



FEBRUARY
2026

Land North of Camer Road, Meopham

Education Note

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of
The McManus Family

ICENI PROJECTS LIMITED
ON BEHALF OF THE
MCMANUS FAMILY

February 2026

Iceni Projects

Birmingham: The Colmore Building, 20 Colmore Circus Queensway, Birmingham B4 6AT

Edinburgh: 14-18 Hill Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3JZ

Glasgow: 201 West George Street, Glasgow, G2 2LW

London: Da Vinci House, 44 Saffron Hill, London, EC1N 8FH

Manchester: WeWork, Dalton Place, 29 John Dalton Street, Manchester, M26FW

t: 020 3640 8508 | w: iceniprojects.com | e: mail@iceniprojects.com

linkedin: linkedin.com/company/iceni-projects | twitter: [@iceniprojects](https://twitter.com/iceniprojects)

Land North of Camer Road, Meopham
EDUCATION NOTE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Icen Projects have been commissioned by the McManus Family to produce an Education Needs Note for the Proposed Development at Land North of Camer Road, Meopham. The scheme comprises of up to 725 homes.
 - 1.2 It is necessary to understand the likely education needs in the area, both currently and in the future, to determine whether there is a need for additional school provision locally.
 - 1.3 Policy CS10: Physical and Social Infrastructure of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) indicates that it is important that sufficient infrastructure is provided to meet the needs of existing and new residents, employees and businesses within the Borough. Where new development leads to the need for new or improved physical or social infrastructure, developers will be required to provide or contribute towards this subject to viability considerations.
 - 1.4 Pre-application discussions with Kent County Council (KCC) in January 2025 have indicated that there is a requirement for a new primary school within the area in order to meet demand arising from significant levels of uncommitted development locally.
-

Fig 1.1 Site Plan



1.5 This note provides an overview of the education needs in this part of Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) and covers the following:

1. Current education provision and capacity;
2. The anticipated child yield of the Proposed Development;
3. Planned education provision;
4. Impacts of the Proposed Development; and
5. Summary and key points.

2. CURRENT SCHOOL PROVISION AND CAPACITY

2.1 Education services in Gravesham are primarily commissioned by Kent County Council (KCC).

Primary Education Baseline Position

2.2 The Site fall within the Gravesham Rural South Planning Group for primary schools. As set out in the Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent 2025-2029ⁱ, there are five primary schools located in the Gravesham Rural South Planning Group.

2.3 The Commissioning Plan does not provide data on the number of pupils attending these primary schools. Therefore, data has been obtained from the Department of Education's (DoE) "Get Information about Schools" database (accessed in October 2025). This shows that there is a total of 1,204 primary school children attending the five schools within the Planning Group. It should be noted that this database is updated regularly and therefore, the capacity numbers should be viewed as a point-in-time assessment as they will change with time.

2.4 Overall, the analysis shows that currently there are 1,266 pupil places with 62 surplus places. Therefore, primary schools within the Proposed Development Planning Area are currently operating at 95.1% capacity. This indicates that there is currently limited flexibility within schools locally to manage parental choice or absorb fluctuations in cohort size.

2.5 **Table 2.1** below provides a breakdown of the capacity of the primary schools in the Gravesham Rural South Planning Group. The primary school closest to the Site, Meopham Community Academy, is currently operating with a deficit of places, meaning that it is already operating 25 pupils above capacity. Equally, Cobham Primary School is operating at 100% capacity, with no ability to absorb additional demand. While a small surplus exists at Vigo Village School, this reflects its more distant location (6km from the Site) and does not represent accessible or sustainable provision for families at the Proposed Development.

Table 2.1 Primary Schools in the Gravesham Rural Planning Group

Primary School	Distance	Places	Pupils on Roll	Surplus/Deficit
Meopham Community Academy	1.2km south west	420	445	-25
Cobham Primary School	1.9km north east	216	216	0
Istead Rise Primary School	2.9km north west	210	208	2
Culverstone Green Primary School	4.9km south west	210	204	6
Vigo Village School	6km south west	210	131	79

Total		1,266	1,204	62
-------	--	-------	-------	----

Source: Get Information about Schools (accessed October 2025)

Secondary Education Baseline Position

- 2.6 The Site falls within the Gravesham and Longfield non-selective planning group for secondary schools. As outlined in the Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent, there are seven secondary schools in the Gravesham and Longfield non-selective planning group.
- 2.7 The Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent indicates that the planning group is in deficit for the duration of the Plan period (2025-2029). It suggests that by 2027, another 3FE of secondary provision will be required. KCC will work with the schools in the planning group to see whether any would be capable of accommodating additional capacity. The alternative is to look at provision in adjacent planning groups, or cross boundary. Longer term, KCC will need to consider new secondary provision, depending on the publication of the Gravesham Local Plan.
- 2.8 Overall, the analysis shows that there are 7,620 secondary school pupil places and 7,889 pupils attending the seven secondary schools. Currently, there is a deficit of 269 places. The analysis does include the assumption that Saint George's Church of England School is operating at full capacity. This is because the school is an all-through facility (ages 4-18) and the Department of Education does not provide details of capacity for the secondary school years in isolation. In reality, there may be some additional capacity available within this school to meet needs.

Table 2.2 provides a breakdown of the capacity of secondary schools in the Gravesham and Longfield non-selective planning group

Table 2.2 Secondary Schools in the Gravesham and Longfield non-selective planning group

Secondary School	Distance	Places	Pupils on Roll	Surplus/Deficit
Meopham School	2.1km south west	832	957	-125
Leigh Academy Longfield	4.6km north west	1,150	980	170
Northfleet Technology College	6km north west	989	963	26
Northfleet School for Girls	5.7km north	1,145	1,302	-157

Thamesview School	5km north east	910	955	-45
Saint George's Church of England School	5.2km north	1,410	1,410	0
St. John's Catholic Comprehensive School	5.8km northt	1,184	1,322	-138
Total		7,620	7,889	-269

Source: Get Information about Schools (accessed October 2025)

3. ANTICIPATED CHILD YIELD

- 3.1 To examine the impact of the Proposed Development on early years and education services, the likely primary and secondary child yield has been calculated using the method set out in the Kent County Council (2023) Developer Contributions Guideⁱⁱ. This is based on multipliers applied to the proposed numbers of units adjusted according to the unit type (flat/house). The Proposed Development is expected to include 72 1-bed flats and 653 houses (2,3, and 4-bed).
- 3.2 **Table 3.1** sets out the anticipated child yield for the Proposed Development based on the dwelling mix. This demonstrates that the Proposed Development is expected to provide accommodation for approximately 188 primary aged children and 135 secondary-aged children.

Table 3.1 Child Yield

Phase	Pupil Yield x Houses	Pupil Yield x Flats	Total Child Yield
Primary School	$0.28 \times 653 = 183$	$0.07 \times 72 = 5$	188
Secondary School	$0.20 \times 653 = 131$	$0.05 \times 72 = 4$	135
Total			323

Resulting Impact on School Capacity

- 3.3 **Table 3.2** shows the impact of the baseline education capacity following the Proposed Development estimated population.
- 3.4 For primary schools, there are currently 62 surplus primary school places. However, it should be noted that these places are primarily located within Vigo Village School, 6km from the Site, and the closest primary schools to the Site are all operating at or over capacity. With the addition of the estimated 188 primary school pupils from the Proposed Development, this would lead to a revised capacity of -126 places. Therefore, primary schools in the Gravesham Rural Planning Group have no surplus capacity.
- 3.5 At the secondary school level, there is a deficit of 269 places. With the addition of the estimated 135 secondary school pupils from the Proposed Development, this would lead to a revised capacity of -404 school pupil places.

Table 3.2 Impact of the Proposed Development on the Education Baseline

Phase	Current Surplus Places	Additional Pupil from Proposed Development	Updated Capacity Numbers	Revised Capacity %
Primary School	62	188	-126	0%

Secondary School	-269	135	-404	0%
------------------	------	-----	------	----

Source: Icení Analysis

- 3.6 However, it should be noted that a number of families may move into the Proposed Development from within the same school catchment areas and therefore the proposal would not generate additional pupils in these instances. Furthermore, additional pupils do not all appear at once when a new development is opened. Impact on school capacity is gradual. KCC has advised that there is generally a five year lag between occupation and need for a new school.

4. PLANNED EDUCATION PROVISION

- 4.1 So far, this note has discussed how the Proposed Development will affect the capacity of both primary and secondary schools compared to the current baseline. It is important to note that this assessment reflects the current situation and has been conducted at a specific moment in time. However, the education capacity in the Borough will not be static and is always evolving, in response to demographics, migration and school organisation.

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent

- 4.2 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent indicates that the Gravesham birth rate and number of births have fallen sharply since 2019. Following a small increase in 2022, the rate dropped again in 2023. The Plan also suggests that prior to the Covid pandemic, significant demand for primary and secondary school places in Gravesham, was from the migration from urban centres in Greater London. Migration reduced significantly over the last four years, but it is likely that migration will pick up. This is already being seen in the Junior aged cohort, as families move into the area to place themselves in a more favourable position of gaining a place for their child at the secondary school of their choice.
- 4.3 It should be noted that lower birth rates temporarily increase the surplus of Reception places, however this does not always guarantee long-term space capacity, especially in areas such as Gravesham with in-migration and new housing allocations. The reduction in births is being offset by families moving in with older children, increasing pressure in Years 3–6 and at the secondary transition stage.
- 4.4 As outlined in the Plan and shown in Table 4.1, from September 2023, primary schools within the Gravesham Rural South Planning Group are expected to see a small deficit for the next three years. The deficits will largely be managed by using capacity in adjacent planning groups that show a surplus, such as Gravesend East. From 2027 onwards, primary schools in the Group are expected to see a very small surplus in capacity .

Table 4.1 Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Gravesham Rural South Planning Group	Capacity
2024-2025 (Forecast)	-1
2025-2026 (Forecast)	3

2026-2027 (Forecast)	-12
2027-2028 (Forecast)	3
2028-2029 (Forecast)	5
2029-2030 (Forecast)	7
2030-2031 (Forecast)	9
2031-2032 (Forecast)	11
2032-2033 (Forecast)	14
2033-2034 (Forecast)	16

Source: The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent

4.5 With regard to secondary schools, by 2027, another 3FE of provision will be required in the Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group. KCC will work with the schools in the planning group to see whether any would be capable of accommodating additional capacity as well as look at provision in adjacent planning groups, or cross boundary. Longer term, the Plan indicates that KCC will need to consider new secondary provision, depending on the publication of the Gravesham Local Plan. KCC will monitor the forecasts as the new Gravesham Local Plan becomes clear. During the local plan consultation, KCC notified GBC that there is deficit, and so any new housing needs to come with land for a new, non-selective secondary school.

4.6 As outlined in the Plan and shown in Table 4.2, demand for secondary school places is expected to continue strongly.

Table 4.2 Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group	Capacity
2024-2025 (Forecast)	-36
2025-2026 (Forecast)	-43

2026-2026 (Forecast)	-64
2027-2028 (Forecast)	-113
2028-2029 (Forecast)	-117
2029-2030 (Forecast)	-100
2030-2031 (Forecast)	-88
2031-2032 (Forecast)	-119
2032-2033 (Forecast)	-114
2033-2034 (Forecast)	-118

Source: The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent

- 4.7 The Commissioning Plan indicates that future funding of schools and the identification of suitable sites for these schools, should be addressed as part of the Draft Local Plan to ensure a comprehensive, planning approach. KCC notes that addressing deficiencies on these matters should not be entirely covered by developers nor through ad-hoc schemes coming forward. However, it should be noted that this proposal has the opportunity to provide a 2FE primary school in a sustainable location, walkable from both Meopham and Sole Street. Pre-application engagement with KCC's Education team confirmed that they are supportive of a school on this site to accommodate the future growth of Meopham.
-

5. HOUSING DELIVERY AND FORECAST DEMAND

Housing Delivery

- 5.1 The Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy outlines a need for at least 438 dwellings per annum for years 2024/2025 – 2027/2028 (1,752 dwellings) in the borough. At least 363 dwellings per annum were required for years 2019/2020 – 2023/2024. The latest Gravesham Annual Performance Report showed that in 2023/24, 381 total net additional homes were added to the Council Tax valuation list.
- 5.2 The housing trajectory for the Borough is also a component of pupil forecasts. The latest Housing Delivery Test results show that between 2020-2023, Gravesham Borough Council delivered 1,056 homes against a target of 1,789 (59%). This means that a presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.

Table 5.1 Housing Delivery Test Measurement for Gravesham

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Requirements	436	646	707
Delivery	217	420	419
Difference	-219	-226	-288

Source: MHCLG Housing Delivery Test: 2023 Measurement

- 5.3 The implications of not all the required housing being delivered, is that it is likely that they would have been factored into the pupil forecasts for the Borough. Forecast models typically assume that planned homes will generate additional children according to standard pupil yield assumptions. When these homes are not delivered, the expected increase in pupil numbers will not occur, meaning that actual demand may be lower than projected.
- 5.4 However, undelivered housing does not necessarily remove the requirement for new provision, and forecasts suggest that there is still a deficit of places.

Cumulative schemes locally

- 5.5 Table 5.2 below notes that there are currently four outline applications in the area which could further impact upon education capacity locally. When multiple housing developments come forward within the same planning area, their combined impact on education provision is significantly greater than the impact of any single scheme alone. It is important to note that none of the proposed schemes below will deliver a primary school. In areas where schools are already
-

operating at or above capacity—as is the case in both the Gravesham Rural South primary planning group and the Gravesham & Longfield secondary planning group—cumulative developments can potentially worsen capacity issues locally.

- 5.6 Using Department of Education Pupil yield from housing developments calculations, these four cumulative schemes would bring forward 202 pupils of primary school age, and 144 pupils of secondary school age.
- 5.7 When combined with the 188 primary school pupils and 135 secondary school pupils arising from the Proposed Development, this would result in an a cumulative increase of 390 primary school pupils and 279 secondary school pupils.

Table 5.2 Cumulative schemes

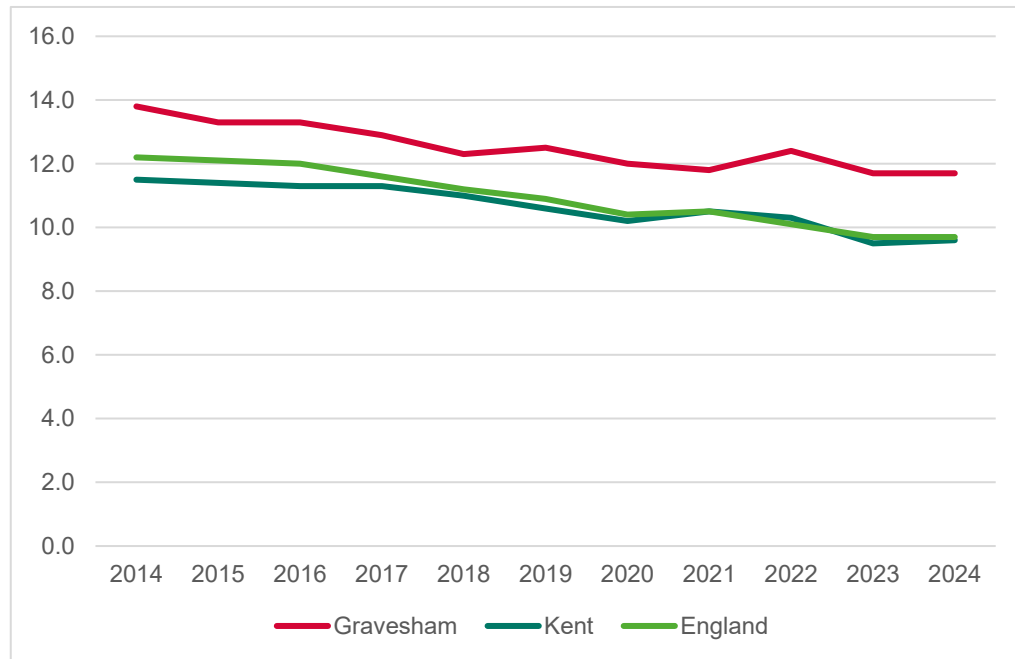
Cumulative scheme	Scheme Description	Potential for cumulative education effects?
Land West of Norwood Lane Meopham Gravesend Kent DA13 0EY (REF 20251116)	Outline application with all matters reserved (except access) for a development of up to 150 dwellings (Use Class C3), including affordable dwellings, and associated landscaping, public open space and infrastructure works.	Yes – the scheme proposes 150 residential units
Land at Wrotham Road Meopham Gravesend Kent DA13 0AA (REF 20250992)	Outline application for the erection of up to 350 residential dwellings, public open space and associated works. Approval is sought for the principal means of vehicular access from Wrotham Road and all other matters are reserved.	Yes – the scheme proposes 350 residential units
Land Adjacent to Longfield Road Meopham Gravesend Kent DA13 0EW (REF 20250993)	Outline application for the erection of up to 120 residential dwellings, public open space and associated works. Approval is sought for the principal means of vehicular access from Longfield Road and all other matters are reserved.	Yes – the scheme proposes 120 residential units
Blackthorn Farm Wrotham Road Meopham Gravesend Kent (REF 20250802)	Outline planning application for up to 100No. residential dwellings (including affordable housing), with all matter reserved except for access and creation of a new access from A227/South Street.	Yes – the scheme proposes 100 residential units

- 5.8 Therefore, with significant proposed housing delivery within the area, the need for more primary school provision within Meopham becomes more pressing.

Birth Rates

- 5.9 As acknowledged in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent, the Gravesham birth rate has been decreasing in line with county and national levels over the last ten years, however still remains higher than these averages.

Fig 4.1 Gravesham, Kent and England & Wales birth rates 2014-2023



6. IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 The Proposed Development is likely to have an impact on the overall capacity of the schools within the catchment area.
- 6.2 However, in light of limited primary capacity locally, the scheme includes the delivery of a new 2FE primary school. Based on an average 30 pupils per class, the school could accommodate around 420 pupils.
- 6.3 This would provide enough capacity to accommodate the anticipated 188 primary-aged pupils generated by the scheme, reducing the impact of capacity issues within existing schools. Alongside accommodating new residents, it will also support existing demand for primary school places within in the local area.
- 6.4 A primary school on the Site would promote active travel to school, and reduce car dependency, decreasing the number of pick-up and drop-off trips generated by the Proposed Development. This would particularly benefit pupils living in Meopham and Sole Street.

7. SUMMARY

- 7.1 This Education Note has been prepared for the proposed residential-led development at land north of Camer Road, Meopham for up to 725 homes.
- 7.2 Utilising the Department for Education's child yield and high-level assumptions about the proposed unit mix, it is anticipated that the Proposed Development would generate 188 primary and 134 secondary pupils.
- 7.3 The assessment demonstrates that both primary and secondary education provision in the local area is already under significant pressure and is expected to face further constraints over the forecast period. Schools within the Gravesham Rural Planning Group are operating at 95% capacity, with no capacity available in primary schools closest to the site. While KCC's long-term forecasts suggest small surpluses may emerge later in the decade, these are marginal, highly sensitive to changes in birth rates and migration, and insufficient to accommodate the full impact of the Proposed Development.
- 7.4 In terms of secondary education, there are currently a deficit of 269 places in the Gravesham and Longfield non-selective planning group, with a persistent deficit existing over the next 10 years..
- 7.5 In addition, the cumulative impact of multiple proposed housing developments coming forward simultaneously will intensify existing deficits across both primary and secondary phases (with 202 and 144 primary and secondary pupils generated). None of these applications include primary school provision. Pre-application discussions with Kent County Council (KCC) in January and May 2025 have indicated that there is a requirement for a new primary school within the area in order to meet demand arising from significant levels of uncommitted development locally.
- 7.6 The Proposed Development includes a new 2FE primary school which would accommodate up to 420 pupils. This would provide enough capacity for primary aged pupils at the Proposed Development as well as supporting wider demand in the local area (particularly Sole Street and Meopham). The deficits in secondary school places will largely be managed by using capacity in adjacent planning groups that show a surplus, such as Gravesend East. Demand for secondary school places is expected to fluctuate which will require additional capacity and potentially developer contributions.
-

-
-
- ⁱ Kent County Council (2025) Kent Commissioning Plan for Education 2025-2029
ⁱⁱ Kent County Council (2023) Developer Contributions Guide