

SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

Position Statement Autumn 2017

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Over the last 5 years secondary numbers have been stable with demand being met by existing capacity. This position is changing as large primary cohorts, created by rising birth rates and increased housing, move up putting pressure on secondary capacity. Forecasts indicate that demand for secondary places could exceed capacity in some areas from 2018 onwards.

Secondary place planning in Torbay is difficult due to the high number of grammar school places which admit according to attainment rather than location. Data shows that over 50% of Torbay grammar school places are allocated to pupils from outside of Torbay. This has a considerable impact on place planning. In Torquay the grammar schools account for over 30% of places available and in Brixham the grammar school accounts for over 40% of places available. In 2016 the net effect of pupil migration across all year groups was an additional 662 secondary pupils into Torbay.

Low and stable secondary numbers has enabled the Council to accommodate this in-migration up until now. However, larger and growing cohorts will make this more of a challenge. The Council will need to maintain a working margin of surplus to allow for variations in the selective school intake and ensure all Torbay secondary pupils have a school place.

Therefore, planning for the long term the Council is looking for solutions that meet both the forecast demand based on historical trends and which provide a recommended surplus capacity of between 5% and 10% to allow for a variable selective intake. This level of surplus also allows for parental preference, in-year admissions and any unforeseen growth from local improvements such as the new link road which has made Torbay a viable commuter district for thriving cities such as Exeter.

Further pressure has been placed on capacity through the impact of organisational changes and the condition of existing buildings at some academies. The impact of these was not an issue when numbers were low but now present obstacles for the Council when looking for schools to expand.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE DEMAND?

Birth rates remain high compared to previous years but numbers can fluctuate year on year and town to town which creates uncertainty for some schools.

Housing developments in Paignton are being delivered quicker and in greater quantities. Current developments have a higher percentage of small starter homes which, with investment in new businesses and local amenities, is attracting younger families to the area. This is evident from the Council's assessment of recently completed housing developments and has led to an increase in the pupil yield per dwelling from 0.24 to 0.39. This higher figure reflects the national picture and has been included in the latest forecasts.

Future development sites in the west of **Paignton** have been ear-marked for early delivery as a departure to the Local Plan. Whilst these developments cannot be included in the Council's projections until planning has been submitted, they are considered to be areas of significant growth and will impact on the demand for school places.

Net in-migration is a significant factor for school place planning in Torbay and results from a larger number of children moving in to the area than moving out. This has become particularly noticeable since the completion of the South Devon Highway which has made Torbay a viable commuter region for large cities such as Exeter and Plymouth.

WHAT DO THE LATEST FORECASTS SHOW?

Pupil forecasts are published in the Summer Term and are calculated using school census data.

Secondary numbers in **TORQUAY** are rising and additional places are needed from September 2019 to meet demand.

TORQUAY	<i>Year 7 forecasts</i>
2016-17 (actual)	887
2017-18	842
2018-19	920
2019-20	969
2020-21	931
2021-22	991
2022-23	1000

The current number of Year 7 places in **Torquay** is 961.

Secondary numbers in **PAIGNTON** are rising and additional places are needed from September 2019 to meet demand.

PAIGNTON	<i>Year 7 forecasts</i>
2016-17 (actual)	293
2017-18	291
2018-19	292
2019-20	306
2020-21	329
2021-22	317
2022-23	336

The current number of Year 7 places in **Paignton** is 300.

Secondary numbers in **BRIXHAM** are fluctuating and places could be needed from September 2018.

BRIXHAM	<i>Year 7 forecasts</i>
2016-17 (actual)	342
2017-18	308
2018-19	365
2019-20	318
2020-21	396
2021-22	338
2022-23	410

The current number of Year 7 places in **Brixham** is 355.

IMPLICATIONS AND ACTIONS?

TORQUAY:

- Forecasts indicate that demand will exceed capacity from 2019 onwards. To meet the immediate need the Council has brokered an agreement with one secondary school to take a bulge class in 2019 and 2021. The school will utilise accommodation currently not in use because of small cohorts in other year groups in the school. A total of 30 additional places will be provided for the each of the admitting years only. This is only a short term solution and current projections show that secondary numbers will remain high and exceed this extra capacity from 2022 onwards.
- Officers are exploring permanent solutions to deliver additional capacity. Recently the Council supported an application in Wave 12 of the Free Schools Programme for an all-through school in Edginswell. Unfortunately the application was not successful. Feedback from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is that they were unable to support the application as the proposed new housing for the area does not yet have outline planning approval. The Council is maintaining a watching brief for Wave 13 of the Free School Programme and will support the submission of any applications that would deliver additional capacity for the area.

PAIGNTON:

- Forecasts indicate that demand will exceed capacity from 2019 onwards and numbers are expected to continue to rise for the foreseeable future reflecting the growth in the Paignton primary sector.
- There is currently only one secondary school in Paignton. Options for expanding this school will be expensive because the school has a lot of poor condition accommodation that will require replacement if the school is to increase in size. At this time no viable solution has been identified; discussions are ongoing with the Regional Schools Commissioner and ESFA.
- The Council is maintaining a watching brief for Wave 13 of the Free School Programme and will support the submission of any applications that would deliver additional capacity for the area.

BRIXHAM:

- Forecasts indicate that over the next 5 years secondary numbers will not steadily increase as they are expected to in Torquay and Paignton but instead will have peaks and dips which mirror spikes in the live birth rate for the area. There has also been a recent increase in admission numbers for Churston Grammar School. The selective nature of the intake makes it difficult to predict future growth as a significant number of places are offered to pupils from out of area.
- Whilst current forecasts show that during the peaks, numbers will exceed capacity, during the dips there is sufficient capacity to meet demand. With birth rates and primary numbers stabilising in Brixham, the Council does not propose to make any permanent changes to capacity in the area at this time.
- Options will be considered as a temporary solution to meet the expected peaks in demand. For example a bulge class for one year to accommodate extra pupils.

NEXT STEPS?

Forecasts and implications will be reviewed at the following points:

- Autumn Term 2017 following actual admissions (including late) for September 2017
- Spring Term 2018 following school census
- As new planning applications for large housing developments are received and approved

Free School Programme Wave 13

- No guidance has yet been issued for Wave 13
- If Wave 13 proceeds with the same criteria as previous waves, Torbay Council will support any applications that provide additional secondary school places within Torbay.

AUTUMN 2017 UPDATE

The actual numbers admitted for Year 7 September 2017 are in line with latest forecasts. There has also been a significant rise in late applications which will impact all year groups.

FURTHER INFORMATION?

For further information on planning for secondary school places please contact:

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