEND.

Kent has made progress in improving SEND services since the previous SEND inspection. The 2026 Ofsted and Care Quality Commission inspection recognised improvements, including in newer EHCPs, inclusive support in schools, partnership working and earlier help. However, inspectors also identified continuing inconsistencies in children's and families' experiences across the county.

There is also more to be done to create an effective sustainable system. KCC is seeking to do so through its Local Area Strategic Plan and the Government's High Needs Stability Grant arrangements.

The SEND Sufficiency Plan forms part of this wider programme of improvement. Its particular role is to ensure that the pattern of education provision develops in response to the needs of Kent's children and young people. The Sufficiency Plan can be viewed in Appendix 11.3 of the KCP.

8.1 Future SEN Commissioning of Provision

Pressures remain, both locally and nationally, on state maintained special school capacity. The sufficiency pressures in our special schools has led to a number of challenges and the increased use of the independent and non-maintained sectors. A paper proposing a capital programme to alleviate the sufficiency and suitability challenges and support Kent's maintained special schools to continue to deliver high-quality education to their pupils will be presented to KCC CYPE Cabinet in November 2026.

Below are tables showing the planned commissioning for all SEN Provision:

Figure 8a: 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 by Year				
					2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32
Expansion of special school (Broomhill Bank)	2027/28	C&I	Sevenoaks	130	40	40	50	0	0
New special school (all through) Swanley	2028/29	PSCN	Sevenoaks	250	0	114	66	70	0
New special school (all through) Whitstable	2028/29	SEMH/ASD	Canterbury	120	0	48	28	44	0
Expansion of special school (Parkwood Hall)	2031	C&L	Sevenoaks	40	8	8	8	16	0
Total planned special school places				**540**	**48**	**210**	**215**	**130**	**0**

Figure 8b: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in East Kent

East Provision: SRP	Date of Opening	SEN Type	District	Total Additional Places by Year					Total New Places
				2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	
Newlands Primary*	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	10	7	3	0	0	**20**
Herne Bay Primary Planning Group	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	10	10	0	0	0	**20**
Faversham Primary PG Bysing Wood	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Swale	15	5	0	0	0	**20**
Bromstone**	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	6	6	0	0	0	**12**
Total planned primary SRP places				**41**	**28**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**72**

East Provision: SRP	Date of Opening	SEN Type	District	Total Additional Places by Year					Total New Places
				2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	
Thanet Non-Selective PG	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	15	15	20	0	0	**50**
Canterbury Coastal PG***	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	15	15	10	0	0	**40**
Canterbury Coastal PG (2)	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	15	15	20	0	0	**50**
Faversham non-selective PG	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Swale	10	10	0	0	0	**20**
Thanet Non-Selective (2) PG	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	10	10	10	0	0	**30**
Total planned primary SRP places				**65**	**65**	**60**	**0**	**0**	**190**
Total planned SRP places				**106**	**93**	**63**	**0**	**0**	**262**

*Newlands: potential additional number of places reduced from 40 in consultation with the school
**Bromstone: does not have a designated SRP and needs to be formalised through the statutory process. Work is necessary to meet the required standards (BB104)
***Canterbury Coastal Planning Group: potential additional number of places reduced from 50 in consultation with the school

Figure 8c: Planned/New Expanded SRPs in North Kent

East Provision: SRP	Date of Opening	SEN Type	District	Total Additional Places by Year					Total New Places
				2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	
Alkerden CoE Academy (Primary)	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	4	3	3	5	0	**15**
Rosherville CoE Primary Academy	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Gravesham	6	5	4	0	0	**15**
Edenbridge PG: Edenbridge Primary School	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	7	7	6	0	0	**20**
Swanley PG: St Marys	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	6	5	4	0	0	**15**
Total planned primary SRP places				**23**	**20**	**17**	**5**	**0**	**65**
Alkerden CoE Academy (Secondary)	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	6	6	6	7	0	**25**
Sevenoaks and Borough Green PG: Knole Academy	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	8	12	10	0	0	**30**
Dartford and Swanley non-selective PG	2028/29	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	0	10	10	10	0	**30**
Total planned primary SRP places				**14**	**28**	**26**	**17**	**0**	**85**
Total planned SRP places				**37**	**48**	**43**	**22**	**0**	**150**

Figure 8d: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in South Kent

East Provision: SRP	Date of Opening	SEN Type	District	Total Additional Places by Year					Total New Places
				2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	
Ashford North Planning Group	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	7	7	6	0	0	**20**
Ashford East Planning Group	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	7	7	6	0	0	**20**
Tenterden South Planning Group	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	6	5	3	0	0	**14**
Ashford South Planning Group	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	6	5	3	0	0	**14**
Total planned primary places				**26**	**24**	**18**	**0**	**0**	**68**
Total planned secondary SRP places				**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**26**	**24**	**18**	**0**	**0**	**68**

Figure 8e: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in West Kent

East Provision: SRP	Date of Opening	SEN Type	District	Total Additional Places by Year					Total New Places
				2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	
South East Maidstone Town	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	6	5	3	0	0	**14**
North West Maidstone Town	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	6	5	3	0	0	**14**
Maidstone Rural	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	6	5	3	0	0	**14**
Tunbridge Wells Town 1 East Planning Group	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	6	5	3	0	0	**14**
Tunbridge Wells Town 2 West Planning Group	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	6	5	3	0	0	**14**
Tunbridge Wells Rural	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	6	5	3	0	0	**14**
Total planned primary SRP places				**36**	**30**	**18**	**0**	**0**	**84**
St Augustine (expansion)	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	8	12	10	0	0	**30**
Maidstone Secondary Town	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	8	12	10	0	0	**30**
Skinners' Kent Academy	2027/28	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	8	12	10	0	0	**30**
Total planned primary SRP places				**24**	**36**	**30**	**0**	**0**	**90**
Total planned SRP places				**60**	**66**	**48**	**0**	**0**	**174**

Figure 8f: Planned Changes for Established SRPs

SRP Provision	Date	District	Category of Change	Total New Places
The Archbishop School	2027/28	Canterbury	Broaden Designation to ASD/SLCN	10
Westlands School	2028/29	Swale	Broaden Designation to ASD/SLCN alongside School's Rebuild Programme	25
Wincheap Foundation Primary School	2026/27	Canterbury	Broaden Designation to ASD/SLCN	20
Total Planned Places				**55**

Figure 8g: Agreed and Planned Alternative Provision in Kent

Alternative Provision	Proposed Opening Date	SEN Type	District	Total Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places by Year				
					2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32
Expansion of KS3 provision, The Rosewood School	2027	Health Needs Education Centre	Canterbury	30	30	0	0	0	0
Jude's Academy	2031	AP	Gravesham	80	0	0	0	0	20
Total planned special school places				**150**	30	**0**	0	0	0

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:

- 30 hours per week of funded childcare for working parents of children from 9 months up to school age - WPE
- 15 hours of early education for eligible two-year olds – EL2 (in Kent formerly known as Free for Two)
- The Universal Entitlement of 15 hours for all three and four-year olds - UE

Over the period September 2024 to date, The Education People as commissioned by KCC supported the development of 2,629 free entitlement places in the private, voluntary, independent and maintained sectors.

Also in September 2024, the Government announced School Based Nurseries capital funding to create or expand 3,000 on-site nurseries in primary schools, either run by schools or in partnership with private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers. Of the 13 successful schools in both Rounds 1 and 2, 10 are open and 3 are yet to open but hopefully will in 2027. KCC is currently in the process of submitting a further 19 bids for Round 3 of the Programme

KCC also commissioned The Education People to work with schools and PVI providers to increase the supply of wraparound childcare, so that parents of primary school-aged children could access childcare from 8am to 6pm, or equivalent hours with different start and end times where appropriate, if they needed it. KCC is on track to achieve its target of just over 4,000 places.

Following a national pilot programme of free breakfast clubs in 750 schools, the Government has now received Royal Assent to provide free breakfast club places in every primary school. The national rollout has begun and is likely to be completed during 2028/29.

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.

Kent County Council (KCC) commissions The Education People to work with providers in making available a sufficient range of provision, in all geographical areas as needed, at the right times, and offering flexible sessions to fit with both standard and atypical working patterns.

The DfE previously provided each local authority with information related to the expansion of funded early education and childcare entitlements and wraparound childcare announced in the Spring Budget 2023, including analysis of demand for and supply of childcare places in Kent. That analysis informed earlier sufficiency planning by The Education People but has not been used for the 2026–2027 assessment.

9.3 Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency

KCC 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.

The Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency for the 2026–2027 academic year uses local childcare take-up rates for all age groups to estimate demand. This approach reflects observed patterns after the new entitlements, including the increase to 30 hours for eligible working parents of children aged from 9 months, had been implemented for a full year. Population forecasts are combined with these local take-up rates, while the supply of childcare places in Kent is derived from the number of available places reported by early education and childcare providers through 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 supply of childcare places with the forecast number of places required in each age group, planning area and district. Figure 9a shows the anticipated childcare places needed for 0 to 4 year olds in the 2026–2027 academic year.

Figure 9a: 0 to 4 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2026–2027 Academic Year)

District	0-4 Year Old Population	DEMAND: 0-4 Year Old places required	SUPPLY: 0-4 Childcare places	EXCESS SUPPLY: 0-4 Childcare Sufficiency Surplus/Deficit Places
Ashford	6,766	4,247	4,588	341
Canterbury	6,077	3,966	4,835	868
Dartford	7,428	4,244	5,880	1,636
Dover	4,999	3,192	3,596	404
Folkestone & Hythe	4,430	2,902	3,591	688
Gravesham	6,133	3,277	3,819	542
Maidstone	9,490	5,567	6,594	1,027
Sevenoaks	5,694	3,245	5,379	2,133
Swale	7,821	5,001	5,969	967
Thanet	6,156	4,064	4,865	800
Tonbridge & Malling	6,573	4,039	5,033	994
Tunbridge Wells	5,264	3,301	5,391	2,091
Grand Total	**76,831**	**47,047**	**59,539**	**12,491**

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 childcare sufficiency for under 2 year olds. Monitoring this age group remains important because the increase from 15 to 30 hours of funded childcare per week for eligible working parents of children aged from 9 months to school age had been in place for a full year by the 2026–2027 assessment. Figure 9c shows childcare sufficiency for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

Figure 9b: Under 2 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2026–2027 Academic Year)

District	Under 2 Year Old Population	DEMAND: Under 2 Year Old places required	SUPPLY: Under 2 Year Old places	EXCESS SUPPLY: Under 2 Year Old Surplus/Deficit Places
Ashford	2,821	678	944	266
Canterbury	2,517	738	1,048	310
Dartford	3,186	838	1,258	420
Dover	2,135	514	810	296
Folkestone & Hythe	1,869	481	764	284
Gravesham	2,581	457	733	276
Maidstone	4,033	967	1,537	570
Sevenoaks	2,438	543	1,313	770
Swale	3,296	887	1,533	646

Thanet	2,600	727	1,027	300
Tonbridge & Malling	2,765	797	1,383	586
Tunbridge Wells	2,219	570	1,224	654
Total	**32,460**	**8,196**	**13,573**	**5,377**

Figure 9c: 2, 3 and 4 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2026–2027 Academic Year)

District	2, 3 & 4 Year Old Population	DEMAND: 2, 3 & 4 Year Old places required	SUPPLY: 2, 3 & 4 Childcare places	EXCESS SUPPLY: 2, 3 & 4 Childcare Sufficiency Surplus/Deficit Places
Ashford	3,945	3,569	3,644	75
Canterbury	3,560	3,228	3,787	558
Dartford	4,242	3,406	4,622	1,216
Dover	2,864	2,678	2,786	108
Folkestone & Hythe	2,561	2,421	2,826	405
Gravesham	3,552	2,820	3,086	266
Maidstone	5,457	4,601	5,057	457
Sevenoaks	3,256	2,702	4,066	1,364
Swale	4,525	4,114	4,436	322
Thanet	3,556	3,338	3,838	500
Tonbridge & Malling	3,808	3,243	3,650	407
Tunbridge Wells	3,045	2,730	4,167	1,437
Grand Total	**44,371**	**38,851**	**45,965**	**7,114**

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 2025/26 has continued to be challenging for young people progressing into post-16 education:

- A considerable number of young people did not achieve the entry criteria for their own 6th forms, consequently the number of students in 6th forms shrank for the second year running and numbers in colleges continue to rise (Jan 2025 compared to Jan 2026).
- Provision for young people needing to study at L2 and below or in specialist settings filled very quickly despite the colleges taking on additional young people.
- The 16-18 cohort grew again. This year by almost 1,000.
- Provision for those outside schools and colleges continued to shrink.

Our NEET numbers have continued to grow. In June 2026, 2018 young people were NEET compared to 1,625 in June 2025, an increase of 24%. Despite this, the NEET support service reported that the weeks after GCSE results day have been much calmer as processes in schools and college have reacted quickly and efficiently to support young people without places. There is also evidence that more schools are offering level 2 qualifications in their 6th forms for their learners that did not reach level 3 entry criteria.

The choice of lower-level qualifications for learners outside college has continued to shrink. The number of providers decreased from 16 in 2024/5 to 12 in 2025/26. The number of places shrank slightly from 720 to 640 over the same period, mainly due to the loss of provisions that relied on short term funding or providers relocating from North Kent into Southeast London.

Work with the DFE to increase places in the county is still ongoing. One of the measures set out in the Post-16 and Skills White Paper (Oct 2025) was the establishment of Regional Improvement Teams (RIT) to focus on quality and capacity in post-16 education. Due to the work of Pathways for All and the quality of Kent's Gap Analysis, the county has been selected as a pilot area. Pathways for All will be the main area of focus for the RIT and other workstreams are:

- Filling Gaps in Local Provision
- Addressing Standards and Outcomes in colleges through improved transition between year 12 and 13
- Work with schools to develop their Careers Education Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG) offer to ensure that young people are adequately prepared to progress into post-16 learning and beyond
- Develop long term collaborative structures and increase engagement through Pathways for All and the Local Collaborative Partnership Areas

In general, focus from Central Government Agencies on performance within the Post 16 Sector appears to have increased in the last year. Towards the end of the 2025/26 Academic Year, alongside the RIT, the local Authority also received requests to produce action plans in respect of NEETs and Not Knowns.

10.1 The Post-16 Co-ordination group

As explained in the previous iteration of the KCP 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 group will produce a Post-16 Co-ordination Plan, bringing together all of the post-16 interdependencies to ensure they are working towards common goals.

Within the plan there are 3 key aims:

Aim 1: Ensuring that the local authority provides appropriate support and oversight to the sector by improving the internal structures, processes, partnerships and data/intelligence.

Aim 2: Working in partnership with the wider sector to ensure there is sufficient and appropriate provision for all learners including for SEND, NEET young people, EHE, CME, UASC and other lower achieving and vulnerable learners.

Aim 3: Ensuring that all young people are prepared for life/employment by making sure there are adequate and appropriate pathways:

The group's oversight will support a complement specific work that is already underway or being initiated within the Local Authority and with sector partners, such as Pathways for All and the NEETs Task Force.

10.2 Pathways for All

The work of Pathways for All, the outcome of the countywide 16-19 review, has continued to move on. The sector-lead 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.

Due to the continuing rise in the number of NEETs it was decided to narrow the focus down to three key strategic objectives:

- Increase provision for vulnerable learners
- Support Transition into Post-16 Education
- Strengthen Collaboration between Providers, and with Employers in each LCPA

Over the course of the next year, the work of Regional Improvement Team will increasingly support Pathways for All. This should accelerate progress, but thought must be given as to how the two workstreams will work together

Notable successes in 2025/26 have been:

- An increase in the number of 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. This is now expanding across the county.
- Good practice sharing; There have been several expert voices webinars on aspects of post-16 good practice such as funding and developing level 2 programmes. There is also a good practice page on Kelsi where providers can access support.
- An increase in the number of schools offering L2 programmes in their 6th forms.

Last year the LCPAs identified localised priorities, and these were set out in the previous iteration of this document. At the time of drafting this document those priorities continue to be the LCPA's focus. However, the LCPA's are currently reviewing their priorities and plans for the year ahead and amendments will be communicated to officers and Members as appropriate.

10.3 NEETs and Not Knowns

Even though the two categories of Not knowns and NEETS are intrinsically linked, different Government bodies have prompted Local Authorities to review their processes and produce actions plans on how support to both cohorts can be improved.

Due to Kent's Not Knowns being slightly in excess of 3%, KCC has produced an action plan to improve the tracking of individual young people, so that support can be targeted to them in support of them securing appropriate training or employment. At the time of drafting the action plan, Kent had already seen an improvement in the percentage of not knowns, and this is against a backdrop of increasing post 16 cohorts. The data included in the plan showed the following:

Month	Dec 25- Feb 26 NEET & Not Known	Not Known Dec 25-Feb 26	NEET Dec 25- Feb 26
December	8.9%	4.4%	4.5%
January	7.7%	2.9%	4.8%

February	7.2%	2.2%	5.0%
	8.00%	**3.20%**	**4.80%**

The key workstreams within the plan are designed to strengthen the tracking and support targeted towards the Not Known cohort. They are:

- Immediate refocus of resources to prioritise establishing contact with our current Not Known cohort.
- Intensive targeted tracking activities.
- Embed the Risk of NEET Indicator Tool and Strengthen Early Intervention
- Strengthen school engagement and use of data systems during transition periods
- Increase reach of NEET Support Service and Tracking Team to drive down Not Known young people through new approaches and technology

The Skills and Employability Service within TEP has recently been restructured and this has opened opportunities for new approaches to be employed. Some of which are already resulting in improvements.

In respect of the NEET cohort, data demonstrates that young people who become NEET face a wide range of challenges and barriers, including increasing levels of vulnerability with more needing SEN support, greater competition for the available post-16 provision due to rising cohort numbers and a reduced Level 2 offer, reductions in specialist NEET provision, and increased demand on the NEET Support Service. More than half of young people identified as NEET or Not Known now present with multiple vulnerabilities, reinforcing the need for earlier intervention and robust preventative approaches.

KCC submitted a growth case to the Department for Education requesting an additional 460 post-16 education places in Kent. Although this was approved, the funding has not yet been awarded. As a result, young people are being tracked to identify their destinations, but there are insufficient available places to support their engagement in education. This could eventually result in increased disengagement and, in turn, and increase in the number of young people recorded as Not Known.

Due to the evident increase in NEETs, the DWP wrote separately to Kent County Council and Medway Council in July 2026 requesting that a NEET task force be established following the initial findings of the Milburn report.

Given the county's existing collective efforts and joined up nature of work on skills, employment and health, a single Kent & Medway NEET Task Force has been established. This group will operate as a subgroup of the Kent & Medway Employment Task Force, the Kent Pathways for All (16-18) Strategic Board and Medway's oversight structures for Post 16 provision.

The Kent & Medway NEET Task Force (KMNTF) draws on membership from those groups and brings together experts focusing on the 16-18 cohort supported by statutory provision with key stakeholders supporting the 19-24 cohort providing an opportunity to tackle cliff edges and ensure continuity of support availability.

Strategic Links - The KMNTF will align its work to:

- The Get Kent & Medway Working Plan (Oct 25)
- The Kent & Medway Economic Framework (Mar 24)
- The Kent Pathways for All review and strategic plan
- The Medway Post 16 Action Plan
- Skills & Employability Plan for Medway
- The Kent & Medway Local Skills Improvement Plan
- The emerging Local Growth Plan
- Kent Marmot Coastal Region and Medway Marmot Place programmes

The Task Force's remit will be to:

1. Map current provision for 16-18 and 19-24 cohort, review effectiveness, identify gaps, support further alignment and coordination.
2. Create an action plan that will reference / build on and link to the existing strategies and their action plans mentioned above.
3. Consider deliverables that are achievable within the current system, programmes and delivery mechanisms
4. Identify actions that could be put in place with additional dedicated resource.
5. Seek approval from the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership and Employment Task Force, Pathways for All Strategic Board and Medway Post 16 governance structures for the plan.

The work undertaken by the Task Force will also feed into and support the aims set out in the upcoming Post 16 Co-ordination Plan.

10.4 Funding

As highlighted above, funding continues to be a significant barrier in increasing and improving post 16 provision. Kent and its partners continue to lobby Central Government for changes, but to date that has yielded little success.

The main issues are that revenue growth funding is still subject to a "lagged" approach, meaning providers do not receive full funding for an increase in learners in the Academic year that cohort starts. This can often result in significant increases being unviable for many providers. The majority of capital funding is retained centrally often with little or no clarity as to how it is distributed.

However, following a letter to the Minister for Skills Department for Work and Pensions by the 14 Leaders in Kent and Medway, the response set out the following funding plans from Government:

- Over the next three years, there will be investment of an additional £2.5 billion through the Youth Guarantee and Growth and Skills Levy to create up to 500,000 opportunities to earn and learn.
- Transformation of the apprenticeships levy into a new growth and skills levy, to support 50,000 more young people into apprenticeships over the next three years. This includes providing financial support to smaller employers who play a vital role in creating apprenticeship opportunities for young people.
- As of August 2026, the Government are fully funding apprenticeship training for employers of all sizes for eligible people aged 16-24. This includes introducing a new apprenticeship hiring payment of £2,000 for non-levy paying employers, typically SMEs, that take on 16 to 24-year-old apprentices as new employees.
- Employers hiring apprentices aged 18-24 who have been on Universal Credit for over six months are also eligible for the new £3,000 Youth Jobs Grant. These new payments are available in addition to the current £1,000 payments that employers can receive when taking on younger apprentices and the £2,000 payment for foundation apprentices and can be stacked together where the apprentice and/or employer is eligible.
- Specifically to Kent, there has been an increase in the Skills Bootcamps funding allocation for the 2026-27 financial year by c.£700,000.

Additionally, KCC has lobbied for specific capital funding to support the introduction of skills centres to support the provision of lower level or vocational courses. At the time of drafting this document, no response had been received.

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.

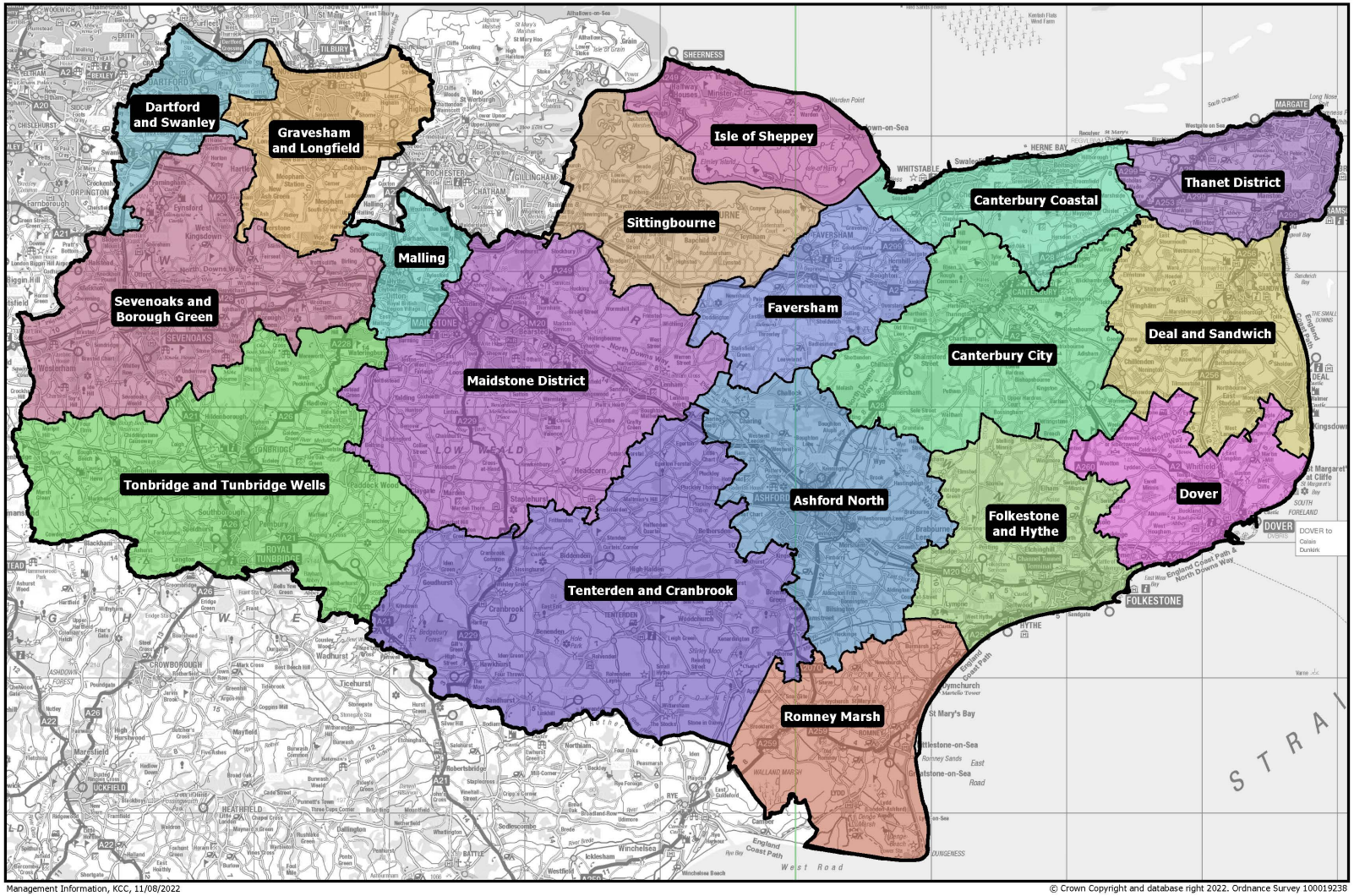
Information about expected levels of new housing, through the yearly Housing Information Audits (HIA) and Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategies is the most accurate reflection of short, medium and long term building projects at the local level. Where a large development is expected, compared 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.

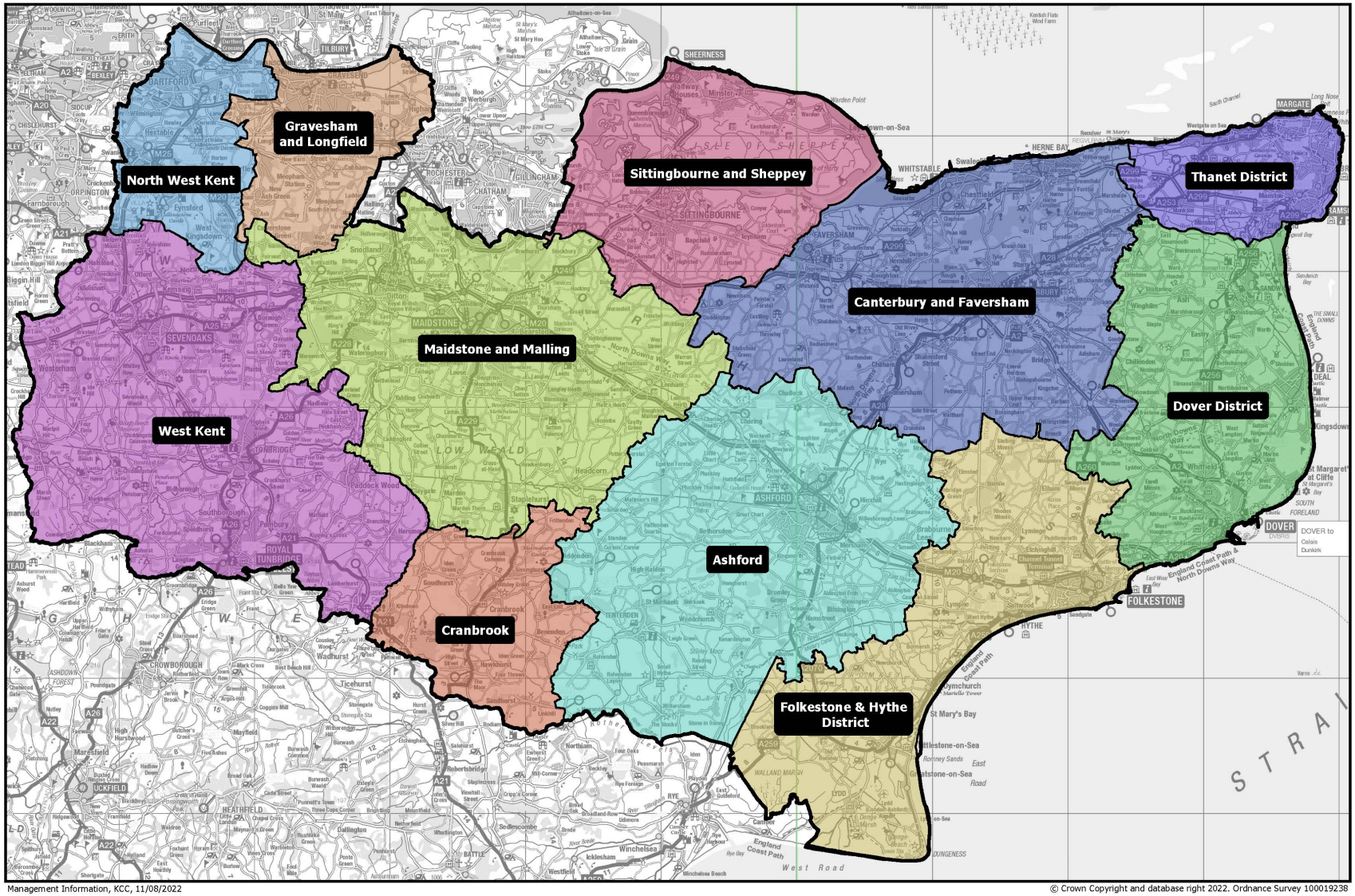
Forecasting future demand for school places can never be completely precise given the broad assumptions which have to be made about movements in and out of any given locality, the pace of individual housing developments, patterns of occupation and not least parental preferences for places at individual 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.

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