

West Sussex County Council responses to 28 Questions from the Future for Adur Schools Team:

1. What is WSCC plan for Year 5 children applying to secondary school in 2019?

We are aware that the demand for school places in Adur is increasing. Across the area there are places available at Sir Robert Woodard Academy (SRWA). At the time of writing these responses there are some 400 places available in SRWA. Should the need arise, as projections are indicating and increase for additional basic need places, then we would initially look to expand existing schools having maximised potential in those schools to fill to their net capacity totals.

2. What will you do to manage children's and parents expectations of a place at Shoreham Academy?

West Sussex County Council manage the admissions rounds however Shoreham Academy is the admission authority for the school. We work with the school in coordinating the admissions rounds and we are sure that the school will manage the transition meetings as appropriate. The School has its own oversubscription criteria and places will be allocated accordingly. The Information for Parents booklet which is available on-line gives the last allocated distance and the category of child admitted to each school. This would help give parents some idea as to their likely admittance to a particular school. Parental preference and the size of the cohort would factor in here.

3. What is the longer plan for future schooling in Adur - and importantly Shoreham specifically?

As detailed in Planning School Places 2018 page 26, by adding two forms of entry at SRWA this would address the predicted forecast increase in demand for school places. This is subject to further discussion between WSCC and the Academy Trust and is dependent on the housing delivery timescale.

4. What are your plans for transport to schools outside Shoreham (bikes/car/bus)?

Bus and rail networks are run commercially by the operators. Where there is demand the operators assess provision and whether it is viable to put on additional journeys or diversions. As part of Shoreham Area Sustainable Transport Plan Study the County Council has also commissioned an independent assessment of the bus network across Adur. Issues such as school and hospital accessibility will be considered in the context of current and future developments.

Schools develop their own School Travel Plans and these may include consideration of how to improve the journey to school for public transport users, car users and walkers/cyclists. The West Sussex Walking and Cycling Strategy 2016-26 sets out the wider aspirations for these modes in the County. Specifically, Lancing and Shoreham appear in the prioritised list of potential schemes in the appendix of that document. The Shoreham Area Sustainable Transport Study is currently undertaking feasibility work on additional cycle routes across Adur District.

For a pupil to be entitled to assistance with transport the criteria that are applied in all cases involve which school is attended and the distance from that school that the family live. There is also a further criterion regarding income that applies to some families.

A pupil must be attending either their catchment school (as defined by the County Council) or their nearest available school. If the nearest school has no space at the time of the Admissions application then this school is not viewed as being available. This applies equally to primary and secondary aged children.

Pupils must also live over the statutory walking distance from their school. For children under the age of 8 this is 2 miles and for those 8 years and over it is three miles. The distance measured is the shortest available route, including use of footpaths, Public Rights of Way and other walkable tracks. The route should be able to be walked in reasonable safety. There is an assumption in law that a child is accompanied as necessary, so the judgement used on, for example, crossing a road are judged to be those of an adult.

Families on a low income as assessed by eligibility for free school meals and a number of other measures can apply for further assistance. This means transport assistance to secondary school is given to one of the three nearest secondary schools between 2 and 6 miles away. If the secondary school is attended for reasons of religion or belief then the distance may be extended to 15 miles. For primary schools the distance at age 8 is lowered to 2 miles but is only applied to the nearest available school at the time of admission.

5. What are the school transport costs to go to different schools? One parent thought it was free to Shoreham Academy but expensive to go to Steyning?

In most cases the cost of travel to school is met by parents and costs will vary depending on where the family lives. Stagecoach, Brighton and Hove Buses, Compass Travel and Southern Rail sell a variety of tickets, including passes for 1 week or more that give unlimited travel on their networks. The County Council provides transport assistance where eligibility criteria are met. Usually this would mean a pupil is provided with a bus or rail pass. More information and links to public transport operators is available at the Council's website www.westsussex.gov.uk/buses and for help with school transport at www.westsussex.gov.uk/schooltransport

6. Can you develop good and safe cycle routes to Sir Robert Woodard? Especially important if New Monks Farm development goes ahead.

Please refer to the response to Q4 – improved cycle routes across Lancing and Sompting, which could serve SRWA are being considered as part of the Shoreham Area Sustainable Transport Study.

7. Statutory responsibility to provide transport, so will there now be funding assistance for transport outside Shoreham locality?

Transport assistance is given to eligible children – more information is at www.westsussex.gov.uk/schooltransport. Essentially, if a child is attending their nearest available or catchment area school and it is over 3 miles walking distance, we would provide a bus or rail pass. (The transport catchment area is as defined by the County Council.) This applies equally to children both in and outside of the Shoreham area.

8. What happens when SRW and SA fills up? (asked several times)

According to our projections we believe the schools are likely to both reach current net capacity by 2022/23. Expansion works would therefore need to be completed by 2023/24 in order to expand the schools beyond their current Net Capacity. The actual increase is currently projected as 2 forms of entry (FE) i.e. 60 pupils. The Department for Education (DfE) will not consider schools of less than 6FE (180 pupils) per year group as a viable new secondary school. In order to build a new secondary school in the area, should the need arise, there are significant issues in the locality of finding a site large enough to build a new school of 6FE or greater.

9. Importantly, what happens to children in the middle?

WSCC have interpreted this question as meaning children living between Shoreham Academy & Sir Robert Woodard Schools. In this case, those children will be treated no differently to the children described in the response to Q2.

10. Could SA create a satellite site school like Steyning?

Shoreham Academy could apply to create a separate site but this would need to be funded by the Academy Trust. A site would be required, however, but similar split site arrangements are in operation at other schools, such as Steyning Grammar School.

11. What happens if all schools in my catchment area are full? (asked several times)

Parents are advised to express 3 preferences when completing the school admissions form and are advised to include their catchment school. The Admissions Team aims to allocate all children and young people to one of their three preferences and have a high success rate in meeting parental preference. This is in excess of the nationally published admission data.

12. If all local schools are full, how do WSCC then allocate school places? Could it be anywhere in West Sussex?

Should a situation arise where all local schools are full, then pupils will be allocated to the next nearest school with available spaces.

13. Who decides on the catchment area and rules?

Catchment areas are established through the admissions consultations which are open to residents, schools and other stakeholders for comment. The introduction of academies and free schools brought about the freedoms for these schools to set their own catchment areas, again through annual consultation if changes are to be proposed. However, when new schools are established many academies and free schools prefer an open catchment. This will be determined by the relevant Academy Trust.

14. Can catchment be changed so more Southwick and Portslade children are included in PACA catchment?

They could, but this is a neighbouring local authority and would be subject to public consultation. If parents wish to apply for a place at PACA they are able to do so without the need for catchment changes.

15. Why must we wait until all the schools are full before considering a new secondary school - isn't that too late?

Projections indicate that there is not enough growth in pupil numbers for the DfE to consider a new secondary school as the requirement is for a minimum of 6FE to be established – this would mean 180 children per year of age.

16. Does 'full' mean a year group or the whole school? Clarify PAN admission.

'Full' means the school has reached its Net Capacity (as determined by the DfE). The School Admissions Code 2014 states that Infant Class size legislation which applies to Key Stage 1 does not allow classes to exceed 30 pupils. There are some 'exceptions'. Although there are no restrictions to other year groups they are mostly set up for no more than 30 pupils. If there is spare capacity in the older year groups in a school and no space in the other year groups those spaces cannot be counted towards allowing more of other year groups in due to how schools organise.

17. Question about how future developments, particularly Ikea development & resulting impact from traffic and travel time to and from Sir Robert Woodard and Worthing schools.

These are considered during the planning approval process which is completed at Borough/District Council level. The County Council are consulted on all such issues.

18. Why doesn't the Local Plan include provision for secondary school?

WSCC responds to the Local Plan highlighting areas where additional school places or schools are required. The current number of additional dwellings proposed in the Adur Local Plan does not bring forward a requirement for an additional secondary school.

19. When do they plan for extra secondary school provision resulting from new developments?

Please refer to the response to Q18.

20. How much collaboration is there between secondary schools and the Planning Dept.?

WSCC is not privy to any conversation that happens between an Academy Trust and the local planning department unless invited.

21. When will all secondary schools be full? What's the long term planning?

Long term planning for all pupil provision is contained within the annual WSCC Planning School Places document available at: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/policies-and-reports/school-policy-and-reports/planning-school-places/>

22. How can parents ensure that a new school gets built if WSCC can't build them? Do we need support of WSCC? Do we need support from our local MP?

Parents are at liberty to form a group and propose a Free School. Details are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-school-application-guide> all free school applications are approved by the DfE in line with local need.

23. Who has responsibility for new school places?

The Local Authority (WSCC) has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places.

24. How long does it take to plan and open a new secondary school?

Typically, a minimum of 3 to 5 years would be required from initial discussions to opening of a new secondary school.

**25. How and who checks validity of addresses on application form?
Is it done by WSCC or schools?**

In the normal admission rounds schools are required to ask for proof of address, WSCC will ask for proof of address if the applicant moves. Proof of address becomes important if a school is oversubscribed.

26. Grave concern from parents about the wellbeing of a child if they get sent to a different school from all their friends.

This is a matter for parents to discuss with the relevant school.

27. Has any consideration been given to extending new primary school beyond Year 6?

Should a new school wish to establish as an all-through i.e. aged 4-16 years, then the Academy Trust would need to make a case to the DfE through the Government's Free School process. WSCC do not plan to extend existing primary schools beyond Year 6.

28. What's the future plan for recruitment of teachers?

Schools are responsible for teacher recruitment; however the local authority works with schools and governing bodies to promote the benefits of working in West Sussex. Each year a recruitment fair is held and schools are invited to participate. In 2018, WSCC held two recruitment fairs; one at Fontwell Racecourse and one at Ifield Community College, Crawley. Over 600 people attended who were actively seeking employed roles in schools. WSCC proposes to organise similar events in 2019.