

CHAPTER TWELVE - EDUCATION

Each chapter in the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan is under constant review and refinement. Not all of the Appendices are yet available but they will be posted on the website as and when they are ready. The text in the chapters should be sufficient, however, to enable you to respond to the questions which are in the leaflet and repeated at the end of the section for your convenience.

Objectives

- To provide educational opportunity for children and young people within the parish and to ensure, as far as is possible, that appropriate choices exist.
- To sustain the library as a safe and enjoyable community centre, thus maintaining access to books and the internet for all age groups with particular emphasis on stimulating interest and inquisitiveness in children thus contributing towards a basis for life-long learning and pleasure.

The current position

The parish is relatively well provided in terms of primary provision but has a limited offer at secondary level up to age sixteen. Apart from specialised courses at Stansted Airport College all 'A' level or vocational qualifications require travel outside of the village.

A map of the schools in the Plan Area may be found in [Appendix XX](#)

Nursery/pre-school – There are three pre-schools in the village with another two in close proximity but outside the Plan Area at Ugley and Birchanger

Name	Location	Max. number per session	Number on roll 2020-2021	Operator
Apple Barn	Bentfield Causeway	15	30	Private
Bentfield	Rainsford Road	26	32	Bentfield School
Butterflies	Birchanger	28	50	Private
Rainbow	St John's Road	26	43	Rainbow Pre-School (Stansted)
Ugley Ducklings	Ugley	45	50	Private

All of the provision is concentrated in the centre of the village apart from one day nursery on Foresthall Park which, given its size, deserves greater provision. Scope for expansion in terms of the current pre-schools is very limited.

Primary school places – There are three primary schools, two of which are new builds

Name	Location	Max. number available	Number on roll 2020-2021	Operator
Bentfield	Rainsford Road	240	217	Essex County Council
Magna Carta	St John's Road	210	142	Burnt Mill Academy Trust
St Mary's	Hampton Road	315	270	Foundation

- Bentfield School – Included in the number of available places are 21 for pupils with complex health, physical, developmental and life-long learning needs who learn as part of the mainstream school. There is no scope to expand.

- St Mary's School – Originally a Church of England school which chose to change to Foundation School. The oldest primary school in the village, it moved from poor buildings to a new purpose-build on the Foresthall Park development. There is no scope to expand.
- Magna Carta – The former St Mary's site was redeveloped to house a third primary school in a new purpose-build. Once seven years have passed, in 2022, this one-form entry school will have a roll of 210 pupils. There would be scope to expand by adding a half form entry.

INCLUDE A PHOTO OF EACH SCHOOL

The total number of pupils of primary age in Stansted is 757 of which approximately 198 (26 % of the total) attend schools outside of the parish including Birchanger, Manuden, Farnham, Elsenham and Rickling. Essex County Council has a statutory duty to provide places. The grouping of schools allows ECC to fulfil this duty by allocating places at a more distant school in the relevant group, to which pupils must commute which in itself is not desirable or should be considered to be an environmentally sustainable option.

Secondary school places – there is one small secondary school

- Forest Hall School is situated on Church Road close to two large housing estates and is run by Burnt Mill Academy Trust. The school was renamed in 2013. It is a small secondary school with 477 pupils on roll in 2020/21 and in the next academic year this is projected to be 510. The age range is 11-16 years with no sixth form studies available in the parish.

Although it is the only secondary school in Stansted, 354 (74%) of the pupils come from other villages. 129 (51%) secondary age pupils living in Stansted attend schools outside of the village in Bishop's Stortford and Newport while post-sixteen the range broadens to include Saffron Walden, Harlow College and Cambridge.

- Stansted Airport College opened in 2018 and currently has a roll of 250 students which is full capacity. Its curriculum covers Aviation Operations, Engineering & Aircraft Maintenance, Hospitality and Events Management and it offers 'A' levels, BTEC and apprenticeships. It is run in association with Harlow College but has few students who live in Stansted. The planned Phase 2 expansion programme will double the capacity of the college.

By many standards Stansted Mountfitchet has a good level of educational provision but there are gaps and potential pressures which need to be addressed.

What will be needed in the next fifteen years?

The NPPF gives the following guidance:

- paragraph 34 says "Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure). Such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the Plan.

- paragraph 94 says "It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities" followed by "local planning authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications".

For health and environmental reasons consideration must be given to enable as many students as possible to be educated locally thus reducing the need for travel, especially by car.

The identified educational investment needed over the next decade is as follows:

- *Increased pre-school provision* – There is a shortage of spaces, the provision of which could be met in three ways:

- The preferred solution would be to provide a pre-school on Foresthall Park if land could be acquired which may not be possible. The land, adjacent to St Mary's Primary School, was originally earmarked for the provision of a GP surgery but this was subsequently built in Lower Street. (see Appendix XX for location map showing a possible site)
- Land was allocated for education on the new development at Walpole Meadows. The downside of this site is its location at the northern tip of the village.
- Expand the existing playschool, Rainbow, on a site which is owned by Essex County Council, which would facilitate expansion, if approved, in the near term.
- *The need for additional primary school provision is uncertain.* Two factors will determine future need:
 - Birth Rate – ECC projections point to an increase in demand for about five years thereafter seeing a decline.
 - Housing Development (if any) is uncertain both in this parish and in Elsenham/Henham. With no Local Plan in place, projections are speculative. As a rule of thumb each new house is assumed to add demand of 0.3 of a primary school pupil, thus a 200-house development may add 60 additional pupils.

The provision of additional places is not expected to require a new school. Elsenham School has been expanded while, if necessary, Magna Carta could add another half form entry. Further, there is still capacity at Birchanger School. This could be insufficient if an adopted Uttlesford Local Plan proposed substantial new development in, or around, Stansted Mountfitchet.

- *Secondary school provision poses a number of uncertainties:*
 - The availability of places in Bishop's Stortford may become less easy given the scale of new housing development happening, and planned, in and around the town. Take up at the new school at Bishop's Stortford North will influence future demand at Forest Hall School
 - The number of pupils of secondary school age is expected to increase over the plan period and this trend may be reinforced by additional housing development. Each new house is projected to add 0.2 of a pupil, thus 1,000 houses would add about 200 additional students.
 - Apart from some availability at Joyce Franklin in Newport the roll at Forest Hall School is likely to grow with projections pointing to a rise from around 500 students to approaching 700.
- *Forest Hall School will have to expand.* The existing site is not large and Essex County Council will need to identify additional land through the planning process. This acquisition of land is regarded as an educational priority in terms of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Full advantage should be taken when adding facilities to permit, dual-use of these for the wider community and the school.
- *Introducing a Sixth Form requires serious evaluation.* This would enhance the school's offer and raise the status of the school with parents and students. However, realising this ambition is not straightforward and Essex County Council and the Burnt Mill Academy Trust are unconvinced that the school will be able to offer a range of subjects which will appeal to students and be viable as well as being able to be funded.

POLICIES

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| SME1 | To identify a site, preferably close to Foresthall Park, for the provision of a pre-school. |
| SME2 | To avoid, as far as is possible, encouraging primary school pupils to have to travel by car to take up a school place. |
| SME3 | To secure land adjacent to Forest Hall School to enable expansion to take place to accommodate a rising number of pupils reflecting the direct and indirect effects of substantial housing development in Essex and Hertfordshire. |

SME4

To pursue ways of adding sixth form studies at Forest Hall School through discussion with the school, Burnt Mill Academy Trust and Essex County Council.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

- 1 Are you satisfied with the pre-school choice offered in Stansted?
- 2 Do your children attend the primary school of your choice? Are you pleased with the school's performance? If the school is elsewhere, why did you make this choice?
- 3 If one, or more, of your family attend Forest Hall School are you, and the student/s, pleased with the education?
- 4 If you have secondary school age students who go elsewhere, which school/s do they attend and why was that choice made?
- 5 If Forest Hall School had a sixth form would you stay there? If attending a school elsewhere, would you move to Forest Hall School for sixth form?
- 6 Do you know about Stansted Airport College and the range of courses offered there?

ADD
RELEVANT POLICIES IN ULP AND UDLP
RELEVANT EVIDENCE BASED DOCUMENTS

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