



Planning Obligations in Lancashire Policy

Pupil Forecast Methodology

Districts

Lancashire consists of 12 Districts, with 483 primary schools and 83 secondary schools:



Primary Pupil Forecasts

Districts are split into Primary Planning Areas (PPA) as detailed in the School Place Provision Strategy. PPAs are set in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance and can only be changed or altered with approval from DfE. Lancashire is currently split into 70 PPAs, details of which can be found in the School Place Provision Strategy. Using the whole district for primary schools would not provide an accurate assessment of the forecast number on roll due to the large geographical area of Lancashire and the large pupil population.

Live Birth Data

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) produces live birth data annually for the purposes of school place planning. Available to all local authorities, this birth data is split by Lancashire County Council into wards and aggregated to ward level birth data. Wards are allocated to each PPA, and where a ward straddles PPAs, the number of births are apportioned between those PPAs. The live birth data provides the baseline for future numbers on roll.

The pupil forecasts are 5 year projections, however, due to the lag in ONS reporting live births, there are only 4 years of birth evidence available at any time and, therefore LCC presumes that there is no change in the birth rate between year 4 and year 5.

Each PPA has a pattern of birth data converting to numbers on roll at the schools in that PPA. We refer to this as the *intake rate*. Different PPAs have a different intake rate depending on the characteristics of that area. For example, urban areas tend to have an intake rate below 100% (such as 80%) which indicates that for every 100 births in that area, only 80 pupils will enter school at reception year. Conversely, some small rural areas can see very high intake rates of up to 200%, which indicates that for every 100 births in that area 200 pupils will enter school in reception year.

Past trends in intake rates are used to calculate an average intake rate, which is then adjusted for some PPAs where known changes have taken place which change the profile of the intake rate; for example a new school, significant school expansion or school closure.

The intake rate applied to live birth data gives a "raw" forecast intake for future reception years.

Existing Number on Roll and Migration

The schools' current numbers on roll are updated into the forecasts at two points in the year. The October School Census number on roll data is included by 1st December each year, and the January School Census number on roll data is included by 1st April each year. For previous years' data, the January school census is the main data set used each year.

Four years' of historical number on roll data is compiled and compared year on year, to build a picture of movement or migration within each PPA. The movement between schools within a PPA has no net change to pupil population, but the migration into or out of each PPA per year is calculated. The three years of migration is then subjected to weighted average, giving more weight to most recent year's migration, and an average annual migration rate calculated per PPA. This is then applied to birth data to understand the likely future effect on current number on roll and future number on roll.

Housing

Each of the 12 districts produces a 5 year housing land supply document (HLS) or equivalent document which outlines the housing developments scheduled to come forward within 5 years. Annually, LCC requests that each district supplies their latest document that they wish us to use for school planning, and in cases of a published document not being available, the district is asked what data they wish LCC to use for forecasting.

The housing data supplied is then split by PPA based on the location of each individual development. Developments are phased within most district documents, and only that element phased within the next five years is included within the primary forecasts. LCC excludes developments which have a sealed Section 106 or similar agreement for that type of infrastructure in place to mitigate that impact of that development. Student dwellings and over-55s or similar age specific developments are also excluded from forecasts.

Pupil yield research for Lancashire, established a pupil yield per type of dwelling from 1 to 5+ bedroom houses. However for the forecasts the average yield from the pupil research is used, which for primary is 0.17 pupil per dwelling, or 17 pupils per 100 dwellings, as the housing data supplied by districts is at high level and does not provide a breakdown of the number of bedrooms per development. The housing data within the forecasts is subjected to this average yield factor to give the number of expected pupils from those developments, and this is applied to the forecasts.

Secondary Pupil Forecasts

Forecasts for secondary schools are produced on a district level as there are fewer secondary schools and pupils are more likely to travel longer distances to a good school, so it is not necessary to split them into smaller areas like PPAs.

Primary School NOR and Transfer Rate

The baseline for the future number on roll at secondary school is the existing primary school population. Primary school population data is updated twice per year: The October School Census number on roll data is included by 1st December each year, and the January School Census number on roll data is included by 1st April each year.

For primary school population transferring to secondary school, there is a *transfer rate*. Not all primary school pupils within a district will attend secondary school within that district. Therefore transfer rates vary from 75% to 150% by district.

LCC calculates the past transfer rates by examining four years of number on roll information from the January School Census for previous years, plus October or January school census for the latest year. The past three transfer rates are then subjected to weighted average, giving more weight to most recent year's transfer, and an average annual transfer rate calculated per district. LCC will adjust this average where known changes have taken place which change the profile of the transfer rate; for example a new school, significant school expansion or school closure.

The transfer rate applied to primary population gives a "raw" forecast intake for future year 7 intakes.

Existing Number on Roll and Migration

The schools' current numbers on roll are updated into the forecasts at two points in the year. The October School Census number on roll data is included by 1st December each year, and the January School Census number on roll data is included by 1st April each year. For previous years' data, the January school census is the main data set used each year.

Four years of historical number on roll data is compiled and compared year on year, to build a picture of movement or migration within each district. The movement between schools within a district has no net change to pupil population, but the migration into or out of each district per year is calculated. The three years of migration is then subjected to weighted average, giving more weight to most recent year's migration, and an average annual migration rate calculated per district. This is then applied to both primary and secondary data to understand the future effect on current number on roll and future number on roll.

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Pupil yield research for Lancashire, established a pupil yield per type of dwelling from 1 to 5+ bedroom houses. However for the forecasts the average yield from the pupil research is used, which for primary is 0.09 pupil per dwelling, or 9 pupils per 100 dwellings, as the housing data supplied by districts is high level and does not provide a breakdown of the number of bedrooms per development. The housing data within the forecasts is subjected to this average yield factor to give the number of expected pupils from those developments, and this is applied to the forecasts.

Forecast Assumptions and Evaluations (Primary and Secondary)

There is no rounding of pupils within the forecasts until the final stage, where all numbers are rounded to the nearest integer.

Forecasts are regularly evaluated internally by LCC to ensure that accuracy is maintained. The DfE carry out external moderation of our forecasts via the annual SCAP return, and the forecast accuracy of those returns is published by DfE annually.

The DfE guidance states that all forecasts must not contain more than 5% margin of error, and a target of under 1% is desirable. LCC target the lower of these two values, and we aim for our forecast to be within 99% accuracy. Annual internal evaluations show that we have achieved this for four of the last five years up to 2019.