



Secondary School Place Strategy  
2019 – 2024



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# 1

# Introduction

## 1.1

The Secondary School Place Strategy sets out Portsmouth City Council's approach to the analysis of demand for secondary school places and outlines how the demand will be met.

## 1.2

**Section 14** of the Education Act 1996 requires Portsmouth City Council to ensure that there are sufficient school places for resident children. This duty requires the Council to forecast future pupil populations so that it can ensure that sufficient places are provided.

## 1.3

The strategy considers forecasting data compared to capacity in Portsmouth schools, and determines whether action needs to be taken to meet anticipated future demand for school places by Portsmouth resident children.

## 1.4

The Strategy covers a 5-year period, but also looks forward to the longer term demand for places. This ensures that prompt action can be taken in a timely way if a future shortfall is identified.

## 1.5

All Councils are required to submit their pupil projections to the Department for Education (DfE) on an annual basis. The pupil projections inform the Government allocation of Basic Need capital funding to Councils. **Appendix A** explains the pupil forecasting methodology which supports the pupil projections.

## 1.6

The geography of Portsmouth is important for pupil place forecasting because the lack of permeable boundaries on the east, south and west greatly restricts the potential for migration in and out of the council area by pupils. Portsmouth is the most densely populated city in the UK, outside of London, with 5,000 people per km<sup>2</sup>. Portsmouth parents generally have a broad choice of schools within a small distance. However, there is a significant barrier to pupil movement (as could be expressed through parental preference) due to the water course between the island and mainland parts of the City area. **Appendix B** is a map of Portsmouth showing school locations.

## 1.7

Since 2011, pupil numbers in Portsmouth have risen dramatically. This has put considerable pressure on the availability of primary school places and over 1,700 additional places have been added through school expansions. These additional pupils are now impacting on secondary school places.

## 1.8

Action has been required to address the future pressures for secondary school places. This has been highlighted in previous iterations of the Secondary School Place Strategy 2017 – 2023 and 2018 – 2024 (**Appendix C**).

### 1.9

Capital funding for four projects was identified and the projects are now progressing with a view to completion by September 2020. The projects are presented in alphabetical order.

- Admiral Lord Nelson School – increase capacity by 250 places
- Charter Academy – increase capacity by 300 places
- The Portsmouth Academy – increase capacity by 300 places
- Trafalgar School – increase capacity by 60 places (Y7, Y8, Y9 only)

### 1.10

**Section 4** explains the forecasting methodology and the current pupil numbers and capacity within Portsmouth schools.

### 1.11

**Section 5** covers the review of demand versus capacity and outlines pro-active steps which could be taken to address future pressure for secondary school places.

### 1.12

The recommendations in **Section 8** focus on actions which need to be taken in the next 1 – 3 years to ensure that future demand (within the next 5 years) can be adequately addressed.

### 1.13

In addition to the Secondary School Place Strategy, there is also a Primary School Place Strategy, a SEND Provision Place Strategy, and a School Organisation policy document. The four documents are reviewed on an annual basis and updated to take account of refreshed forecast data and new or emerging intelligence.

# 2 Portsmouth Context

## 2.1

Summary of the pupils in maintained schools and academies

*See table 1*

## 2.2

Some schools are maintained by the Local Authority, and other schools are academies within a Multi Academy Trust. In Portsmouth, all schools are encouraged over time to become part of a strong Multi Academy Trust.

*See table 2*

## 2.3

For the spread of pupils across primary, secondary and special school provision.

*See table 3*

## 2.4

Whilst there has been a reasonable surplus level of capacity available across the city in secondary schools for a number of years, the number of primary pupils has been rising significantly for over a decade. The demand for school places in Portsmouth has been mainly fuelled by rising birth rates, inward migration and the impact of regeneration schemes and housing developments.

## 2.5

The number of live births in the city has risen by over 25% since 2001. Since then there has been a small decline in numbers and the position had stabilised. The most recent data (2016) has shown a further decline.

*See table 4 overleaf*

## 2.6

The economic climate can impact on pupil numbers, leading to a reduction in the proportion of pupils leaving the LA maintained sector for independent schools and/or a reduction in outward migration from the Local Authority area. Economic impact has affected pupil numbers across the majority of the country and this impact is evident in predicted pupil numbers across Portsmouth.

**Table 1: Portsmouth maintained schools and academies (as at January 2019 school census).**

Primary	16,250	63%
Secondary	8,861	34%
Special	574	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,685</b>	<b>100%</b>

*This figure does not include pupils in private schools.*

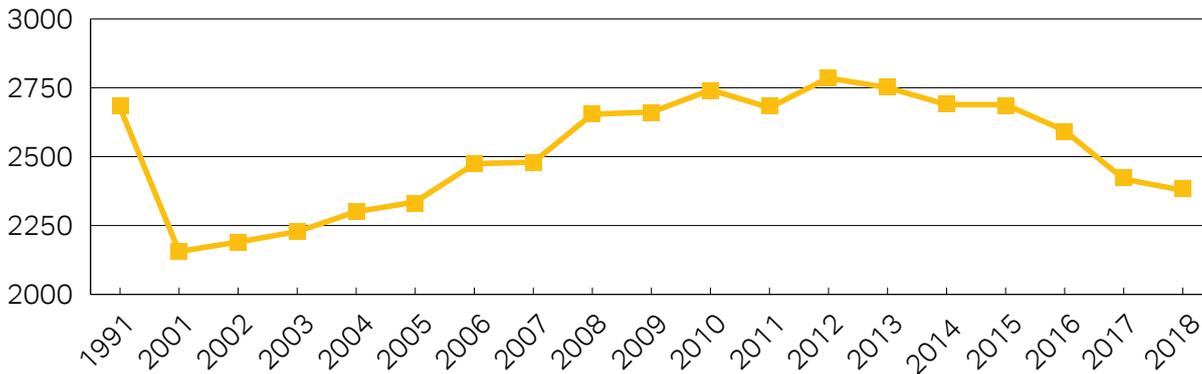
**Table 2: Maintained and Academy Schools (as at September 2019)**

	LA Maintained schools	Academies	Total
Infant	6	10	16
Junior	3	9	12
Primary	11	9	20
Secondary (including the University Technology College)	1	9	10
All-Through School	1	0	1
Special	1	3	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>63</b>

**Table 3: Pupils across primary and secondary provision (as at January 2019 school census).**

	LA Maintained schools	Academies	Total
Infant	1,609	2,135	3,744
Junior	1,161	3,516	4,677
Primary	4,340	3,489	7,829
Secondary	1,948	6,913	8,861
Special	169	405	574
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,227</b>	<b>16,458</b>	<b>25,685</b>

**Table 4: Number of live births in Portsmouth per year**



**2.7**

For planning and funding purposes, local authorities are required to plan pupil provision based on planning areas which reflect patterns of provision in a similar geographic area. Planning areas in Portsmouth are based on secondary school catchment areas.

**2.8**

Between 2008 and 2012, secondary school numbers were falling. However, the secondary numbers are currently rising. Forecasts on future secondary numbers show that an upward trend will continue for the foreseeable future. **Section 4** provides a detailed explanation about an upward trend for four more years.

**2.9**

By working with LA maintained schools, academies and Multi Academy Trusts and using a strategy of expanding existing schools, the Council has ensured that there are enough secondary school places in Portsmouth, based on the forecasts available at the time.

**2.10**

The Secondary School Place Strategy scans a 5-year horizon. This ensures that there is a watching brief on school numbers and that prompt action can be taken in a timely way, if a future shortfall is identified.

**2.11**

The condition of many of our schools also remains a concern. The Council will continue to use capital maintenance funding to address the most urgent condition works in LA maintained schools and academies will do the same either through their allocation from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) or through bids to the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF).

**2.12**

A **key priority** is to secure capital funding to address sufficiency of school places and address the urgent condition issues in the city's schools.

**2.13**

In addition to the Secondary School Place Strategy, there is also a Primary School Place Strategy and a SEND Provision Place Strategy. These strategic documents will be refreshed on an annual basis.

# 3 Portsmouth Education Partnership

## 3.1

The Portsmouth Education Partnership (PEP) brings together Multi Academy Trusts, individual schools and academies, colleges, early years settings, the Regional Schools Commissioner, the University, the Dioceses, the Education Business Partnership and Portsmouth City Council to drive improved attainment and opportunity for all children and young people across the city. The PEP was launched in November 2016.

## 3.2

88.5% of inspected schools are good or outstanding (as at September 2019), compared to 85% (as at July 2017).

## 3.3

*The Education Strategy for Portsmouth 2017 – 2020: pulling together, achieving more* has been drawn up through the PEP. It explains the actions that are being taken to address together key priorities for the city. Detailed plans are continually being updated, and the strategy sets out a high level summary of strategic objectives and key priorities with cross references and links to other documents and action plans. The full strategy document is available on the Portsmouth Education Partnership website and the summary of the Portsmouth Education Strategy 2017 – 2020 is at **Appendix D**.

## 3.4

The Education Strategy comprises ten strategic objectives. This strategic objective links directly to the School Place Strategy:

***Invest in school buildings to create additional school places and provide high quality learning environments that meet the needs of all children***

## 3.5

Key priorities under this Education Strategy objective and relevant to the School Place Strategy are:

- a) Work with LA maintained schools and Multi Academy Trusts to ensure that there are sufficient primary and secondary school places in Portsmouth in order to achieve a minimum surplus of 2%, through a strategy of expansion of existing schools.
- b) Secure capital funding to address sufficiency, condition and suitability issues through the allocation of basic need funding for the DfE, ESFA Priority School Building Programmes and Free School applications where appropriate.

# Forecasting Secondary School Places

## Forecasting methodology

### 4.1

Pupil forecasts are reviewed on an annual basis by the council and the DfE. The data presented in this document is drawn from the annual review submitted to the DfE in July each year. The forecasts cover a 5 year period up to 2024/25. Forecasting pupil numbers is affected by a wide range of factors such as:

- Birth rate
- Inward and outward migration
- Navy movement
- Cross border changes
- Housing development timeframes and impact, such as Tipner/Milton
- Future Free Schools
- Impact of University Technology College (UTC)

### 4.2

The methodology and projections use an impressive range of data sources to model conversion ratios to establish the actual Reception Year cohort. The full forecasting methodology is at **Appendix A**.

### 4.3

Pupil Forecasts are based upon Small Area Population Forecasts provided by Hampshire County Council Research and Intelligence group in the early spring to determine the population of 4 year old children. These are modified within the council's Geographical Information System to reflect primary school catchment areas.

### 4.4

The methodology for forecasting at the primary and secondary aggregate level for Portsmouth is based on a cohort survival method that assumes pupil numbers will roll forward from one year group to the next at the end of each academic year. Year on year changes, which may be influenced by such factors as migration, turbulence, demographic and building changes, are projected forward by using the highest value of the last 5 years. The Council has pupil census data going back to 1996. This model produces forecasts of the usually resident population by age and sex in each Census Output Area in the city and is based on census, birth and child health data and dwelling supply information.

### 4.5

At the aggregate level, secondary pupil forecasts are based on the highest value of the last 5 years of participation rates based on actual numbers (School Census) and forecast numbers from the primary sector.

### 4.6

There is a low level of variability in the Year 6 to Year 7 conversion rate and the conversion rate is stable. The fluctuation in conversion rate year on year has never been more than 1.9%. In the last 8 years it has been within 1% of the previous year (each percentage point equates to approximately 18 pupils at the current cohort size). The low variability in the Year 6 to Year 7 conversion rate in recent years gives confidence that it is an appropriate basis for projecting the future year 7 cohort and therefore 92% has been used as the basis of the projection going forward. This methodology is an appropriate basis for projecting the future year 7 cohort. The full forecasting methodology is at **Appendix A**. This tried and trusted methodology produces accurate forecasts.

## National pupil projections

### 4.7

On an annual basis, the DFE publish national pupil projections for the number of pupils in schools in England by type of school and age group. The projections are based on Office of National Statistics (ONS) national population projections, ONS birth data and school census data.

### 4.8

By 2026, the 2018 model was projecting a secondary school population 53,000 lower than was forecast in the previous model. However, the new projected figure of 3,277,000 in 2026 still forecasts a rise in the secondary school population of 429,000 (15%).

### 4.9

The only school types to show a higher population in 2018 than had been projected in the 2017 model were state funded special schools (2,000 higher than previously projected) and independent schools (3,000 higher). The difference between the two projection models increases through the projection period, and by 2026 is mostly found at primary and nursery level. This is because most of the difference in the new underlying ONS national population projections is a drop in projected figures at age 0 (birth) which, over the timescale of this projection, feeds into the nursery and primary population. By 2026, the projected nursery and primary total is 151,000 (3.2%) lower than previously forecast. Thus whereas in the previous projections an increase in the nursery and primary population was forecast over the whole projection period, the DFE are now forecasting that, by 2026, the nursery and primary population will be 100,000 lower than it is in 2018.

### 4.10

Changes in the school age population are largely driven by the birth rate. However, the proportion of the overall population which actually attends school also has an effect, particularly in the early years, since parents can choose whether to send children aged under 5 to school.

### 4.11

Direct immigration of pupils born outside the UK has a very small effect on the school age population. However, the birth rate, which has a much larger effect, is affected by any increase in the number of children born to non-UK born women (who overall tend to have higher fertility rates).

## Portsmouth pupil projections

### 4.12

In line with the rest of the country, Portsmouth has seen a rising birth rate which peaked in 2012. Since then, the number has started to decrease. This is shown in **Table 4** (section 2.5).

### 4.13

Inward migration has been an important consideration for Portsmouth in terms of pupil places in recent years, particularly as it is difficult to quantify and has occurred over a relatively short timescale. However, since a peak in new arrivals into the city in 2014/15, numbers stabilised and have shown a further decrease this year. With uncertainty regarding Brexit, it is likely that this number will continue to fall.

*See table 5*

### 4.14

**Appendix E** outlines the current pupil forecasts as outlined in the annual return to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

**Table 5: Portsmouth: New arrivals with English as an Additional Language**

Year	Total number of new arrivals
2013 – 14	194
2014 – 15	252
2015 – 16	197
2016 – 17	195
2017 – 18	164
2018 – 19	145

## Current numbers and capacity

### 4.15

In order to meet the demand for school places and ensure the Local Authority meets its statutory duty to provide every resident child with a school place, additional secondary school places are being created. Four projects are progressing, with implementation scheduled for September 2020. The projects are presented in alphabetical order.

- Admiral Lord Nelson School – increase capacity by 250 places
- Charter Academy – increase capacity by 300 places
- The Portsmouth Academy – increase capacity by 300 places
- Trafalgar School – increase capacity by 60 places (Y7, Y8, Y9 only)

### 4.16

Despite this investment, by 2022 there will be a surplus of less than 2%.

### 4.17

The Government uses an assumption of 2% surplus for both primary and secondary as the basis for basic need funding allocations to Local Authorities. In light of this, the Council uses the aim of a 2% surplus for school place planning purposes.

### 4.18

Year 7 numbers are forecast to increase up to 2024/25 and then to fall leaving an acceptable level of surplus places the following year 2025/26.

### 4.19

The Council's Planning Department provided data for 50+ potential housing developments across the Local Authority area. From the Planning data, established models are used to estimate pupil yield for each site and therefore the potential impact on the local demand for school places. Pupil yield is based on the type and volume of housing (for example, the number of children who may live in a one-bedroom flat compared to a 5-bedroomed house may be different).

### 4.20

Where development impact is included in the Small Area Population Forecasts provided by Hampshire County Council Research and Intelligence group, it is reflected in Year R forecasts and then projected forward as these pupils move through year groups into the secondary sector.

### 4.21

The potential impact from strategic and large housing developments could significantly increase the pressure on secondary school places. Therefore, the assessment and monitoring of housing timing and impact is a vital factor in pupil place forecasting.

### 4.22

Where developments are tentative and formal planning permissions are not in place, potential pupil numbers are not reflected in the pupil forecasts. However, these developments are reviewed and monitored on a regular basis so that any changes are reflected in pupil number assumptions going forward.

### 4.23

Portsmouth is yet to have any mainstream free schools. Opportunities are restricted by the lack of land availability, although there has been recent interest shown in Portsmouth as a potential location for a future free school. The impact on pupil numbers would need to be considered if a free school opens in Portsmouth.

# Portsmouth Secondary Schools Capacity review

## 5.1

In 2016, the council commissioned an independent study into secondary school capacity and to review the options to expand the number of secondary school places. The Re:Format report concluded that:

- Schools in the city generally have sufficient core space to be able to add additional classrooms.
- The potential solutions to create the additional school places offer good value for money and a better spread of provision across the city compared to a new school that would cost in the region of £23.4m plus the cost of the site.

## 5.2

Therefore, the focus has been to identify projects to expand existing secondary schools and academies to create the additional places that will be needed.

## 5.3

Portsmouth is densely populated. The national expectation at secondary school age is that children should be able to access a school place within a reasonable distance. The reasonable distance is nationally interpreted as three miles. For any point within the City, a distance of three miles would encompass most if not all of the ten secondary schools. Therefore, due to the compact size of Portsmouth, parents have a broad choice of schools within a small distance and few geographic barriers to navigate.

## 5.4

The geography of Portsmouth is important for pupil place planning because the lack of permeable boundaries on the east, south and west greatly restricts the potential for migration in and out of the city by pupils. This tight geography and the restrictions to internal movement reduce the relevance of pupil place planning areas and increase the focus on city-wide pupil place planning.

## City-wide Place Planning

**Table 6: Pupil forecasts for Year 7**

Estimate >	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
<b>Year 7</b>							
Number on Roll (Actual and forecast)	2,029	2,032	2,154	2,173	2,207	2,239	2,119
Capacity (Admission Limit including proposed changes)	2,151	2,214	2,214	2,214	2,214	2,214	2,214
Surplus/(Deficit)	122	182	60	41	7	-25	95
%Surplus/(Deficit)	6.0%	9.0%	2.8%	1.9%	0.3%	-1.1%	4.5%

### 5.5

Detailed discussion have taken place with secondary schools to identify expansion opportunities. The consideration of the potential for expansion of Portsmouth secondary schools is detailed in the Secondary School Place Strategy 2017-2023 and Secondary School Place Strategy 2018-2024.

### 5.6

**Appendix D** outlines the comparison of capacity versus demands for school places. The figures are summarised below.

*See table 6*

### 5.7

Pupil forecasts indicate a short-term pressure on the sufficiency of secondary school places, followed by an initial indication that numbers may fall and pressure be relieved in 2025.

### 5.8

The pressure on capacity is partly driven by housing developments, and, if housing development impact starts to be seen as forecast across a number of development schemes, additional places will be required. The impact of developments on secondary pupil numbers is shown in **Appendix F**.

### 5.9

It should be noted that, without the housing development impact, there would be a much reduced pressure on secondary school places in this timeframe, and therefore the assessment of housing impact is a vital factor in pupil place forecasting. For example, the impact of the Tipner regeneration project is being closely monitored, to ensure that any future growth in pupil numbers can be accommodated. A number of solutions are being considered, and a final solution may not be determined for some time.

### 5.10

The northern part of the city is on the mainland and has a boundary with Hampshire County Council. Pupil numbers in this area of the city are heavily impacted by cross border pupil movement. At meetings with Hampshire County Council, cross border impact is reviewed to ensure that any changes in pupil numbers are captured and to allow for adequate planning of school places. The discussion considers cross border pupil number flows, cross border development impact, change to school capacity and other known local issues that may impact on cross border pupil numbers. It was recently concluded that Hampshire primary numbers have started to decline.

*See table 7*

**Table 7: Percentage of pupils allocated an out of city school**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Reception	2.1%	2.8%	2.4%	2.7%	2.7%
Junior	2.6%	2.6%	2.9%	1.9%	2.9%
Secondary	7.6%	6.7%	9.6%	9.7%	9.0%

**5.11**

There is potential for an 800 home development in Portchester. The pupil yield for this development is unknown at this point. However, Hampshire County Council has confirmed that it will not be increasing the capacity of their schools to cater for the pupil yield from this development; this could result in a reduction in the number of Portsmouth pupils who would be able to attend Hampshire schools. The impact of the development will be considered in future pupil forecasting, once more information is available.

**5.12**

The strategy for creating additional educational capacity has, to date, been to expand existing secondary schools and academies to create additional capacity and a better spread of provision across a number of schools. This has been possible due to the compact size of Portsmouth and there are still schools which have capacity to expand.

**5.13**

In July 2018, the Education and Skills Funding Agency highlighted Portsmouth in the top 20 Local Authorities for the efficient delivery of value for money education capital projects. This supports the assertion that school expansions in Portsmouth offer value for money.

**5.14**

Consideration is given to determining whether to expand existing schools or seek a new school. Planning must allow sufficient time for feasibility to be established, funding sources to be identified, and capital projects to be undertaken to provide additional accommodation.

**5.15**

There is a lead-in time for school expansion projects due to the time required to both develop architectural plans and to undertake the required capital building works. Ideally, a 3-year lead-in time would be used.

**5.16**

Discussions with secondary schools about further expansion have taken place and the potential for three future schemes was evaluated during 2018/19.

# 6 Addressing the sufficiency of secondary places

## 6.1

The rise in primary pupil numbers in recent years is already impacting on availability of secondary pupil places. Year 7 numbers are due to increase year on year until they peak in 2024/25 at 2239.

## 6.2

Secondary capacity has been increased for 2019 to 2151 (surplus of 6%) with a further increase planned for 2020/21 to 2214 (surplus of 9%). However, without further secondary capacity increases, the level of surplus places will reduce to:

- 2.8% by 2021/22
- 1.9% by 2022/23
- 0.3% by 2023/24, and
- -1.1% by 2024/25

Secondary numbers are forecast to peak at 2239 in 2024/25.

## 6.3

In line with the forecast reduction in primary numbers, secondary numbers are forecast to fall from 2025/26, providing surplus capacity. This position could alter if there was significant housing development in the intervening period.

## 6.4

There are still a number of schools in the city that have sufficient land and/or core capacity to be able to expand. Three feasibility studies have been completed to determine where additional places could be provided, if needed.

## 6.5

As secondary numbers are forecast to fall from 2025/26, any expansion plans will ensure that space can be used flexibly to account for future potential uses. For example, mainstream classrooms could be repurposed for SEND Inclusion space in the future, if mainstream numbers fall and the demand for inclusion provision rises.

## 6.6

The following factors are used to determine the initial high level assessment of viability and to prioritise potential sites:

- Sufficient land within the school boundary on which to expand the school
- Current pupil numbers within the planning area where the school is located
- Trends in pupil numbers within the planning area where the school is located
- Potential benefits associated with building in this location
- Potential risks / complexities associated with building in this location, including land ownership
- Potential benefits or risks associated with access to the site to build

# Capital Funding for Secondary School Expansion Projects

## 7.1

Basic Need funding is allocated by the Government on the basis of a comparison of school capacity against forecast mainstream pupil numbers from Year R to Year 11, uplifted to provide a 2% surplus operating margin. Funding is allocated based on the annual returns of pupil numbers which the council makes to the DfE in July each year. It is hoped that basic need funding will be forthcoming to support the delivery of the secondary school expansion projects.

# 8

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### 8.1

The Council continues to have the statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for resident children and is committed to working with schools, academies and Multi-Academy Trusts for the benefit of children and young people in Portsmouth.

### 8.2

Detailed analysis and forecasting has confirmed that the number of pupils requiring secondary school places will continue to rise until 2024/25, placing pressure on school place capacity. In line with the forecast reduction in primary numbers, secondary numbers are forecast to fall from 2025/26, providing surplus capacity, but this position could alter if there was significant housing development in the intervening period.

### 8.3

Pressure on capacity is partly driven by potential housing developments and the schemes should be closely monitored to assess whether progress is delayed or the scheme has failed to proceed.

### 8.4

Capacity is already increasing at Trafalgar School, Admiral Lord Nelson School, Charter Academy, The Portsmouth Academy, and St Edmund's School. However, action is required to address a modest pressure on places in 2023/24 (surplus of 0.3% - 7 places) and 2024/25 (shortfall of 1.1% - 25 places)

### 8.5

Three feasibility studies have been completed to determine where additional places could be provided, if needed.

### 8.6

Expansion plans will need to ensure that space can be used flexibly to account for future potential uses if secondary numbers fall and surplus capacity is available in future years.

### 8.7

The Secondary School Place Strategy is reviewed on an annual basis, alongside the annual pupil forecasting return to the DfE and the refreshed pupil forecasts.





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