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## REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

EXECUTIVE BOARD: June 2009

SUBJECT: Expanding Primary Place Provision

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report to Executive Board is:-

- To describe the trends in population growth and the changing context for planning primary school places in Leeds;
- To propose an immediate response to the pressures for additional reception places in 2010/11; and
- To outline planning arrangements to ensure sufficient places to meet future needs.

1.2 The Local Authority's statutory duty is to secure sufficient school provision for all of the children in its area. Our response to this duty is driven by important principles:

- Ensuring sufficient local places for all of the children in the local community
- Continuing, as far as possible, to meet parental preferences
- Where possible, expanding successful and popular schools
- Ensuring high quality accommodation
- Achieving value for money solutions
- Optimising the size of the school to meet parental preference and improved outcomes for children
- Making appropriate provision for children with SEN.
- Responding to statute and meeting statutory responsibilities laid down in the School Admissions Code.

1.3 The report outlines a range of solutions to meet the projected pressures in

2010, 2011 and 2012. It proposes specific responses for 2010 through further dialogue with a number of schools.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 The Executive Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the changing context for the provision of primary school places and the potential demands on capital programmes in the future;
- (2) Approve communications with relevant stakeholders and the Schools' Adjudicator and the DCSF outlined in section 6; and
- (3) Receive further reports to approve expenditure and agree future planning proposals.



Agenda Item:

Originator: Jackie Green

Telephone: 2477163

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## REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

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SUBJECT: Expanding Primary Place Provision

### Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

### Specific Implications For:

Equality & Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call-in

Not Eligible for Call-in  
(Details contained in the Report)

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## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

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- To describe the trends in population growth and the changing context for planning primary school places in Leeds;
  - To propose an immediate response to the pressures for additional reception places in 2010/11; and
  - To outline planning arrangements to ensure sufficient places to meet future needs.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Local Authority's statutory duty is to secure sufficient school provision for all

of the children in its area. Our response to this duty is driven by important principles:

- Ensuring sufficient local places for all of the children in the local community
- Continuing, as far as possible, to meet parental preferences
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- Responding to statute and meeting statutory responsibilities laid down in the School Admissions Code.

2.2 During the 1990s there was a significant decline in the birth rate nationally and locally. By 2001 there were falling numbers in primary schools and a growing number of surplus places across the primary sector. (Appendix 1: Trends in Leeds Births 1997 – 2018). Appendix 2: Office for National Statistics (ONS) projections of 0-4 population from 1996-2006

2.3 The primary reviews undertaken from 2001 addressed the mismatch in places and demand within the primary estate. A series of proposals were approved that sought to rationalise the primary sector, reduce the size of some schools and close others. Through the review and the roll out of extended services across schools, surplus places have been reduced to 9.8%, below the DCSF target of 10%. This has:

- saved an additional £1.5m per year – savings which were and still are being spent in primary school classrooms across Leeds;
- more children learning in sustainable, local schools in response to parental preference;
- more children learning in modern learning environments, including new builds and refurbishments; and
- removed a whole series of extremely poor and deteriorating buildings and typically unpopular schools.

2.4 From 2004/2005, NHS data and ONS predictions showed that the number of babies born had begun to increase and the population was predicted to do the same. As a consequence, Education Leeds planned for these children to be admitted from 2008/2009. There remains just under 10% surplus in the system but it is significant that these places are predominantly in key stage 2. Therefore, the focus of most area reviews since 2004 has been to maintain any existing surplus on the basis that it would be likely to be needed in the foreseeable future. However, NHS data and revised ONS predictions now indicate a significantly different population growth which now requires a very different approach.

2.5 NHS data in 2007 detailing the number of babies born showed for the first time a significant increase in numbers and ONS now expect this to continue until 2015-2018. This sharp trend is a national issue but is more pronounced in Leeds (19.2%) than in other parts of the region (14.6%) and across the country.

(England 16.1%). Table 1 shows these increases in the number of births between 2001 and 2007. There has also been a significant increase in the overall population of the city over the same period, 6.4% (46,000) compared to a national average of 4.1%.

**Table 1: Comparison of Leeds births, with national trends 2001 to 2007**

	<b>Births 2001</b>	<b>Births 2007</b>	<b>Percent increase</b>
England	564,000	655,000	16.1%
Yorks & Humber	56,000	64,200	14.6%
Leeds	7800	9300	19.2%
Wakefield	3300	3900	18.2%
Birmingham	14426	16975	17.7%
Bradford	7200	8300	15.3%
Kirklees	5000	7000	14.0%
Calderdale	2300	2600	13.0%
Newcastle	2875	3238	12.6%

*Source: Office of National Statistics*

- 2.6 The new Schools Admission Code, which came into force in February 2009, has increased the flexibility available to schools who feel they are able to admit additional children. The Code has enabled us to allow a number of schools to take in additional children in the current admissions round for entry in September 2009. Education Leeds has discussed with these schools how they will manage any extra admissions within the current funding arrangements and accommodation to ensure value for money whilst meeting parental preference. All these discussions have been mindful of the infant class size legislation.
- 2.7 In accordance with the Council's statutory duty, arrangements have been made, in consultation with Head Teachers and Governors, to accommodate all the children entering reception classes in 2009 who were born in 2004/2005. Arrangements have also provided for 111 admissions across 10 schools where parents did not apply through the proper process for admission but who are seeking admission in September 2009.
- 2.8 This involved the following schools: Beecroft; Beeston Hill St Lukes; Brownhill Calverley CE; Greenmount; Harewood; Highfield; Hovingham; Seacroft Grange and Thorner, Primary Schools.

### **3.0 MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 The admissions limits for the September 2010 round were agreed at the Executive Board in April 2009. However, it is clear that for September 2010 there will be an additional 350 children who will need a reception class place due to the rising birth rate alone in Leeds.
- 3.2 Historically it is important to note that not all the children in each birth cohort have expressed a preference for a Leeds maintained school. However in September 2009 children equivalent to 100% of the birth cohort are entering Leeds reception

classes (Table 2).

**Table 2: Leeds births and entry to school reception**

<i>Source: Leeds Area Health Authority</i>			
Year of birth	Aged 0-1	Entered reception 4 years later	% of birth cohort entering reception
2001/2	7784	7508 (2006/7)	96.5%
2002/3	8094	7743 (2007/8)	95.7%
2003/4	8192	8082 (2008/9)	98.7%
2004/5	8516	8500 (2009/10)	99.8%

- 3.3 While the research evidence is limited this change in preferences for Leeds schools can be explained by the following factors:-
- a. high standards of primary education across the city
  - b. popular and successful primary schools in Leeds particularly in the inner city areas
  - c. strong preferences for local primary schools
  - d. some movement from private sector schools to state maintained schools
  - e. economic migration and
  - f. asylum seekers and refugees
- 3.4 Further research is being undertaken to identify the exact impact of these factors but it is clear that all of the above are now influencing the pattern of need for admission to local reception classes.
- 3.5 In addition to the increase of 350 children, on the basis of recent experience, it is predicted that there will be approximately 120-150 children who will not apply for a place through the proper process but who will, at short notice, expect admission and require a place in reception in September 2010. Therefore planning and provision for up to 500 additional children in Leeds reception classes for September 2010 needs to be undertaken, over and above the limits already agreed by Executive Board in April 2009.

#### **4.0 OPTIONS FOR CHANGE FOR 2010-2012**

- 4.1 The distribution of the demand for reception places and admission capacity across the city for 2010/2011 can be seen in Appendix 2. This shows areas of the city where the need is greater (coloured in orange and red) than there is currently sufficient capacity.
- 4.2 One solution would be to expect children to attend a non-local school where capacity exists. However, this is not a preferred solution since it means more of our youngest children travelling greater distances, it does not take full account of parental preference nor does it ensure sufficient local places for all the children in the local community. Additionally, there would be cost implications of making transport available for more children to travel to school to access reception classes.
- 4.3 Another solution would be to create new schools or additional traditional built

classrooms. However, this would require a lengthy procurement programme and construction and therefore it would not be realistic in the time available. The cost of this option is not currently built into the Council's Capital programme and recent estimates for a new one form entry school (30 reception places) indicate a minimum cost of £3.3m. The cost of a seven class (1FE) traditionally built extension is estimated to be at least £2m depending on site and specific requirements.

- 4.4 Another solution would be to purchase purpose built teaching spaces which are safe, fully equipped and can be delivered with minimum disruption or delay to the existing school. Modular accommodation may provide the most feasible option to meet the timescales required to ensure sufficient places for 2010. The cost of this solution is approximately £100k per classroom unit, including toilet facilities.

## **5.0 PLANNING PROVISION FOR 2012 ONWARDS**

- 5.1 The rapidly rising birth rate and the revised ONS projection require a rethink of primary school planning and provision. To take full and proper account of all the local changes in school populations we propose to publish a school organisation plan which would be subject to consultation with elected members, schools, stakeholders and partners. This will provide details of all primary and secondary planning areas with appropriate long term forecasting based on the most accurate and up to date national and local data and projected trends.

- 5.2 The plan will enable consideration of the challenges facing each planning area and would allow further consideration of all the above short term options as well as an opportunity to look at creative solutions to changing need.

## **6.0 IMMEDIATE ACTIONS/CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Education Leeds will continue discussions with elected members, schools and other stakeholders to explore solutions to secure 500 additional reception places for 2010.
- 6.2 Education Leeds will consult to satisfy the needs of the Schools' Adjudicator for 2010 admissions.
- 6.3 Education Leeds will consult with the DCSF regards the availability of additional basic need funding.
- 6.4 Education Leeds will develop a risk management plan and conduct an equality impact assessment for this work.

## **7.0 LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 In making the request to vary the admissions arrangements via the Schools' Adjudicator Education Leeds will consult with schools, governors, parents, diocesan authorities and neighbouring local authorities.
- 7.2 Education Leeds, on behalf of Leeds City Council, will approach central

government (eg DCSF, Academies Unit, Partnerships for Schools) to seek additional funding for 2010 onwards to pay for the increase in the Council's costs under the DCSF's safety valve funding or any other source of funding.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 Executive Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the changing context for the provision of primary school places and the potential demands on capital programmes in the future;
- (2) Approve communications with relevant stakeholders and the Schools' Adjudicator and the DCSF outlined in section 6; and
- (3) Receive further reports to approve expenditure and agree future planning proposals

Appendices:-

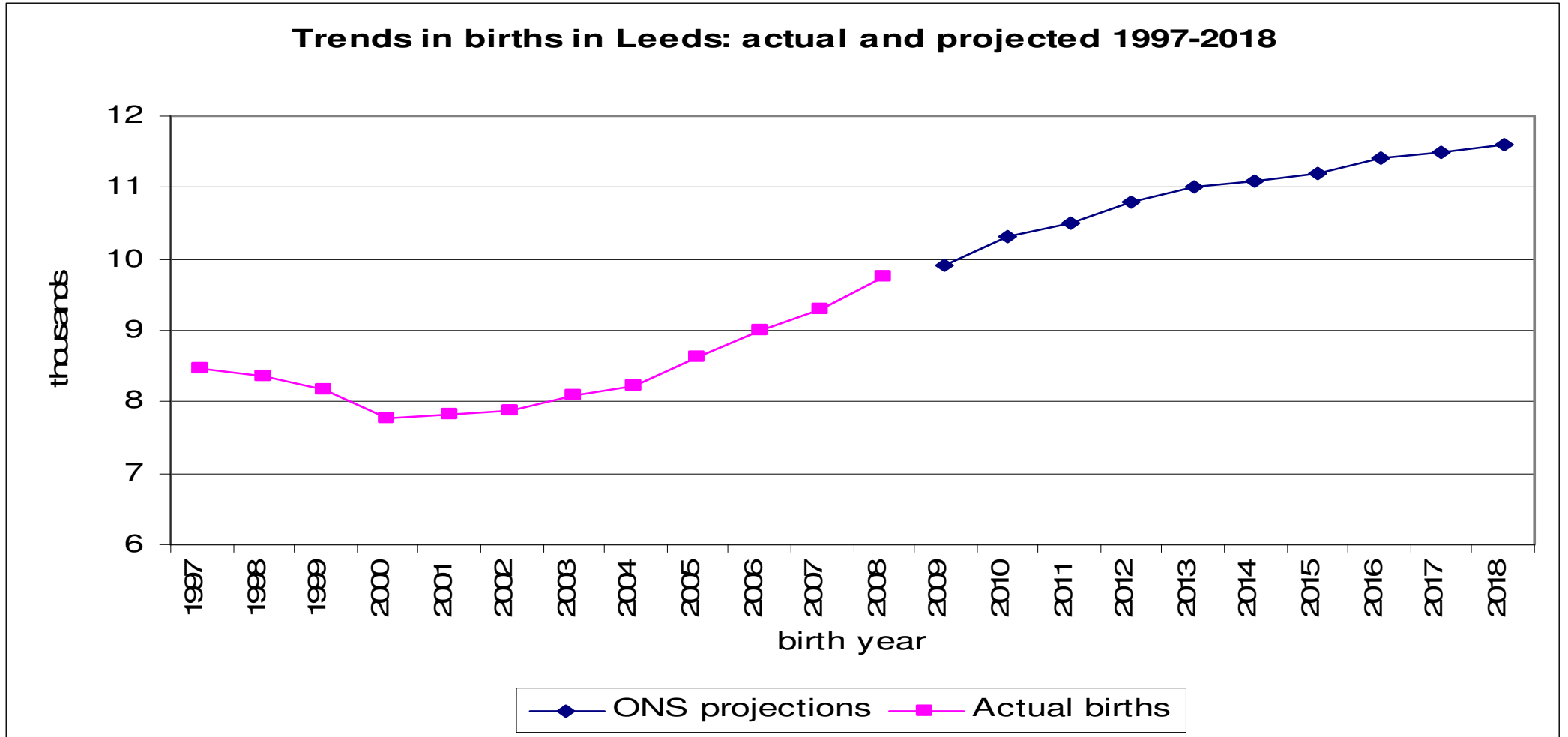
- (i) Trends in births in Leeds: actual and projected 1997 – 2018
- (ii) ONS projections of 0-4 population based on 1996, 2004 and 2006
- (iii) Map showing reception places v admission limits by primary planning area 2010/11.

Background papers:-

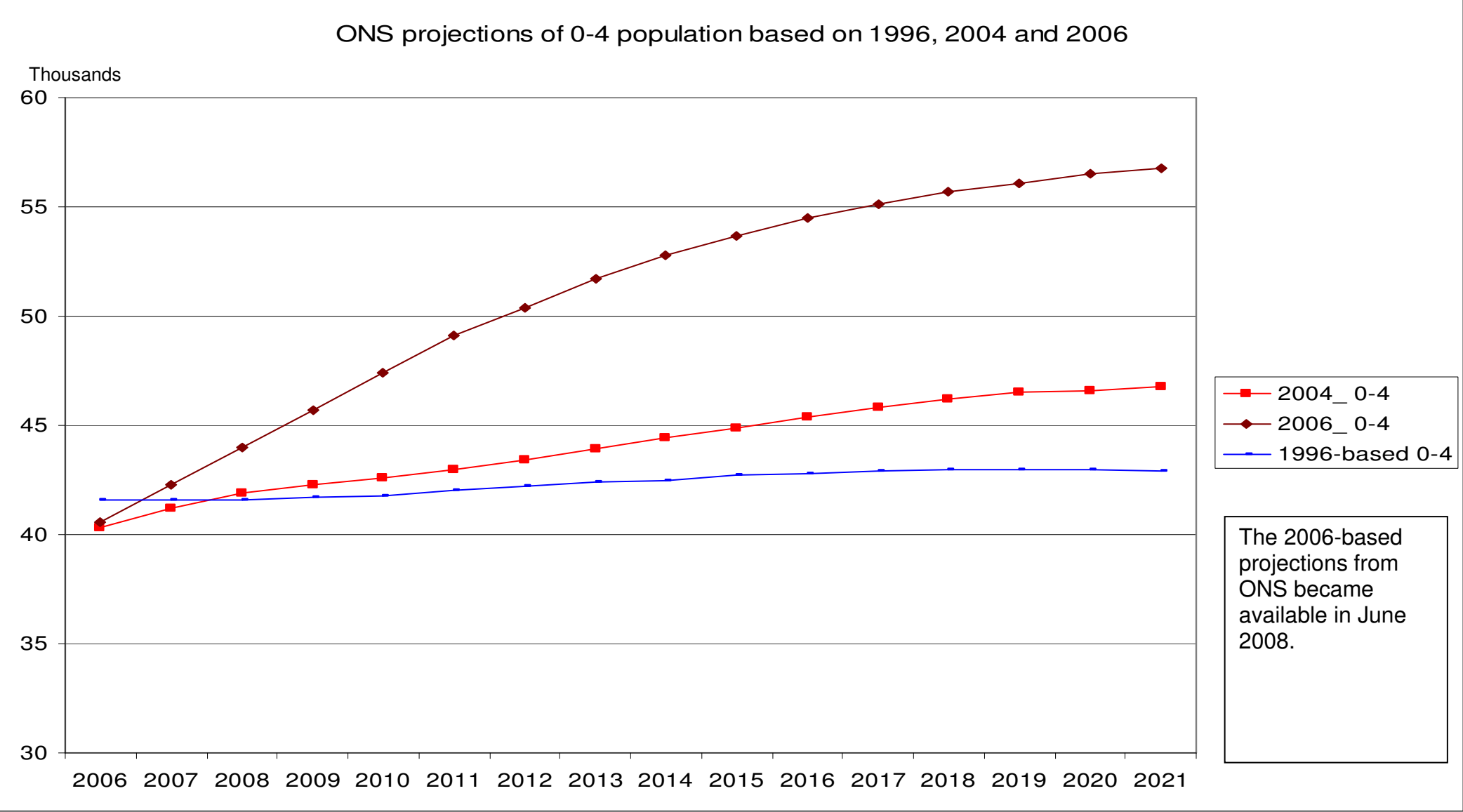
- (i) Executive Board report in April 2009 "Annual Consultation on Admissions arrangements for Sep 2010"
- (ii) Executive Board report in June 2006 "A Framework for Managing School Places"



Appendix 1-Trends in births in Leeds: actual and projected 1997-2018

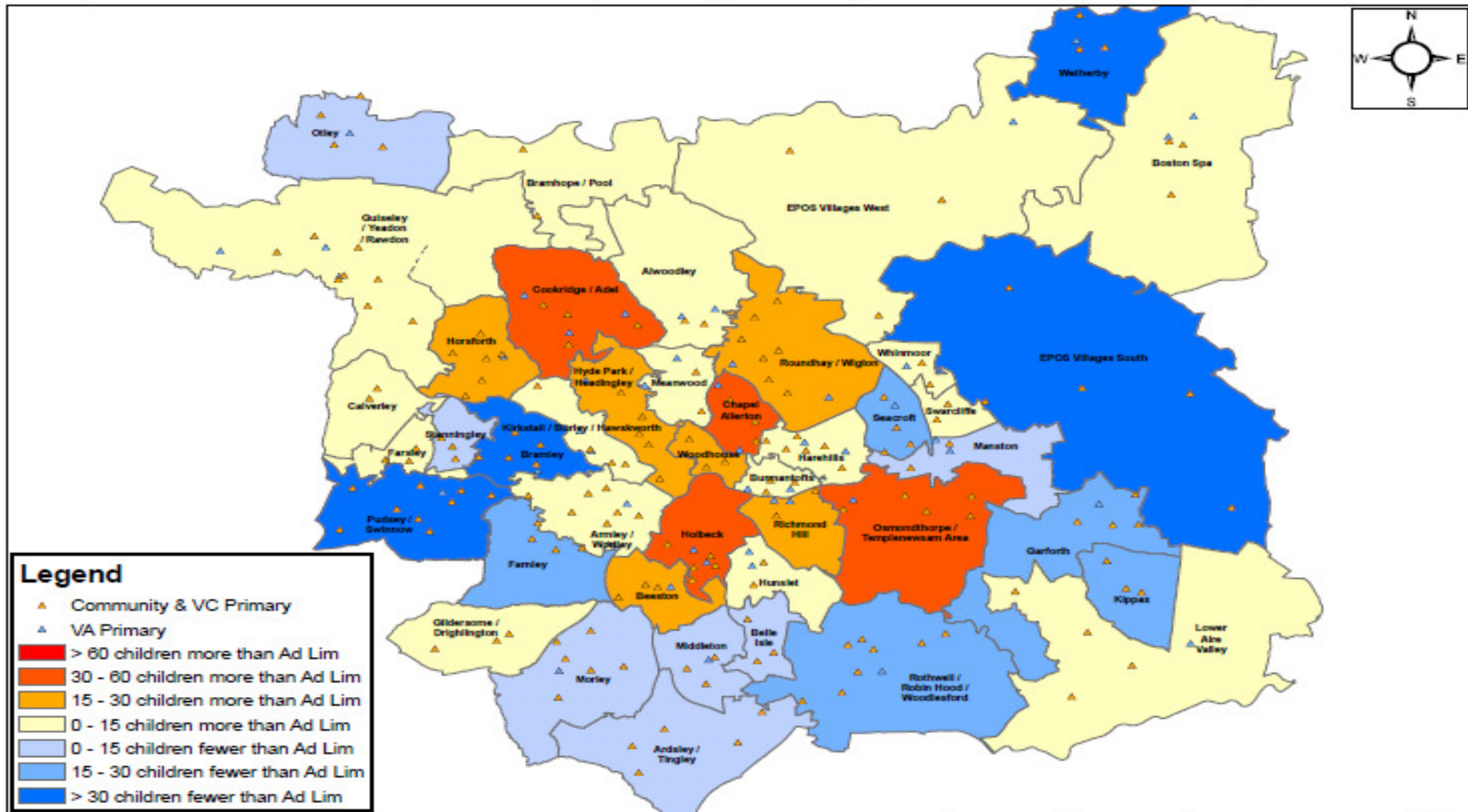


Appendix 2 – ONS projections of 0-4 population based on 1996, 2004 and 2006



Appendix 3 – Map showing Reception Places v Admissions Limits by Primary Planning Area 2010/11

Reception Places v Admissions Limits by Primary Planning Area 2010/11 (data at May 2009)



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