

Report to Rochdale South Township



Date of Meeting	6 th December 2022
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education
Report Author	Fay Davies, School Place Planning Manager Early Help & Schools
Public/Private Document	Public

Need for Secondary School Places 2023 - 2026

Executive Summary

- 1.1 Through 2021-22 in-flow into Rochdale has caused significant issues in providing Secondary school places to newcomers to the area. There is a shortage of Secondary places across the Greater Manchester area.
- 1.2 The new Secondary in Littleborough, which will be run by Star Academies, has been "paused" by the Department for Education. The DfE have said that the school will now not be opened before 2025.
- 1.3 The new SEN school timeline for delivery has also been delayed and is currently not expected to be finished until the "2024/25 school year".

Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the new delivery timescales of two new schools; the Littleborough Star Leadership Academy and the Heywood SEN school.
- 2.2 Approve spending of £1.5m from Basic Need funding to provide accommodation for an additional 50 places at Wardle Academy for 2023 intake.
- 2.3 Approve the submission of a bid for the new round of centrally delivered SEN schools.

Reason for Recommendation

- 3.1 The council has a statutory duty to offer every pupil living in the borough, who applies, a Secondary school place. Where the council offers a school place that is over the statutory “safe walking distance” for the age of that child the council is required to provide free school transport. Because bus transport in the area is provided through Transport for Greater Manchester, any child offered a school place, which is over the statutory distance criteria, is offered a free bus pass that is provided from council funds. The council receives no central government funding for school bus transport.
- 3.2 The council does receive Basic Need funding to provide additional school places for both permanent and temporary school building expansions and bulge classes. The allocation of Basic Need funding from central government is reported annually to the council Cabinet and the report this year was approved on 29th March 2022

<h3>Key Points for Consideration</h3>

- 4.1 In order to improve council oversight, and better manage the process of adapting pupil spaces to need, in September 2021 the ADCS created a decision making committee for pupil places with representatives from finance, school improvement and school organisation teams.
- 4.2 The new Edgar Wood Academy opened in September 2021 in temporary accommodation on Hopwood Hall College campus in Middleton. In September 2022 the school opened in its newly finished building off Heywood Old Road near Birch/Bowlee.
- 4.3 In September 2021 Wardle Academy had a building extension to provide 100 additional places; 50 for 2021 and 50 for 2022 intakes. For September 2023 Wardle have offered a further 50 places with a further classroom extension to the new block to be funded by Basic Need DfE funding.

Heywood and Middleton

- 4.4 Because of the usual travel of pupils between Heywood and Middleton these areas are considered together. Available places and forecasts for pupils numbers are shown in figure 1 showing the expectation currently that schools in the Heywood and Middleton area will be at capacity despite the opening of the Edgar Wood Academy.

4.5 The new Edgar Wood Academy opened in September 2021 in temporary accommodation on Hopwood Hall College campus in Middleton. In September 2022 the school opened in its newly finished building off Heywood Old Road near Birch/Bowlee.

4.6 In September 2021 Wardle Academy had a building extension to provide 100 additional places; 50 for 2021 and 50 for 2022 intakes. For September 2023 Wardle have offered a further 50 places with a further classroom extension to the new block to be funded by Basic Need DfE funding.

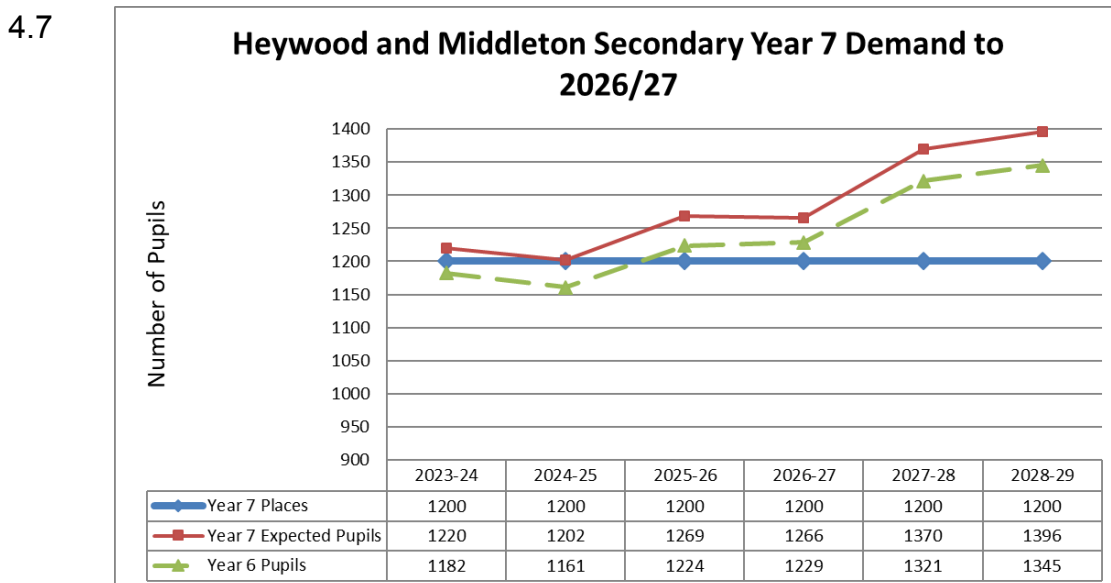


Figure 1: Forecast for Places and expected pupils in the combined Heywood and Middleton area

4.8 The combined Heywood and Middleton area sees an inflow of pupils at Secondary transition with an increase of approximately 3.5%. Because of the unprecedented numbers of pupils arriving in Middleton through last year the forecast predicts that trend to continue. Further expansion of schools may be needed if in-flow into the area continues.

4.9 Admission numbers for the next intake year are shown in the table below.

School	Pupil Admission Number for 2023
Newhouse Academy	210
Holy Family RC & CE College	150
Middleton Technology School	270
Cardinal Langley RC High School	210
St. Anne's Academy	180
Edgar Wood Academy	180
Total	1200

Table 1 Places at Heywood and Middleton schools for 2023

Pennine and Rochdale

4.10 There has been a shortage of places in the popular Pennine Secondary schools for some time. It is expected that additional capacity created at

Wardle Academy for 2022 and 2023 intakes will be filled. In the combined Pennine and Rochdale areas there is, on average, an 11% drop in pupils attending maintained schools between year 6 and year 7. This includes the roughly 3% travelling into the Heywood/Middleton area and 8% of pupils choosing to travel to private, independent, grammar schools, or schools in other local authority areas. The drop in pupils choosing non-Rochdale maintained schools does change year to year between 3% and 9% and therefore out of borough factors can cause inaccuracy in the forecast.

4.11

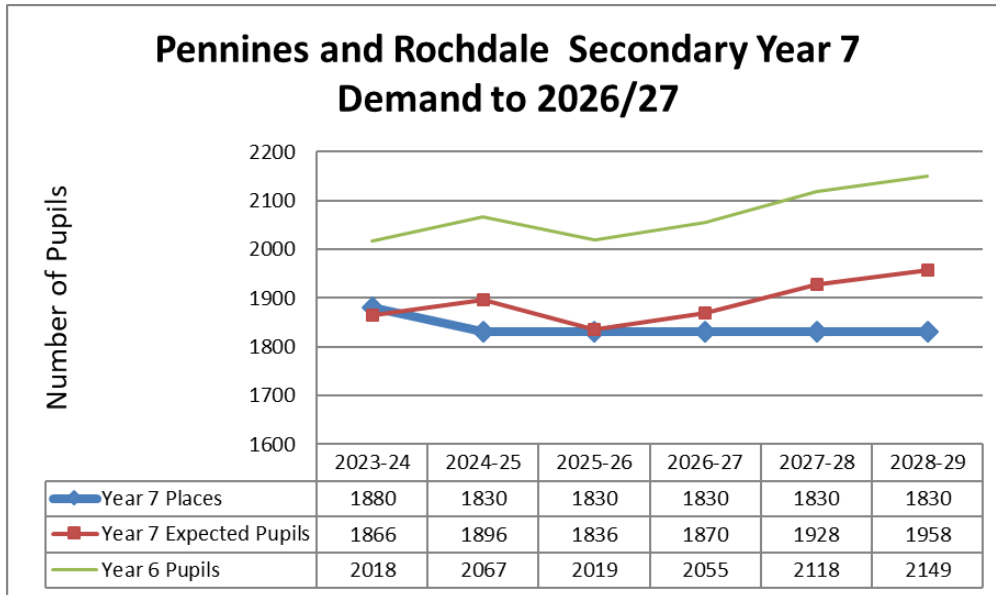


Figure 2: Secondary Intake forecast for Pennine and Rochdale

4.12 The forecast shows insufficient places available in existing schools without the extension at Wardle academy for 2023 intake, and without the new Littleborough school from 2027. Forecasts are reduced when insufficient capacity is produced.

Admission numbers for the next intake year are shown in the table below.

4.13

School	Pupil Admission Number for 2023
Hollingworth Academy	270
Wardle Academy	290
St.Cuthbert's RC High	240
Kingsway Park High	270
Matthew Moss High	240
Oulder Hill School	300
Falinge Park High School	270
Total	1880

Table 2: Places at Pennine and Rochdale schools for 2023

Other considerations

4.14

In 2019 the popular Oldham Crompton House school completed a major extension and increased its intake by 50%. This year (2022) a new school opened in Oldham offering additional places which has increased the offer and uptake of out of borough CoE places with our Families.

Heywood SEN School

- 4.15 Current timelines for the delivery of the Heywood SEN school, to be run by the New Bridge Academy, have slipped again. However a new Department for Education project director has just be put in place and this will hopefully speed up the delivery.
- 4.16 Rochdale Council continues to work very constructively with the New Bridge Trust. The “Rochdale Hub” at Hollinwood has new starters for this intake 2022, and the new accommodation is due to be in place for 2023 year 7 intake.

Alternatives Considered

- 4.17 Alternatives are constantly under review and any impacts of the current pandemic on house building rates or timing of new developments will have knock on effects on school capacity.

<h3>Costs and Budget Summary</h3>

- 5.1 The costs associated with co-ordinating admission arrangements are met from the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- 5.2 Where applicable, schools offering additional pupil places to meet the LA’s statutory need may also be eligible for additional revenue funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant. The policy and funding available for basic need growth has to be agreed with Schools Forum.
- 5.3 Schools are funded based on the number of pupils. Whilst is it acknowledged that a school will have some vacant places, a high number of vacant places in a single year group created if pupils do not materialise as forecast will have an adverse effect on a school’s funding. This can be managed in the short term through the application of the Growth Fund policy but it is not sustainable longer term.

<h3>Risk and Policy Implications</h3>

- 6.1 The application of pupil place planning arrangements contributes to the Council Business Plan in ensuring an effective allocation process for school admissions. The council has a statutory duty to offer a school place to every child living in the borough and must manage the schools estate to meet the predicted need.
- 6.2 Provision of sufficient Secondary school places, within the new school buildings that are being delivered through the centrally managed Free school programme, are not under control of the local authority, but because the statutory duty to provide places resides with the local authority then consequently the local authority needs to be ready to work with local partners to meet the needs of its residents if required.
- 6.3 The financial risks are covered in the Costs and Budget Summary section above

Consultation

- 7. Any additional places created through building works are required to go through the statutory planning consultation process.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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8. Here you should detail any background papers –	and the place of inspection (N1Riverside or elsewhere) – Note: will insert guidance on what is a background paper
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For Further Information Contact:	Fay Davies, , fay.davies@rochdale.gov.uk
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