

Director of Environment
& Infrastructure: Mark Kemp



Louise St John Howe
Programme Officer
PO Services
PO Box 10965
Sudbury
Suffolk, CO10 3BF

Growth & Infrastructure Unit
Environment & Infrastructure
Hertfordshire County Council
CHN114
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford, Herts SG13 8DE

Sent by email to:
louise@poservices.co.uk

Tel: 01992 555600
Email: Antony.Proietti@hertfordshire.gov.uk
My ref:
Your ref:
Date: 17 September 2020

Dear Ms St John Howe

**Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Examination – Supplementary Education Statement
in respect of Little Heath (Sites HS24-Land South of Hawkshead Road and HS25-
Land north of Hawkshead Road)**

At the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Examination in Public session regarding Little Heath (on 19 August 2020), a number of queries were raised regarding education provision. The Inspector has therefore requested specific additional information from Hertfordshire County Council as Education Authority regarding Little Heath Primary School within the Potters Bar Primary Planning Area (PPA). The response to the Inspector's enquiries are set out below.

Current and Forecast Capacity:

At the local plan stage, Hertfordshire County Council currently calculates primary pupil yield based on a ratio of 1 Form of Entry (FE) of need arising from 500 dwellings. Therefore the 135 dwellings proposed for Little Heath in the Submitted Local Plan would equate to 0.27FE of primary education need, which is approximately 8 children per year group.

Hertfordshire County Council forecasts primary education demand by PPA. Little Heath Primary School is within the Potters Bar PPA.

The other schools within the Potters Bar PPA include: St Giles' Church of England Primary, Cranborne Primary (The), Oakmere Primary, Ladbrooke Junior Mixed and Infant, Pope Paul Catholic Primary and Wroxham (The). Between them all they offer 255 reception places, as outlined in Table 1 below.

The County Council forecasts demand for school places four years into the future. These forecasts are informed by the numbers of pre-school aged children registered with GPs as living in the area and take account of historic migration patterns as well as assumed pupil demand from new housing expected to yield within the next four years.

Table 1 below sets out the latest forecast in relation to the Potters Bar PPA (published summer 2020). This also sets out the number of reception places available at each of the schools in the PPA.

Table 1: Current Primary School Forecasts for the Potters Bar PPA (published summer 2020):

15.2 Potters Bar									
School Code	School Name	Places Available 2020-21	Actuals			Forecast			
			2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
2980	Cranborne Primary School	60	59	60	60				
2982	Ladbrooke Junior Mixed and Infant School	30	30	30	30				
2985	Oakmere Primary School	60	42	48	39				
3975	Pope Paul Catholic Primary School	30	30	30	30				
5204	St Giles' CofE Primary School	15	15	15	15				
5206	The Wroxham School	30	30	31	30				
5207	Little Heath Primary School	30	30	28	30				
Total Year R Pupil Demand			236	242	234	215	209	213	201
Total Year R Places Available		255				255	255	255	255
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (No.)						40	46	42	54
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (%)						15.7%	18.0%	16.5%	21.2%
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (FE)						1.3	1.5	1.4	1.8

This clearly shows that there is currently a surplus of reception places across the schools within the Potters Bar PPA and that this surplus capacity is forecast to continue for the next four years, e.g. there is a surplus of 40 reception places in 2020-21, a surplus of 46 reception places in 2021-22, a surplus of 42 reception places in 2022-23, and a surplus of 54 reception places in 2023-24.

In line with and informed by these pupil forecasts, the latest GP registration data of the pre-school population indicates a decline in the number of 0-4 year olds living in the Potters Bar Primary Planning Area who will be seeking a reception place over the next four years.

Over the past three academic years, around 84% of the pupils attending Little Heath Primary School have lived within the Potters Bar PPA. A small number flow in from Ridgeway West and Hatfield, which both directly adjoin the Potters Bar PPA.

Over the last three years around 62% of pupils who live closest to Little Heath Primary School attend Little Heath Primary school. The majority of the remaining children attend other neighbouring schools within the same Potters Bar PPA.

For the upcoming 2020/2021 academic year there are 24 pupils for whom Little Heath Primary School is their nearest primary school. 20 of them have been allocated a reception place at Little Heath; whilst 4 expressed a 1st preference for another school and have been allocated a place elsewhere, such as for faith provision.

Based on admissions rules, with the exception of a Children Looked After or those with a particular Medical or Social need, allocations to primary schools are prioritised based on sibling links and then distance criteria. Apart from siblings, if you live nearer a school than anyone else applying, you are likely to gain a place. However, some parents living closest to Little Heath have chosen in the past to seek a school place elsewhere.

Families living in Little Heath will have priority for a place at Little Heath primary school based on distance above those children living further away.

There are places available in the other nearby schools within the Potters Bar PPA to meet the needs of the community in Potters Bar as a whole.

Therefore, the county council is satisfied that there is sufficient capacity at reception in the Potters Bar PPA for the new families occupying the new homes proposed for Little Heath.

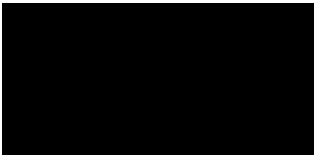
Conclusion:

To conclude, Hertfordshire County Council, as Education Authority, has a statutory duty to provide places for all children in the county. It is the County Council's view that, based on the latest available data and as set out above, there are sufficient places currently available in the Potters Bar Primary Planning Area to meet the anticipated yield arising from the proposed level of new dwellings allocated for Little Heath.

The County Council acknowledges that there may be future pressures arising from the growth proposed in Hertsmere Borough Council. However, the County Council will continue to engage with Hertsmere Borough Council through the development of its Local Plan to ensure that, at the appropriate time when the scale of growth and demand is known, sufficient school places are planned to mitigate the impact of any proposed dwellings within the wider Hertsmere area.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any clarification in relation to this response.

Yours sincerely



Antony Proietti

Growth Area Team Leader (North East Growth Area), Growth & Infrastructure Unit