
Education Responses – Key Factors to Consider

An Education Response, with recommendations for developer contributions, is based on the available data at the time. Projections represent a snapshot in time and all figures can be subject to change as further information becomes available to the School Organisation Team. Our statutory duty is to make sure there are enough primary and secondary school places within the school planning area, and as such any developer contributions sought should be considered as pertinent to the entire planning area's school capacity needs.

Given how long the gap can be between an initial S106 education response and the actual delivery of new homes, as well as the regularity with which housing applications are amended or re-registered, it is important to recognise that a range of factors can lead to:

- A change in the assessed need for school places, and
- A change in the School Organisation Team's Education Response if a revised assessment is requested later for the same development.

Key Factors That May Change Over Time

- **DfE Pupil Yield** – pupil yield calculators are based on regional calculations, and are re-assessed periodically by the DfE. New calculations could give a higher/lower yield for the same number of houses.
- **DfE Cost Multipliers** – again, these multipliers are updated periodically by the DfE, and as inflation is a large consideration in these multipliers, these are only expected to increase.
- **School Census Data** – new school census data becomes available to the School Organisation Team twice a year. This can significantly affect the assessment of available capacity in local schools.
- **School Forecast Data** – the School Organisation Team complete pupil place projections for each school, twice yearly. These forecasts are used to predict the number of surplus places available at a school. Projections are four years ahead for primary and seven years ahead for secondary. Changes in factors like birth rates and migration patterns can mean the actual demand for places is different than forecasted.

- **Other Approved Developments** – The School Organisation Team considers other developments affecting schools in the area. This is to assess the cumulative impact of approved housing on remaining school places in the area. Some developments may not go ahead, and some further developments may be approved. As such, a re-assessment may have a different summary of “available places” in schools in the area of the development. Similarly, when a development is built, there may be more capacity than previously thought, if other developments in the area did not go ahead.

Why Education Responses May Change

These constantly changing factors should help explain why a revised Education Response may differ from the original, even for the same development. A recalculation may result in a higher or lower recommended contribution, depending on the updated context.

Why Contributions May Go Unspent

Even where a contribution was secured through a S106 agreement, it may not be spent if:

- The projected pupil yield does not materialise,
- Other developments do not proceed as expected, or
- Additional school capacity becomes available through other means (e.g. school expansions, new schools, or falling rolls).

While our forecasting process accounts for as many known variables as possible, it is ultimately a projection, and projections can change.