

Ledsham Road / Ledsham Garden Village

Proposed new Primary School

Free School Presumption

FAQ

What is the Free School Presumption?

The Free School Presumption process is the main route by which local authorities establish new schools in order to meet the need for additional places, both in terms of basic need and the need for diverse provision within their areas. The Council is responsible for the specification of the new school.

Why do we need a new primary school?

In line with the Council's statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places, and in response to recent government changes to childcare provision, the Council has confirmed the need for additional primary and early years places to serve the growing Ledsham Garden Village community. The Council also recognises the Department for Education's recent commitment to improving the accessibility and availability of places for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

With significant progress now being made on housing delivery within Ledsham Garden Village, and following a detailed review of projected pupil demand, the Council proposes to establish a new 1 Form Entry (FE) mainstream, mixed primary free school, providing 210 places for pupils aged 3 to 11, alongside a 26-place nursery and a 10-place SEND Provision. Subject to approvals, the anticipated opening date for the school, nursery and SEND Provision is September 2028.

The school building will be built in two phases, the first being a 1 FE (210 place) building with the ancillary spaces (such as hall, kitchen, dining etc) for a 1.5 form entry/315 pupil place school. The second phase will then proceed once pupil numbers determine it, this will add the extra accommodation for the additional 0.5 form entry, 105 pupils.

What detail does the school specification contain?

The outcome of the consultation will help to form the school specification.

The Council will prepare a specification which is detailed enough to enable proposers to understand the needs identified by the Council and submit the strongest proposal possible.

The school specification will include, but not limited to, details such as:

- **character/ethos of school;**
- **phase and age range (nursery)**
- **opening date;**
- **pupil capacity;**
- **proposed Published Admission Number(s) (PAN), number of forms of entry on opening, and expected rate of growth;**
- **proposed admission arrangements, including catchment area if applicable;**
- **Requirement to include a special unit or resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs;**
- **details of any desired community use of the school and/or a preference for any shared facilities**

- **Before and After School Clubs / wrap around care**

The Council are currently working on the detailed design of the school. The details of the school building design and layout and other matters, such as the details of sustainable construction and school travel plan, will shortly be submitted for planning approval. A pre planning application was recently submitted, which can be found [here](#). This design work is separate from the current consultation.

Who will run the new school?

Once the school specification has been formalised, the Council will begin the competition in which Department for Education Approved academy sponsors will be able to bid directly to the Council to run and manage the new school.

The Council will assess bids using the [DfE framework](#), submitting an assessment of each proposer to the Secretary of State, including scoring given for each one. This will allow the Regional Schools Director (on behalf of Secretary of State) to decide the most suitable proposer. The Council will recommend a preferred sponsor, however it will be the Regional Schools Director (on behalf of the Secretary of State) to make final decision.

The successful Trust appointed to run the new school will undertake a formal consultation.

Where will the new school site be located?

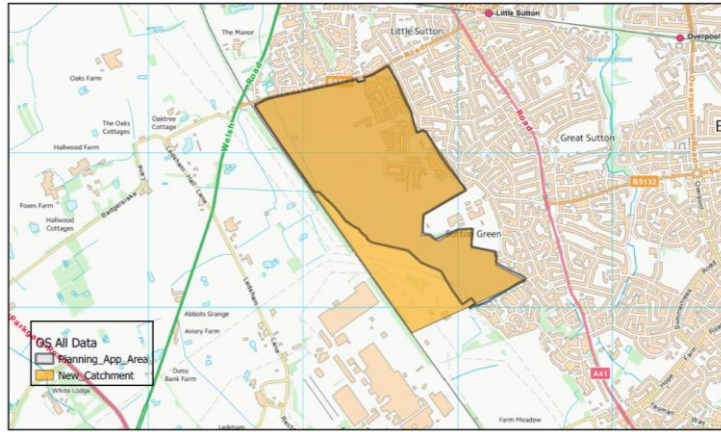
The new school is located centrally on the development of Ledsham Road. Circled on the map below.



Where will the school catchment be?

The below shows the Council's proposed catchment area for the new school. This will be a shared area, in parts, with Sutton Green Primary and Capenhurst CE Primary. The catchment has been extended to natural boundaries and does not indicate in any way that further housing is expected in these areas.

Admissions arrangements, including catchment area will be drafted by the successful trust and will be reviewed by the Department for Education before the statutory section 10 consultation commences.



Why will the school initially be a 1FE, then intended to expand by a further 0.5FE?

Strategic housing developments forecast annual build rates, to which we apply forecast annual pupils expected. The actual dwellings that are occupied and the children that arise from them can fluctuate. The Council continually monitors children moving into new housing.

Larger developments can take many years to build out, and can be driven by a number of factors.. Building a school in stages assists in managing the places needed at the time, whilst ensuring the sustainability of existing schools.

Below is the expected build rate and cumulative pupil forecast for the Ledsham Garden Village Development

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
No. dwellings	56	101	67	72	81
No. of primary pupils	12	22	15	16	18
Cumulative No. of primary pupils	12	34	49	65	83

How will the new school impact existing schools?

The new school is intended to serve the residents from the new development at Ledsham Garden Village. A development of this size requires additional community infrastructure to ensure sustainability.

We will ask all prospective trusts who wish to run the school to demonstrate how they will ensure cohesion and good relations with existing schools in the area.

Forecasts demonstrate a shortfall of primary places in the planning area during the current forecasting period, which coincides with the opening date of the school.

In national planning policy terms, sufficient choice of school places to meet the needs of existing and new communities is important, and widening the choice in education is supported. Within larger scale sites there is support for an appropriate mix of uses including education, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed. The provision of a primary school along with other facilities such as the local centre, community building, formal and informal recreational space within the development is expected to help reduce the need to travel off the site, particularly in the peak morning period. The school is in an accessible location providing residents a reasonable walking distance to the school. The provision of a primary school has been integral to the design of the Ledsham Road development from the outset of the masterplanning for the development.

What provision will be provided in the interim?

We expect the school to be open by the earliest, September 2028. We secured additional funding from the developers to accommodate pupils in the interim period, for which additional provision has been provided at Sutton Green primary school.

What provision will be provided for 3 – 4 year olds?

All 3 – 4 year olds will receive a minimum of 15 hours of funded early year entitlement across 38 weeks of the year (school term time).

We will specify that the provider offers a minimum of 30 hours across 38 weeks of the year (school term time).

The pre-school classbase will accommodate a maximum of 26 children at one time. If eligible, working families may receive 30 hours funded early year entitlement across 38 weeks of the year (school term time).

For further information about eligibility please [click here](#).

We will specify that the school must offer before and after school club / wrap around care from 8am – 6pm.

Why are you providing Special Education Needs (SEN) provision?

The Council recognises the Department for Education's recent commitment to improving the accessibility and availability of inclusive places for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The proposal is to provide SEN provision for 10 places.

Definitions

Form of Entry (FE): Defines the size of a school and refers to the number of children entering Reception. A 1 Form Entry school accommodates 210 pupils and admits 30 children per year.

Published Admission Number (PAN): The agreed number of pupils a school will admit into reception.

School Capacity: The agreed number of pupils a school can accommodate based on building size.

Education Health and Care Plan: An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.