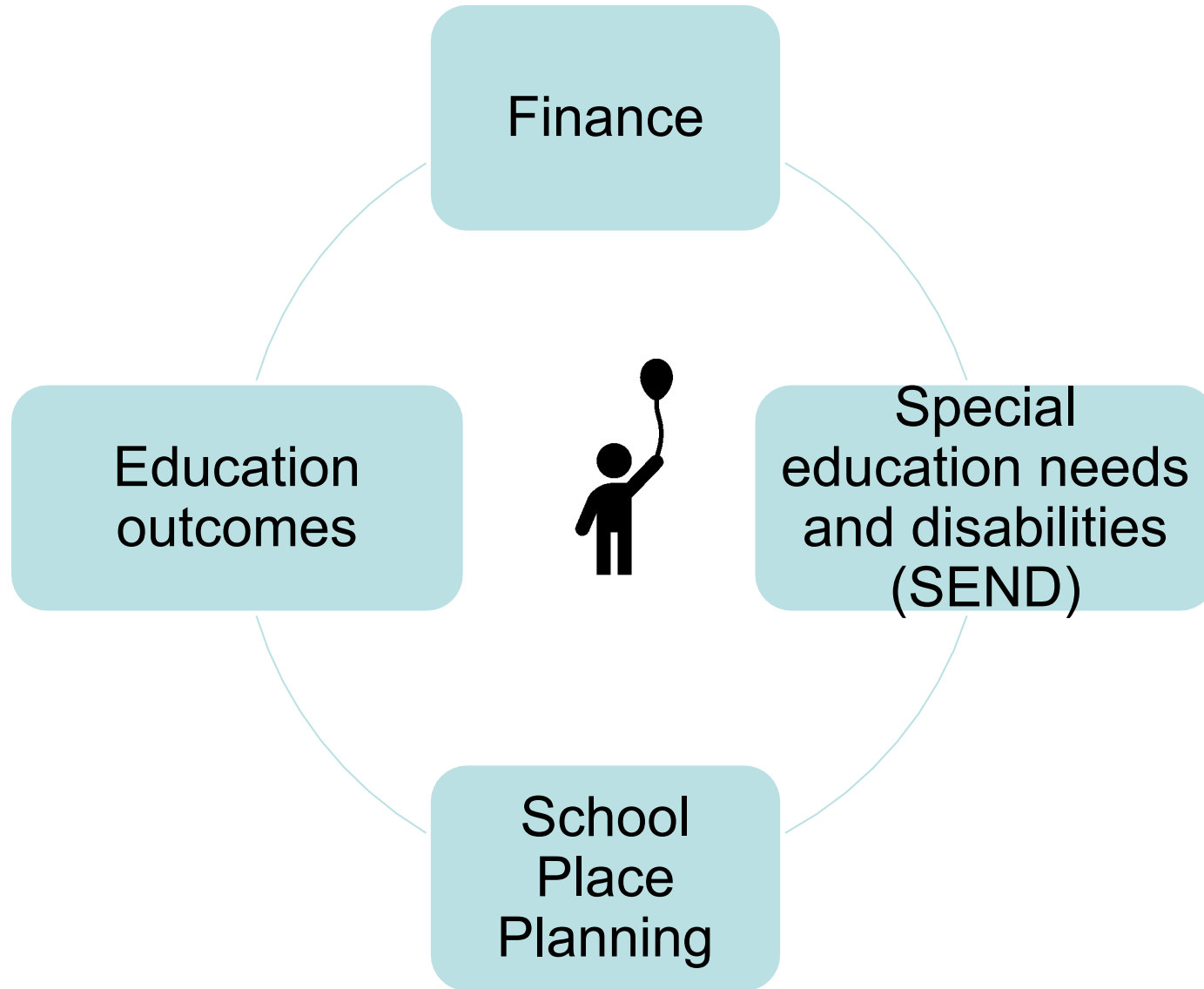




Isle of Wight  
Council

# Children's Services - School Place Planning

## 23 February 2024



# Agenda



Introduction



School Place Planning Overview



Forecasts and data



Impacts of surplus places



Proposed timeframe



Questions

# What is School Place Planning?

- The Isle of Wight Council has a statutory duty to ensure the sufficiency of school places for children living on the Isle of Wight.
- Accordingly, the Isle of Wight Corporate Plan, states that the Council will work with local communities to maintain and ensure appropriate local school provision.
- School place planning requires attention to all of the factors that will influence pupil numbers and also the factors that influence the abilities of schools to thrive.

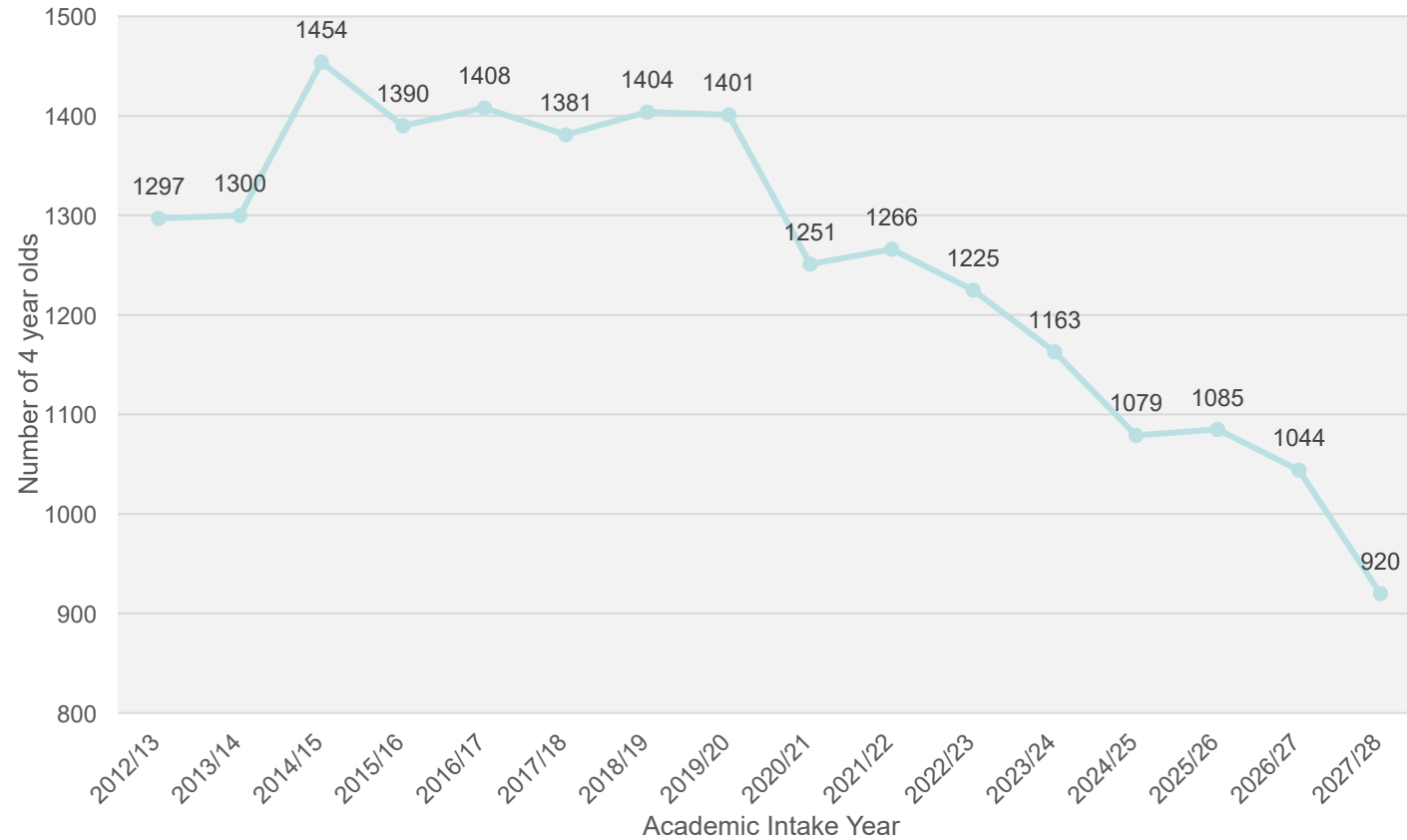
# Things considered when planning:

- Where the children who attend the school live
- Whether the children that attend a faith school do so because of its denomination
- Financial viability
- Transport implications
- Environment implications
- Quality of provision
- Number of pupils choosing to attend the school
- Fabric of the building
- Department for Education guidance about rural schools
- Pupil movement
- Local housing building
- Diversity (faith schools)
- Factors that arise during a consultation process

## **Federation/Academisation**

Nearly half of Isle of Wight primary schools already share leadership  
Most share part time staff or have staff that also work in other schools

# Overview Data – Primary places



## Forecast Islandwide capacity:

	4 year olds	Places available	Surplus
2023/24	1163	1349	186
2024/25	1079	1329	250
2025/26	1085	1319	234
2026/27	1044	1319	275
2027/28	920	1319	399

# Isle of Wight Planning Areas



This review is not about individual planning areas. We require a whole Island approach

# Overview Data – Primary places

Primary Planning Area	Number of Primary Schools	Year R: Total Planned Admission Number Sept	Year R: Number on Roll Sept	Year R: % surplus Sept	Surplus capacity - Year R:	Year R: Proposed Planned Admission Number Sept	Year R: Forecast No. on Roll Sept	Year R: Forecast % surplus Sept	Surplus capacity - Year R:
		2023	2023	2023		2025	2025	2025	
Ryde Town	6	240	204	15%	36	240	160	33%	80
Sandown & Shanklin	7	235	200	15%	35	235	164	30%	71
Cowes	4	180	139	23%	41	180	114	37%	66
Ventnor	4	112	71	37%	41	105	71	32%	34
East Cowes	2	90	75	17%	15	90	66	27%	24
Ryde Rural	2	45	43	4%	2	45	26	42%	19
Newport	9	373	292	22%	81	350	346	4%	4
West Wight	4	74	76	3%	-2	74	81	-9%	-7
		<b>1349</b>	<b>1100</b>		<b>249</b>	<b>1319</b>	<b>1028</b>		<b>291</b>



# The reason we must take action:

- This isn't an issue that is forecast to happen, it is upon us now. Currently, we have **1898** vacant primary school places
- By March 2026, it is forecast that 21 Primary Schools will be in budget deficit. Primary School deficits are estimated to be a cumulative **£3.8m** and pose a significant financial risk to the Isle of Wight Council
- As surplus numbers increase over the coming years schools will be faced with ever greater financial challenges and reduced ability to offer a wide, quality, and varied curriculum. Ultimately impacting school standards
- Parents, carers, staff, and pupils would continue to be faced with uncertainties around the availability and quality of the educational offer on the Island
- We have an opportunity to implement change across the Island's education system.

# What is a small school?

- The Department for Education define a small school as one form of entry or less
- There are only 11 primary schools on the Isle of Wight with greater than one form entry
- 27 schools on the Isle of Wight are small schools, many of which will have to have mixed aged classes – these can be much harder to teach well – and much harder to recruit to - and much harder to afford.

# Impacts of surplus places: finances

- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires local authorities to have a Scheme for Financing Schools. The scheme drives the requirements of schools in managing their deficits and the LA role relates to adherence to the scheme only, as it has no power to write off or contribute towards individual school deficits
- Most schools on the Island are raising concerns about the ability to set balanced budgets in coming years. In a recent consultation with mainstream schools on school funding, most respondents emphasised concerns around the overall quantum of funding not being sufficient to meet current costs, in particular pressures around support staff pay and cost of supporting children with education and healthcare plans
- Maintained schools and academies receive the same funding from the DfE.

# Impacts of surplus places: finances

- When schools are required to become (sponsored) academies, this results in deficits falling to the local authority
- If schools choose to join an academy trust, any debt falls to the incoming trust, but it is highly unusual for trusts to agree to take on schools with deficits
- When a maintained school closes, any deficit balances fall to the local authority and therefore surplus capacity increases the risk of inefficient schools and potentially increased deficits, impacting local authority budgets.

# Impacts of surplus places:

## Educational outcomes

- September 2021 – June 2022 analysis of Ofsted outcomes show that England's smallest schools are 5 times more likely to be rated as inadequate than the largest ones, with none rated outstanding
- Isle of Wight headteachers have shared with us that in small schools with few staff, it is very difficult to spare teacher time to commit to undertake and embed the training required to deliver a broad curriculum that leads to excellent outcomes for children, and is also required to be fully in place in order to be judged to be good by Ofsted
- This results in, more time required to plan the curriculum and putting the required assessment criteria in place
- Teachers may have to teach mixed age/stage classes, causing additional workload, stress and wider differentiation for the pupils. This not only effects teacher well-being and mental health but affects standards as with a variety of breath and ages within one class, pupils cannot receive the tailored support they need to thrive and achieve. Teachers struggle to cater for the range of academic needs within one class.

# Impacts of surplus places:

## Educational outcomes

- Whilst the Isle of Wight primary schools have improved in all key indicators, the Isle of Wight is still below the national average
- Secondary schools continued to improve relative to other LAs nationally

## Social wellbeing

- Isle of Wight Headteachers have shared with us that they find children thrive when they have a peer group that they can interact with; even more so when the school can field a team and compete with other schools in events.

# Impacts of surplus places: SEND



Larger schools are more likely to be able to support resourced provisions



Larger schools are more able to afford additional adults and specialist provision



Shortfall of SEND Places– maximise the opportunity to reutilise accommodation to address the issue across the Island

# Proposed **Draft** Consultation Timeframe:

	Date	Comments
<b>Members briefing</b>	23 February 2024	
<b>Public Engagement</b>	April 2024	To include high level summary of the issues and impacts of surplus places. Briefings to be undertaken across the Island, and views sought on how the process could be managed going forward.
<b>Cabinet</b>	13 June 2024	Paper to Cabinet to note SPP concerns and seek approval to consult on removal of surplus places
Commence public consultation	21 June 2024	
Conclude 6 week consultation	2 August 2024	
<b>Cabinet</b>	12 September 2024	Paper to Cabinet with outcomes of consultation and seek approval to publish notices for final recommended options
Commence public consultation	27 September 2024	
Conclude 6 week consultation	8 November 2024	
<b>Cabinet</b>	9 January 2025	Approval to issue final Public Notice
Proposed closures	31 August 2025	



# Summary

- The Council has a statutory duty to manage the provision of school places
- School place planning is a continuous workstream. The data is clear that we currently have and will continue to have a significant level of surplus capacity in the primary sector that must be addressed
- We understand this is a very sensitive topic and we hope this presentation has helped set out all the complexities that surround this issue
- The well-being and support of education staff across the Island must be kept at the forefront during this difficult time.

**Thank you**

# Questions



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