

Councillor Victoria Cusworth – Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

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Our ref
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Councillor Victoria Cusworth

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8th June 2022

Cllr Firas Miro

Via email: cllrfiras.miro@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Miro

Council Question – Wednesday 25th May 2022

Thank you for the question you submitted to Council on 25th May as follows:

In view of Mr Alex Stafford MP getting involved between Harworth and the Waverley Juniors Academy regarding the number of children on the Waverley estate who did not get a place at WJA, can I ask where we are at with trying to accommodate those children in temporary classrooms for the academic year starting this September?

The Department for Education (DfE) have made their position clear in that there is no projected shortfall of available places in the wider Planning Area that Waverley Junior Academy sits within for the foreseeable future (up until 2025/26) with approximately 20% surplus capacity currently in place across schools in this area.

Therefore, the government's views is that it is reasonable to expect parents who fail to secure their preferred school of Waverley Junior Academy to take up places at one of these other schools and not to expand any schools.

There are two immediate challenges; firstly, that the DfE criteria will not permit government funding for temporary classrooms. And secondly, the consequences of moving children would be immediate and damaging to the other local schools where they have been allocated places. Resolving these twin issues would require special dispensation and funding arrangements from the DfE.

The council has reached out to Mr Stafford to help facilitate conversations with Ministers and DfE officials to help progress this, Council officers stand ready to support these.

Beyond this immediate question, officers continue to work with the Principal Developer, Harworth, in relation to a variation to the current Section 106 funding agreement to bring about an earlier release of funding for the next phase of creating additional permanent primary school places on the Waverley estate.

It should be noted that the developer has met its obligation to provide primary school places aligned to the occupation of 2,000 dwellings in line with the national formula for pupil school place planning. There are currently significantly less than 2,000 dwellings built and occupied at Waverley at this present time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Victoria Cusworth', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Victoria Cusworth
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People