



numbers of children being born may not continue, secondly there is the potential effect that housing development may have on the distribution of children and local admission preferences, and thirdly the trends may vary across each of the Townships.

3.2 In considering the number of additional Reception class places needed, and where they are to be provided, further factors need to be taken into account. These are: where the children were born; the past patterns of parental preferences in those localities; the availability of space to provide the places; the effect of infant class size legislation; and redistribution of population. Overall it is important to ensure that there are sufficient school places without increasing surplus capacity.

3.3 Increasing an admission number does not by itself guarantee that the additional pupils will appear on the school roll. The financial implications of this are that unless sufficient extra pupils take up places, then schools will find it difficult to fund the cost of an extra teacher, if a new class group has to be set up.

#### **4. Consultation proposed:**

4.1 Before decisions are taken on specific proposals at individual schools there will be consultation with schools, Dioceses and Township committees. The consultation will be undertaken based upon the consultation paper to be released when this report is approved. The document will be circulated to all schools at the start of November (nursery, primary, secondary and special), and will be presented to the Township Committees, the Schools Forum, the Governors Forum, and Diocesan authorities. The document will be available through the Rochdale MBC website. The closing date for responses will be Friday 18th December, so that a further report can be presented to Cabinet in January 2010. Attached to this report is the summary of the proposals for additional places.

#### **5. The need to examine the demand for Primary School places:**

5.1 In 2002 the Local Authority undertook a Review of Primary School Places to address the very high level of surplus capacity in primary schools at the time, and in a context of falling live births. That review removed a significant number of surplus places and reduced the number of schools with more than 25% surplus places thus enabling the Authority to secure capital resources to build 5 brand new schools and remodelled others. It also recognised that surplus places were often not where there was demand. If the Authority had not successfully undertaken that review, those resources are unlikely to have been secured, and the Authority would have been criticised by key government agencies for failure to manage school places effectively.

5.2 In order to create resilient schools that can thrive in the long term the authority has to ensure a good match between the supply of school places and the demand for them. It is not a static situation, and school place planning is an ongoing responsibility, taking account of the many changes that are taking place. At the present time the number of births is higher than in previous years and, through Housing Market Renewal, there are potential changes to local demand for places. Further, several thousand new homes are planned over the next 15 years and we need to be mindful that this is likely to result in changing patterns of recruitment to our primary schools.

5.3 Through the Primary Review the Authority acted to reduce capacity in schools where, at the time, there was little prospect of that capacity being used as class bases directly by schools. This resulted in space being available in schools to support "extended" use by

young children, their families and the community. The Authority is aware of recruitment patterns at popular schools and several primary schools in the borough are heavily oversubscribed. The Authority recognises the need to give parents greater scope to access places at the schools they want, and that this may have a knock-on effect to other schools.

5.4 Births in the Borough reflect the national trend. From about 2001-02 they have been rising steadily. In 2006-7 there was a very sharp increase in the number of live births. Generally it is expected that of the children born in the Borough 95% of them take up a Reception class place. As with all the data, there is variation at Township level which is outlined in more detail in the attached consultation document. The most recent information is that there was a fall in the number of children born in the Borough in 2008-09.

5.5 With these points in mind, the consultation paper plots the trend in births and using the accepted methodology projects those actual births and pupils on roll to their admission at school in future years. With the total Reception Class capacity (PAN) of 2,756 places, it is expected that at least 2,908 children will require Reception Class places in September 2011, and in 2012 that number rises to 2,957. In 2013 it is expected that the demand will fall to 2875 places.

5.6 In the past not all children born in the Borough take up Reception Class places. On average it has been about 95% of those children. This pattern is taken into account in projecting demand for future places. On the basis of the number of children born in the borough and the number of Reception class places available we can therefore project the number of school places that will be needed. This means that in September 2011 an additional **152 Reception class places (5 Forms of Entry<sup>1</sup>)** will be needed across the Borough, and in September 2012 a total of 201 places (**7 Forms of Entry**) will also be needed. In September 2013 there will be total of 119 extra places needed (**4 Forms of Entry**). These projections are the minimum provision needed, and assume all available Reception class places in every primary school in the Borough will be filled. In each case they relate to the baseline of the current admission capacity.

5.7 On the basis of current information the minimum position at Township level is projected as follows:

- i) **Heywood**- 1 Form of Entry (FE) in 2012 and a further ½ FE in 2013,
- ii) **Middleton**- ½ FE in September 2010, a further 2FE in 2011, and a further 1 ½ FE in each of 2012 and 2013,
- iii) **Rochdale**- 2 FE in 2011 and a further 3 ½ FE in 2012, and further 2 FE in 2013; and
- iv) **Pennines**- 1 Form of Entry in 2011, a further 1 ½ FE in 2012, and then a further 1 FE in 2013.

## 6. The position for 2010 admissions

6.1 At borough level, for admission in September 2009, there are a total of 2,756 Reception Class places. Based on past patterns of admission and preference, in 2008 the projected Reception cohort for September 2009 was 2,666 pupils, leaving 90 Reception Class places spare. However, presently (17<sup>th</sup> September 2009) 2,712 children have been offered Reception Class places, leaving 44 spare places. At Township level this means that places are very tight in both Rochdale and Heywood townships, although there is limited flexibility

---

<sup>1</sup> 1 Form of entry represents 30 children (1FE). It is a helpful way to describe the additional places needed because it relates to the way in which schools are organised. It also helps to remind us of the need to comply with Infant Class Size limits.

in Middleton and Pennine Townships. This represents an increase in the percentage of pupils from the available cohort being admitted to Reception Classes in the borough, and the projections for September 2010 will be revised to reflect this change in past trends.

6.2 The experience of this year's admission round has shown the importance of parents submitting applications on time if they are to have the best opportunity of securing the school place of choice. For admission to Reception Class in September 2009, applications were received on time for just over 2,200 children, and there were also about 600 late applications. With this in mind steps are already being taken to reduce this very high rate of late applications, for example, primary and nursery schools and Children's Centres have received application packs for distribution to parents and schools will be asked to follow up known "missing" applicants. Voluntary and private early years providers have been asked at briefing meetings to encourage parents to contact the Local Authority or a local primary school for an application pack. The availability of the pack and the deadline for applications has been widely advertised. Parents can apply for places online.

6.3 The closing date for applications for Reception places next September is 27<sup>th</sup> November 2009. After this date the Authority will look closely at the number of applications and the demand for places at Township and school level. The Authority will look at this new information together with projected numbers. It will then consider whether any additional Reception Class places might be needed before offers of places are made in March 2010 for admission in September 2010. Where it is proposed that a Planned Admission Number should be increased an application would be made to the Schools Adjudicator for an in-year variation, and steps taken to ensure accommodation is in place.

## **7. Personnel Implications:**

7.1 Where a school needs to appoint an additional teacher to comply with class size limits or to establish an additional teaching group, it is the responsibility of the school to select and appoint such staff from within the school's budget. There are no other personnel implications.

## **8. Financial implications:**

8.1 At any school where an increase in admission number is proposed and agreed, for either September 2010 or September 2011 onwards, there are likely to be capital costs associated with bringing space into use for class teaching purposes, or for the provision of temporary accommodation. These costs will need to be met from the overall primary schools capital programme.

8.2 Through their revenue budgets, schools receive funding which enables them to comply with Infant Class Size Regulations. School budgets are for financial years based on pupil numbers as per the January census data. For September 2011 any planned increase in numbers will allow schools to budget for additional staff. However, if fewer children than expected are actually on roll, then this may adversely affect the school budget. For this reason it is important that consultees are clear about the effect on school budgets of any proposals on admission numbers. For September 2010, if additional places become planned for any school, under Regulations the LA is able to fund the estimated increase in places if this is significant so the school will receive extra funding for the planned places.

## **9. Implementation of proposals**

9.1 Proposals for Planned Admission Numbers for September 2011 need to be agreed in spring 2010. The timescale for the proposed consultation will enable that deadline to be

met. Where internal modifications or additional space are required, to provide additional Reception Class places, this gives enough lead-in time to plan for that with the schools involved. Due account will be taken of expected demand for Reception Class places for September 2012, and the impact that has both on space requirements at schools affected and any requirement for the publication of statutory proposals. Where changes to admission numbers are needed for September 2010, the effect of that decision on later years admissions will also be taken into account, and an application will be made to the Schools Adjudicator for an in-year variation.

## **10. Conclusions**

- 10.1 This report, and the attached summary of proposals, set out the need to consider additional primary school Reception Class places from September 2011. Proposals in the consultation paper (available through the Rochdale MBC website) take account of the available data and trends. As further factual information becomes available, this will be included in the documentation. It is important that schools, Township committees and Diocesan authorities are able to consider the issues raised, consider the initial proposals and put forward their views before Cabinet takes a final decision in Spring 2010.

**Sue Brown**  
**Head of Schools Service**

**For further information and background papers:** For further information about this report or access to any background papers please contact Chris Swift: telephone 01706 925016, e-mail [chris.swift@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:chris.swift@rochdale.gov.uk)

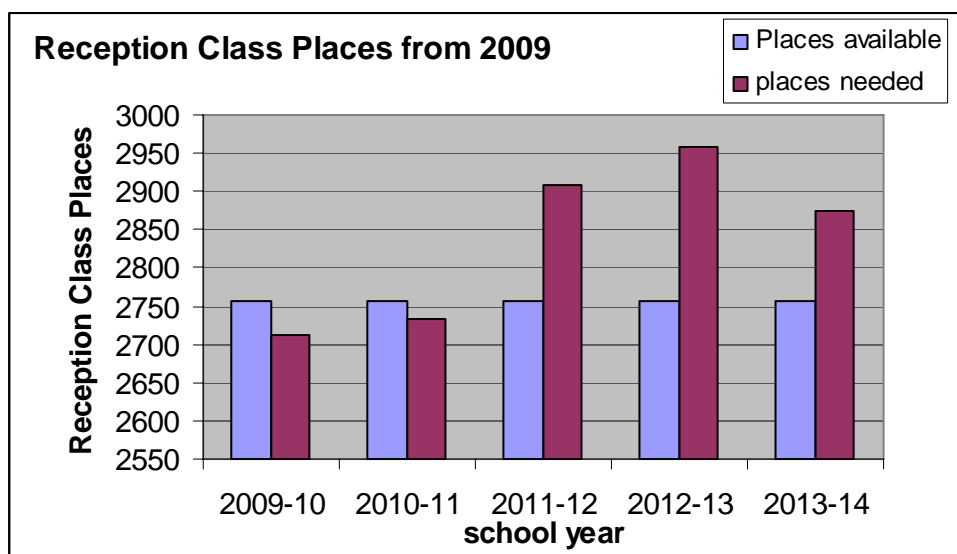
# Rochdale MBC: CONSULTATION PAPER

## Projected Pupil Numbers and the Demand for Primary School Reception Class Places to 2013-14.



### SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTATION

- On the basis of known births, the current number of Reception Class places, the proportion of children taking up Reception Class places, and expecting that ALL schools fill their Reception Classes the Authority expects extra places will be needed in all parts of the Borough. The expected number of extra places required, compared to now, is as follows:
  - September 2010 there are enough admission places overall, although additional places will be needed to meet local pressures in different parts of the borough;
  - September 2011 it is expected that at an extra 152 places will be needed, that is just over 5 Forms of Entry;
  - in September 2012 it is expected that an extra 201 places will be needed, that is about 7 Forms of Entry ( an additional 2 FE over the 2011 level); and
  - in September 2013, it is expected that an extra 119 places will be needed, that is about 4 Forms of Entry (similar to the 2011 level).
- It is recognised that the actual number of class groups required will be different from the minimum figures above to take account of pupil distribution, infant class size limits and local demand pressures. The chart below illustrates the expected demand for Reception Class places.



- The focus of this consultation paper is to look at the at the need for extra Primary School Reception Class places in September 2011, taking account of the extra places that will also be needed from 2012. The paper also raises the situation for admissions in September 2010, so that any necessary action can be taken in a timely manner. Information is given at Borough level, and on the way in which pupil number projections are made. Information is then given at Township level, together with proposals for

consultation on meeting that increase in demand. The consultation is with Schools, governors, Diocesan authorities and Township Committees.

4. **Heywood Township:** On the basis of current information there should be enough Reception class places for September 2010, although the situation will need to be monitored throughout the admissions process. It is expected that in September 2011, 5 additional places will be needed, so a small increase in admission number at one school should provide enough places, and this will need to be monitored in the light of applications for places in the township. In September 2012, an extra 27 places will be needed, about 1 Form of Entry. In September 2013, 12 extra places will be needed, about ½ Form of Entry.
5. **Middleton Township:** The position in Middleton is that 17 extra places will need to be provided in September 2010, that is, just over ½ Form of Entry. In September 2011 67 extra places will be needed, that is just over 2 Forms of Entry. In September 2012 an extra 45 places will be needed, that is 1½ Forms of Entry. In September 2013, an extra 39 places will be needed, that is about 1 ½ Forms of Entry.
6. **Rochdale Township:** On the basis of current information there should be enough Reception class places for September 2010, although the situation will need to be monitored throughout the admissions process. In September 2011 an extra 66 places will be needed, that is about 2 Forms of Entry. In September 2012 an extra 102 places will be needed, that is about 3½ Forms of Entry. In September an extra 58 places will be needed, that is 2 Forms of Entry.
7. **Pennine Township:** On the basis of current information there would be enough Reception class places for September 2010, although the situation will need to be monitored throughout the admissions process. In September 2011 it is expected that an extra 34 places will be needed, that is just over 1 Form of Entry. In September 2012 an extra 45 places will be needed, that is 1½ Forms of Entry. In September 2013 an extra 28 places will be needed, that is about 1 Form of Entry.
8. **Housing Developments:** The focus of this report and the consultation is on meeting the demand for Reception Class places in the next two years, whilst taking into consideration the pattern of admission pressures that can be expected up to 2013. It does not seek to assess the impact of any long term housing development, because that will be addressed as part of revising the School Organisation Plan during 2010. However, for admissions in September 2010 and 2011, account will be taken of local housing developments, so that sufficient admission places are provided.

The full consultation paper is available on the Rochdale MBC website from 27<sup>th</sup> October 2009:  
[http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/consultations/education\\_-\\_consultations.aspx](http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/consultations/education_-_consultations.aspx)

The document gives the overall Boroughwide position, and there is then a separate document for each township.

The deadline for responses is FRIDAY 18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2009, by post or e-mail to:

**Chris Swift**

School Re-Organisation Manager,

PO Box 70, Municipal Offices, Smith Street, ROCHDALE, OL16 1YD

Telephone: 01706 925016. e-mail: [chris.swift@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:chris.swift@rochdale.gov.uk)