

## Children & Young People's Services

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**28<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

Stakeholder  
Various

Dear Stakeholder

### **Re: Waverley Primary School places**

The Council writes to update you on the current situation regarding the oversubscription of Waverley Junior Academy.

The Council would prefer that all pupils are able to attend their first choice of school and is regularly amongst the best performing local authorities in the country in achieving that. It is a matter of regret for the Council whenever this is not possible, as in the case with Waverley Junior Academy.

The Waverley development pupil yield is far exceeding the national formula (provided by the DfE) that is used to project catchment area demand for places and the number of applications for places will continue to exceed the number of places available at Waverley Junior Academy for the foreseeable future with regard to the Reception/Foundation Stage 2 intake.

The Council is able to confirm that school places for National Offer Day annually are allocated in compliance with the Department for Education (DfE) School Admissions Code 2021 and Rotherham's published admissions arrangements.

The Council understands the desire of parents/carers to secure a place for their child at Waverley Junior Academy. Council Officers have held discussions and other communications with the Department for Education (DfE) to seek a resolution that meets with parents/carers wishes.

However, the DfE have made the position clear in that:

- There is a sufficiency of school places in the local area.

- The addition of more places at Waverley junior Academy would have a significant impact on neighbouring primary schools and destabilise the local school system for the foreseeable future.
- Any plans to create additional capacity at the academy would require DfE approval prior to any work commencing via the academy submitting a significant change request and, given the surplus capacity at neighbouring schools this would not be a viable business case at this point in time or for the foreseeable future.
- Children refused a school place at the Academy have been made a reasonable offer of a school place by DfE definition.

With regard to the Government's position outlined above, the Council, working with Harworth, the Principal Developer, has sought to make a variation to the Section 106 agreement that creates funding for future school places as the Waverley development continues.

The variation to the current agreement proposes to bring forward the current trigger points to release funding for the next phase of primary school places aligned to the future projected rise in pupil numbers in future years. This will eventually bring forward the funding to create a third form of entry at the academy.

However, although the trigger point to build the third form of entry releases funding for the build project, it will be necessary to gain DfE approval prior to any work commencing with evidence that there is insufficient school capacity to accommodate all children in the local area without the additional classrooms at Waverley Junior Academy, therefore satisfying DfE that the neighbouring schools are not negatively impacted by the proposal.

The trigger points to release funding for the next phase are:

5% payment released between 1300 to 1500 dwellings occupied and the remainder of funding released between 1500 and 1700 dwellings occupied to create a third form of entry at Waverley Junior Academy.

The actual trigger point to release funding within these parameters would need to be confirmed in conjunction with the DfE to meet their requirement that gives assurances that other schools within the local area will not be negatively impacted and DfE are able to approve a significant change request to the Academy at the point of application to proceed.

It should be noted that once a significant change is approved this may involve an incremental rise in the published admission number (PAN), firstly to 75 and then to 90 over the coming years to satisfy DfE requirements around wider planning area stability.

An indicative timeline for the release of funding is outlined below:

Threshold of 1300 – 1500 dwellings occupied reached releases 5% of the total sum for planning work.

This is likely to be reached between 12 and 36 months based on lower and higher point.

Threshold of 1500 – 1700 dwellings occupied reached releases the full funding commitment to deliver an expansion in final capacity from 420 places to 630 places to create the third form of entry.

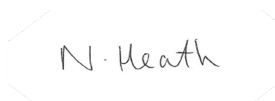
This is likely to be reached between 36 and 60 months based on lower and higher point.

At this stage, the Council would also advise that the release of funding for the 2 trigger points is likely to be towards the higher of the 2 points – 1500 dwellings occupied releases 5% funding for planning works and 1700 dwellings occupied releases funding to build the third form of entry. Ensuring sufficient pupil number growth to satisfy DfE requirements.

Should pupil numbers increase at a quicker rate and the DfE criteria can be satisfied towards the lower points the Council would seek to move plans forward earlier to bring about a satisfactory resolution for parents/carers as soon as possible.

The Council understands that this is not the resolution that parents/carers were hoping for. However, we will continue to work with Harworth and DfE to bring about a resolution that meets with DfE requirements at the earliest possible stage.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N. Heath". The signature is enclosed within a thin, light-colored rectangular border with slightly rounded corners.

Nathan Heath  
Assistant Director, Education & Inclusion