

Foxlydiate First School

Consultation Document

8 January 2024



Have your say:

Provide feedback on this consultation by **11:30pm on 25th February 2024.**

Visit https://online1.snapsurveys.com/NFS_for_Redditch_Specification_Survey_2024.

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Current Context

The Foxlydiate area straddles the boundary between Bromsgrove and Redditch District Councils in the north of Worcestershire, within a locality that has attracted several housing developments in recent years. Housing growth generates an increase in population, including additional children and young people, and the provision of childcare, school and further education places at local facilities needs to increase accordingly.

A major housing development on land to the west of Foxlydiate Lane and Pumphouse Lane is expected to deliver c. 2,560 new houses by 2037. Typically, a new first or primary school may be required where a housing development contributes 300 or more dwellings or in areas where no potential school expansions can be identified. The scale of this development, alongside other developments in the area, means that there is forecast to be an increase in pupil numbers which existing local first and primary schools cannot accommodate.

The developer of Foxlydiate is providing a site within the development, which will enable

Why we need a new school

Ensuring a sufficiency of school places is one of the key statutory duties of the Local Authority. The new major housing development off Foxlydiate Lane, Redditch is planned to deliver c. 2,560 new houses by 2037. This is forecast to increase demand for first school places by an additional 30 places per year group by 2027, 51 places per year group by 2029, and over 100 pupils per year group by the time the development is completed and fully occupied.¹ Other developments in the area (e.g., Brockhill) will also generate additional pupils and will increase the pressure on school places. The combined demand from Brockhill and Foxlydiate developments equates to an additional 62 first school places per year group by 2028 and 91 first school places per year group by 2030. Therefore, a new first school is required to ensure Worcestershire County Council meets its statutory duty.

Evidence from previous large housing developments shows that fewer secondary age children move into new housing developments. The lower numbers of older pupils do not justify the addition of another middle or high school in Redditch currently, and they can be accommodated in existing schools. We are monitoring numbers closely to plan if, where and when additional middle and high school places need to be created.

The provision of a new first school to meet this need was approved by Cabinet on 23 November 2023² and we plan to open the school to admit its first intake of nursery and Reception Year pupils only in September 2027.

¹ Demand has been calculated using the Educations Planning Obligations Policy: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/planning/school-planning-obligations>

²[The New Foxlydiate First School Cabinet Report \(Agenda item 6\)](#) PDF 150 KB

Pupil age range

The new school is proposed to be First school with an age range of ages 2-9 years

The school will also be required to offer ongoing development opportunities for all staff and ensure the wellbeing and mental health of staff, as well as pupils, is a key priority. The integration of green spaces within and around a school will help to improve the health and wellbeing of staff and students.

An environment where pupils feel safe

One of the most important aspects of a new school according to respondents, is that the school creates an environment where pupils feel safe. The Academy Sponsor specification has a focus on keeping children safe, and a strong behaviour policy and requires applicants to provide evidence of such. The school will be built with safeguarding best practice.

Consideration will be given to the design of the whole Foxlydiate site by the developers to ensure the creation of a high-quality space that enables safe trips to be made to key facilities via all modes of transport. The provision of safe walking routes for children and parent carers between home and the new school is a key requirement.

An ethos and practice of inclusivity

The importance of inclusive practice was highlighted in engagement findings. The following principles are put in place to ensure a high level of inclusivity and ensure all pupils can fully access school life:

- x The chosen Sponsor must have a strong ethos and evidenced practice ensuring inclusivity of all pupils, ensure all pupils are able to access the curriculum and quality first teaching (QFT) and high-quality teaching, in particular making appropriate adjustments for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), vulnerable learners and Looked after Children.
- x The chosen Academy Sponsor will be expected to build an ongoing, holistic understanding of their pupils and their needs, and facilities will reflect an ethos of inclusivity.
- x The school will have a strong IT and Digital Policy that seeks to utilise technology to support inclusivity and accessibility for all pupils, including children with SEND.

- x The management of other facilities such as bathrooms and staff facilities must link to the inclusivity policy of the school, regarding gender and self-identity.
- x The school must work closely with the Local Authority and other organisations to ensure all pupils receive the correct support to ensure full access to the curriculum and school life.
- x The school should commit to staff continuing professional development (CPD) and training to upskill senior leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and other school staff in understanding the requirements to meet the individual needs of pupils.

A broad and balanced curriculum

Selection of an academy sponsor will prioritise those that show how their educational offer/ curriculum ensures excellent outcomes and high quality of teaching and learning to ensure all pupils can succeed. Applicants will be required to provide evidence and details of their approach to meeting the needs of all children and ensure accessibility for all pupils to the curriculum and school life, including Looked After Children, Young Carers, and those with Special Educational Needs.

Strong behaviour policy

Respondents felt that the most important key outcome of the school is that 'pupils feel safe at school'. The Academy Sponsor specification has a focus on a strong behaviour policy and requires applicants to provide evidence of such. The school will be built with safeguarding and relationship best practice.

Strong leadership from Head and senior staff

Ensuring the school has strong leadership from the Head Teacher and Senior Staff is crucial to ensuring other values of the school are upheld. As part of the Academy Sponsor application, applicants will be required to provide evidence of strong leadership. The specification will also outline a requirement for the school to have a dedicated head of school and offer ongoing development opportunities for all staff.

Build principles

A minimum build specification will be created in line with the Worcestershire County Council aims towards sustainability and Net Zero Carbon by 2050.⁵ In line with engagement findings, local materials and construction companies will be prioritised where possible throughout the procurement process.

The possible impact of the proposal

Delivery of additional school places

A new first school in Foxlydiate would provide more school places for nursery to year 4 pupils in the Redditch education planning area and will support the longer-term growth of new housing within the area. As a result, these children will have a reasonable opportunity to acquire a place at their preferred school, children moving into the area during the school year will be able to join a local school, and children will be more easily able to move first schools if needed. In providing a more appropriate surplus (excess) of places in the area, other first schools may experience less pupils per year group into reception, dependent on parental preference.

Travel

One of the key outcomes of this proposal is for families in the new housing development to have a first school within their local community, resulting in reduced car use and enabling more pupils to travel to school by active travel methods, i.e., walking and cycling. A Traffic Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the planning process for the school build and the appointed Academy Sponsor will be required to develop a School Travel Plan encouraging safe travel to school which promotes walking and cycling. The provision of safe walking routes for children and parent carers between home and the new school is a key requirement.

⁵ [Worcestershire County Council Net Zero Carbon Plan](#)

What happens next

Based on feedback received during this consultation, the school specification will be amended and finalised before being released as part of the Academy Sponsor competition, which will begin in March 2024. The feedback received will help to ensure the chosen Sponsor meets stakeholder expectations regarding the new school, as selection of the Sponsor will be in accordance with the requirements outlined in the school specification.

Your responses will also support us to progress planning and design for this site, with further opportunities to comment during the planning process.

Contact details for this consultation

Please direct any enquiries to our dedicated mailbox via

NewFoxlydiateFirstSchool@worcestershire.gov.uk