

Topic Paper 3 – Education

Adopted September 2007

This document is one of the supporting topic papers of Vale Royal Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Developer Contributions. It is intended as a guide for landowners, developers and residents and sets out how the Council will deal with necessary contributions towards education.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cheshire County Council, as Local Education Authority (LEA), is responsible for securing the provision of primary and secondary education (including provision for children with Special Education Needs) which will meet the requirements of the County. This Section concentrates on that area of responsibility.
- 1.2 At the national level non-statutory guidance on minimum provision standards for schools are set out in the DfES document Building Bulletin 82: Area Guidelines for Schools (presently under review).
- 1.3 In Cheshire the County Council's School Organisation Plan, reviewed annually, sets out how the Local Education Authority (LEA) intends to ensure the availability of school places to meet the requirements of the population over the next five years.

2.0 Requirement

- 2.1 Currently, housing developments are assumed to generate school pupils as illustrated in the table below. Cheshire County Council uses the following calculation to assess pupil numbers derived from new housing

No. of dwellings x 0.026 (child yield) x no. of year groups*

* 7 year groups for Primary pupils, and, by extension, 5 for Secondary pupils aged 11 to 16.

No. of dwellings	Primary pupils 4 – 11	Secondary pupils 11 – 16
50	9	7
100	18	13
500	90	65

- 2.2 This calculation applies only to family dwellings and therefore excludes:
 - Housing specifically restricted (by planning condition or legal agreement) to those aged 55 or more
 - Developments consisting solely of 1-bed or studio apartments/flats.

- 2.3 Where the calculated requirement cannot be met by available spare capacity within existing local schools, the County Council may seek to negotiate a contribution to enable additional places to be brought into use. Whilst this might, exceptionally, for very large developments, generate the need for a new or replacement school it is more usual for an existing school or schools to be extended. Developers should be aware that extensions to existing provision will not necessarily be a cheaper option. The County Council does not regard mobile classroom units as an appropriate long term alternative to purpose built accommodation, and does not envisage that situations in which their short term use avoided the need for purpose built provision would arise very often in practice.
- 2.4 In circumstances where a development is more than 2 miles away from the nearest school, a contribution may also be sought towards the provision of school transport costs.

Major Developments.

- 2.5 In exceptional circumstances large-scale housing developments may generate the need to provide a new school on a suitable site or to undertake a significant re-organisation of school provision within the area. In these circumstances the County Council will seek a contribution from the developer towards the provision of the necessary facilities, including where appropriate any necessary options appraisal studies or public consultation exercises made necessary by the proposal.

Developers are advised to discuss their proposals with Cheshire County Council at the earliest possible opportunity to determine whether a contribution towards education is likely to be required.

**Contact: Mike Roberts – School Planning and Development
Cheshire County Council 01244 602485**