

Background Paper - Needs Assessment – Education
Last updated: 13 September 2013

1. Policy Background

National

Education Act 1996

The Council has a duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that sufficient schools are available for their area for providing primary and secondary education.

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Key policies within the National Planning Policy Framework, relevant to education are

- There should be encouragement for sustainable development, based on the 3 roles – economic, social and environmental (para 7);
- Local Plans should meet objectively assessed need (para 14);
- Identify strategic sites for local investment, ensure the Plan supports business, identify any potential for clusters of knowledge driven, creative or high tech industries and priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement (para 21),
- There should be positive planning for community and local facilities (para 70),
- Para 72 refers to the need to make sufficient provision for a choice of school places, Local Planning Authorities should take a positive and collaborative approach to meeting requirements and to development which will widen choice in education
- The need for various uses should be assessed using a robust evidence base (details are specified in paras 159, 160, 161 and 73);

Regional

London Plan

Policy 3.16 – Protection and Enhancement of Social Infrastructure

LDFs should provide a framework for collaboration with social infrastructure providers and community organisations to assess need and allocate sites. Boroughs should ensure that adequate social infrastructure provision is made to support new developments.

Policy 3.18 – Education Facilities

LDFs should provide the framework for the regular assessment of need for pre-school, school, higher and further educations institutions and community learning facilities at local and sub-regional levels and secure sites for future provision recognising local needs and specific requirements

Local

The Core Strategy is the strategic policy document, policies relevant to education are

CP 18 Education and Training, this policy seeks to ensure that the provision of schools, pre-schools and other education and training facilities are sufficient in quality and quantity to meet the needs of residents, land in education use will be safeguarded, new sites may be identified in the Site Allocations Plan and the potential of existing educational sites maximised through redevelopment, refurbishment or re-use to meet educational needs. Facilities should be in convenient locations

The Development Management Plan takes forward the Core Strategy with more detailed policies for the control of development, policies relevant to education are:-

Policy DM OS 7 Children's and Young People's Play Facilities
Policy DM OS 8 Sport and Recreation Facilities
Policy DM SI 1 Encouraging New Social Infrastructure Provision
Policy DM SI 2 Loss of Existing Social Infrastructure Provision

Other relevant Borough policy

Corporate Plan

Under the Section entitled "The best schools in London: New schools and places" there is the aim to ensure that the current and future generations of children and young people fully realise their potential. Commitments include:-

- Delivering greater choice, diversity for parents and promoting the independence and autonomy of schools.
- Promoting excellence in education to deliver the highest levels of achievement.

Key activities relevant to the Site Allocations Plan are

- Develop further partnerships with free schools and private schools.
- Promote choice in education - promoting sixth form provision in schools and establishing a local Catholic secondary school.
- Expand the number of primary school places in the borough.

Education Strategy

The Council's overarching ten year education strategy 'Choice and diversity: putting policy into practice', approved in December 2010, proposed

- A 10-year strategy to provide adequate numbers of high quality primary places including the possibility of 'free school' status
- Increased numbers of high quality secondary places including Catholic secondary provision
- Creating sixth form provision on school sites
- Enhancing the freedom and diversity of schools through academy status for all schools on a planned and agreed path
- Developing community engagement in education through the setting up of community boards to work with academies in local areas (the so-called 'quadrants')
- Moving from providing to commissioning high quality children's services

2. Research and Evidence

Demand is assessed by the Council by taking the number of live births per year and estimating the number of families moving into the area with children. Factors are applied to estimate uptake and the number of children outside the Borough who wish to use Borough schools for each age and type of school. The Council's school place planning is regularly reviewed in the light of changes in birth and admissions data, and the establishment of any free schools would also need to be taken into account.

Forecasts of demand are reviewed three at least times a year and continually monitored. More details are given under each type of provision.

Early Years Education

All childcare supporting children from birth until the age of 5 follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. As part of the EYFSE, there are private day care nurseries from approximately 3 months old, pre-school education is provided for children from the age of 3 in private and voluntary nurseries and pre-schools, independent schools and by the Local Authority who has one nursery school and sixteen primary schools with nursery units for this age group.

Children's centres are a partnership between the Council, schools, the Primary Care Trust, Richmond Housing Partnership, the Metropolitan Police, the voluntary and community sector, Jobcentre Plus, the private sector and local families. They offer a range of services and facilities including early years provision. There are six in the borough, in Ham, Heathfield, Mortlake, Hampton Hill, Twickenham and Hampton.

Demand is likely to remain high for pre-school and nursery places with the number per year of live births in the borough (see section on Primary Education), however with a number of providers to respond to needs there is no assessment of a gap in provision, apart from a shortfall in Ham. This is likely to be provided either by private childminders or extending existing facilities and is therefore unlikely to require any specific site to be identified in the Site Allocations Plan.

Primary Education

There are 43 primary phase schools (five infant, five junior and 33 all-through primary) in the borough. 25 of these are non-faith schools, 10 are Church of England and seven are Catholic. Of the 38 infant and primary schools (admitting pupils at Reception) 21 are on the Middlesex side of the Thames and 17 are on the Surrey side.

Free Schools are non-profit making, independent, state-funded schools. In this borough two have been approved, both primary, in Hampton and Mortlake, to open in September 2013, with others currently at the proposal stage.

There are 23 private schools within the borough, catering, between them, for all age groups, and in addition some in-borough pupils attend private schools outside the borough. The percentage of borough-resident children educated privately varies over time and is sensitive to factors such as the economic climate and the performance and popularity of state-funded schools, and is therefore a factor influencing demand for state-funded schools within the borough.

The Council has a duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that sufficient schools are available for their area for providing primary education. The Council's overarching ten year education strategy 'Choice and diversity: putting policy into practice', approved in December 2010, outlines plans for key educational priorities, including the provision of sufficient numbers of high-quality primary school places.

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of live births in the borough rose steadily, from 2,384 to 2,992, a cumulative increase of 25.5%. Our primary schools have been top of the national Key Stage 2 league tables throughout that period. As a result, since the 2004/2005 school year, when there was a considerable amount of spare capacity, demand for Reception places, exacerbated by the economic downturn, has increased by almost 500 children.

In Richmond, where a large percentage – on average 30% prior to 2008 – of parents has traditionally opted for the private sector for their children's primary education, the effects of

the economy on school place demand have been far more marked than in boroughs where that percentage has always been much lower.

The borough also has the second highest percentage – 97.5% – in London of children attending state-funded primary schools in its area who also live within the borough.

Primary school place planning in Richmond Borough is further complicated by the fact that it is unique within London in being bisected by the Thames, which creates a natural barrier for admission patterns; and by the fact that the borough is largely densely-built and travel across it can therefore be difficult at the start and of the school day, which means that parents rightly expect to be able to access schools within walkable distance. We aim to provide places for children within 1.5 miles of their home address and seek to provide places to meet demand from 'black holes' that aren't especially close to any particular schools.

Demand has increased in all areas of the borough, with the results that the 'cut-off' distances have shrunk considerably for schools which use 'home to school distance' as the main oversubscription criterion, and those what were traditionally less popular schools are now over-subscribed.

Between 2000 and 2013, an extra 21 forms of entry, providing a total of 4,410 places, have been provided on a permanent basis within the borough, and three new schools (two free schools – Thomson House and St Mary's, Hampton – and St Richard Reynolds Catholic Primary) opened in September 2013.

As at present, in the medium- to long-term it is likely that there will be a need to consider additional provision in the Barnes/East Sheen/ Mortlake; Richmond; Teddington; and Twickenham areas. If demand were to be exacerbated by variable factors – e.g. continuing economic difficulties altering the proportion of children whose parents opt for private schools; large 'pupil yields' from housing developments at Twickenham Station, the Royal Mail site, Stag Brewery, etc.; and further improvements in standards across the borough's primary and secondary schools – then the projections of pupil numbers could be higher than anticipated.

The general approach to increasing primary provision will be

- To expand existing schools where possible (although the number of opportunities to do this is diminishing, as a large number of primary schools have already been expanded in recent years) this will include continuing to encourage the expansion of private primaries where there is on site capacity.
- To seek new provision on larger development sites, such as at the Stag Brewery, to be provided as part of the redevelopment.
- To seek new state funded provision, i.e. free schools, on other sites as and when they become available.

Secondary Education

There are nine secondary schools in the borough, seven of which are academies and two are voluntary-aided. St Richard Reynolds Catholic High School (Twickenham) opened in September 2013, and feasibility work has been undertaken to provide a further secondary (together with a rebuilt college and new SEN school) at Richmond upon Thames College, Twickenham.

There is one secondary free school proposal, for September 2014 opening, although this has been pre-approved for opening by the Secretary of State, no site has been identified as yet.

There are 23 private schools within the borough, catering, between them, for all age groups, and in addition some Borough pupils attend private schools outside the Borough. The percentage of borough-resident children educated privately varies over time and is sensitive to factors such as the economic climate and the performance and popularity of state-funded schools, and is therefore a factor influencing demand for state-funded schools within the borough.

The Council has a duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that sufficient schools are available for their area for providing secondary education. The Council's overarching ten year education strategy 'Choice and diversity: putting policy into practice', approved in December 2010, outlines plans for key educational priorities, including the provision of sufficient numbers of high-quality secondary school places. The Education 'White Paper' stated that the Council "will undertake feasibility for one, possibly two, additional secondary schools (including one Roman Catholic) in the borough". The Council has agreed to establish a Catholic secondary (and primary) school in Clifden Road, Twickenham with the Diocese of Westminster. A new Catholic primary will be opening in September 2013 in Twickenham.

Despite the 25.5% increase in live births per year between 2000 and 2010, there has traditionally been, and still is, considerable spare capacity in the secondary school provision within the borough, with, as at January 2013, 196 spare places in Year 7 across the borough. Unlike at primary level, where almost all the state-maintained schools in the borough are highly successful and therefore very popular, at secondary level it may take longer than had previously been envisaged for the positive changes at the three sponsored (as opposed to convertor) academies to translate into oversubscription. For that and other reasons (including the possible establishment of free schools; and the establishment of a eight-form entry secondary school in north Kingston in 2015, which would free up 100+ places at Grey Court and Christ's for Richmond Borough children), it is probable that the increased demand in the primary sector will not lead to capacity being exceeded until beyond 2016 at the earliest.

Although demand is expected to increase towards capacity by 2016, it is not forecast to exceed it at that point. At this stage, it is difficult to envisage when, if at all, demand will exceed capacity. As the educational landscape is fast changing, particularly in regard to free schools, many possible developments could take place over the next few years and it is therefore difficult to forecast demand for secondary school places as accurately as is the case at primary level. A working assumption is therefore that there will be a need for a new non-faith school within the Site Allocations Plan period, and the Council has therefore recently been consulting on enabling one at Richmond upon Thames College's site in 2017.

Special Needs Education

The Council is committed to improving the educational outcomes of children with special educational needs (SEN) and this is a key priority in the Children and Young People's Plan. The majority of pupils' needs can be met within mainstream settings. And to further this aim the authority is increasing the number of provisions within mainstream schools designated for children with statements of special educational needs and several building projects for SEN provision have recently been delivered. The borough also maintains two special schools that provide more specialist support if it is required – Clarendon School, Hampton (for pupils aged 7-16 who have moderate learning difficulties) and Strathmore School, Petersham (for pupils aged between 7-19 who have severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties). The Council is seeking to re-provide for these children in new purpose built facilities at Richmond upon Thames College, Twickenham (as part of a re-developed education site), and by re-developing Strathmore School across a number of school sites.

Further/Higher/Adult Education

By September 2014, sixth forms will have been established at eight of the nine secondary schools in the borough, and a sixth form is planned for the new St Richard Reynolds School in 2018.

Richmond upon Thames College in Egerton Road has approximately 4,000 full-time students aged 16-19 years old and offers these students a wide range of courses and subjects. It also offers a range of adult courses, many leading to professional qualifications, and a number of higher education courses, some in partnership with Kingston University. It is proposed to redevelop this site to re-provide a purpose built college, new secondary school and new special school and this will form one of the proposals within the Site Allocations Plan.

Richmond Adult Community College will be solely based at Parkshot in Richmond. It provides further education, adult learning, vocational and skills training, approximately 1300 courses in 14 (out of 15) of the Sector Subject Areas that define the further education sector. No further changes are anticipated which would affect the Site Allocations Plan.

St Mary's University College is a university for around 4,000 students with specialisms in Sports and Teacher Training. The main campus is on Waldegrave Road in Twickenham; St Mary's Hall, and the University College's main sports fields are on the Teddington Lock site opposite the Lensbury Club in Broom Road, Teddington. Kingston University is also close to the borough, with one of the student halls of residence located at Hampton Wick. The Council has not identified any further site specific needs within the Borough in relation to either University.

Consultation

The Education Department have carried out a number of recent consultations, for example on whether sixth forms should be provided in schools and whether a Catholic school should be provided – both of these issues were supported. In addition there have been consultations on specific sites as proposals have been brought forward. These consultations have focussed on educational principles rather than planning issues. A current consultation is on the educational principles of redeveloping Richmond College (in Twickenham) for a new college, secondary school and special school, further information will be provided as results are known. As planning applications are brought forward there is normally early consultation with stakeholders and then the application goes through the usual statutory consultation procedures.