

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Summary Report from Phase 1 Public Engagement Review of Primary School Catchment Areas in Leigh on Sea

September 2017

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Leigh Primary Community School and Own Admission Authority Catchment Area Review for Admissions Arrangements 2019/20

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report identifies a summary of a recent public engagement exercise regarding current primary school catchment areas and suggested changes. It is aimed that the information contained within the report will allow own admission authorities to consider and agree on a preferred option for future catchment areas for primary schools within the Leigh area
- 1.2 To recommend to own admission authorities have a collective agreement on either one of the proposed catchment areas models or agree that no changes are proposed in any formal consultation.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **Own Admission Authorities (Academy Trusts, Foundation School Governing Bodies or Council Members) to consider and collectively agree a preferred option for catchment areas for the participating primary schools in the Leigh area and formally consult in accordance with Admissions Code 2014.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council has the responsibility to determine in relation to school admissions the admission arrangements (admission numbers, admission criteria and catchment areas) for community schools;
- 3.2 Own admission authorities, (academy, foundation and voluntary aided schools) have the responsibility to determine their own admission arrangements including catchment areas.
- 3.3 Section 14(2) of The Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities to secure sufficient schools and places for providing primary (and secondary) education that are available for their local area. The Department for Education

recognises that school populations differ from school to school and year to year and so expects pupil forecasting to be grouped by areas rather than individual schools to account for schools with over and under catchment subscription. Information regarding significant risks of over and under subscription can then be used in reviewing admission arrangements including catchment areas on an annual basis.

3.4 Own Admission Authorities have absorbed the Council's catchment areas. Any proposed change to current catchment areas will require the full collaboration of all schools in any area that has proposed changes to ensure that all Southend addresses are identified within a catchment or priority area model. For example, if a catchment area is reduced to better represent the community and provide a reasonable expectation for admission, neighbouring areas must be increased and aligned to ensure there are no gaps and all children/addresses are accommodated within all areas. In contrast, catchment areas can however overlap and share areas.

3.5 Own Admission Authorities have been engaging in the process and supporting the catchment area review.

3.6 The School Admissions Code 2014 states:
1.14 Catchment areas must be designed so that they are reasonable and clearly defined. 23 Catchment areas do not prevent parents who live outside the catchment of a particular school from expressing a preference for the school."

3.6 Over the last 6 years, with the exception of the 2017 September reception intake, Leigh schools south of the London Road have seen a pattern of at least one of the three schools not meeting catchment applicants on offer day year on year. Chart 1 demonstrates numbers of catchment applicants unsuccessful in gaining a catchment place on National Offer day and at the end of coordination (where the council ceases to coordinate admissions for own admission authorities).

School name	Offer Day 2017	Offer Day 2016	Offer Day 2015	Offer Day 2014	Offer Day 2013	2012 End of Coordination (offer Day was not captured this year)
Chalkwell Hall Infants	0	0	3	14	0	n/a
Leigh Infants	0	0	0	4	14	12
West Leigh Infants	0	27	2	15	0	5
Total Leigh schools	0	27	5	33	14	17

School name	2017 End of Coordination	2016 End of Coordination	2015 End of Coordination	2014 End of Coordination	2013 End of Coordination	2012 End of Coordination
Chalkwell Hall Infants	0	0	2	14	0	n/a
Leigh Infants	0	0	0	3	6	12

West Leigh Infants	0	25	0	9	0	5
Total Leigh schools	0	25	2	26	6	17

- 3.7 The exception for 2017 was anticipated due to the birth numbers for this reception intake year being unusually low, both in the Leigh area and across the town as a whole. Comparable births last being this low within the Leigh area were seven years ago (2010/11 reception intake year).
- 3.8 An objection was received by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator in relation to West Leigh Infant and West Leigh Junior School, regarding how priority is given when there are more applications than places for those living in the catchment area and specifically to the fact that within the catchment, priority is based on distance from the school with those living closest to the school having a higher priority.
- 3.9 As part of the adjudicator's considerations, the adjudicator acknowledged that the catchment area normally has sufficient places for all those who live in the catchment area and thus was reasonable for admissions in 2018. However during her meeting with the local authority, schools and objector, she also acknowledged that where catchment areas were in existence, parents living in catchment should have a reasonable expectation for a place. The adjudicator recognised that births for West Leigh Infant School for the 2019/20 reception year were above the number of places and that Southend Borough Council were 'considering consulting on options for the future and this could include looking at different ways of giving priority when there are not enough places for all those who live in the catchment area and wish to attend the school'. The adjudicator reinforced at the meeting, that where admission authorities were aware that the expectation for a catchment place for all children was unlikely, this was unreasonable and therefore not in accordance with the Admission Code.
- 3.10 Forecasting for years of oversubscription where schools will not meet catchment applications has been particularly problematic for schools in this area (Chalkwell Hall Infant, Leigh North Street Primary and West Leigh Infant) as years of catchment oversubscription has not necessarily followed the years of higher births. Similarly, years of higher births have not necessarily resulted in schools being unable to meet catchment preferences.
- 3.11 One of the explanations linked to the lack of patterns in birth numbers versus numbers of catchment applications is attributed to changes in parental preference. Parental preferences are often influenced by Ofsted ratings, changes in school leadership and local media and public conception regarding a schools popularity. As well as these factors, migration into popular areas and numbers of children born to families of specific faiths also influence preferences and numbers of applications and choices for each school.
- 3.12 Southend forecasting is based upon: registered births (data supplied by registry services); historical and current numbers on school roll (January school census DfE); housing developments (confirmed planning applications); local trends (admissions preference data); local knowledge (information received from schools and early years providers); Early Years data (based upon 2, 3 & 4 year old funding places); plus additional information such as information concerning

neighbouring LA's, school extensions, school closures, new schools being built, school reorganisations and Ofsted outcomes.

3.13 The local authority's statutory duty is to ensure that the authority provides sufficient places to meet pupil need within a geographical area. Due to this, forecasts are predicted by clustering schools into areas, rather than forecasting specifically by individual school. Due to the different data sources, some of which are soft data and local intelligence, forecasting cannot be an exact formula based science but is a tool to ensure that areas have sufficient places available for applicants living in the local area.

4. Characteristics of the schools considering changes to catchment areas

4.1 For the reception intake year 2019/20, there a total of 631 births recorded across the Leigh area. Collectively this is the highest number of births in over 10 years. The total number of places available across this group is 680, evidencing that Southend has enough places to meet the demand.

4.2 Focussing specifically on the three schools that have been oversubscribed for catchment places over recent years and including Darlington School where provision was added in 2011, there are a total of 446 births in the area against 450 places, again evidencing that this area has sufficient places. It is also recognised that from 2014-2016 on average 11% of the recorded births across the three oversubscribed areas gained a place at the local voluntary aided (Catholic) school Our Lady of Lourdes. In total the average number of pupils gaining a reception place at Our Lady of Lourdes across these three catchment areas over the same three year period was 15.

4.3 Blenheim Primary School (Academy):

4.3.1 Historically Blenheim has been able to meet all catchment applications. Blenheim regularly admit children from other catchment areas, predominantly, Fairways, Darlington and Earls Hall as well as other schools in the area. Blenheim has a mixed demographic with some areas of high deprivation, resulting in a higher percentage of children eligible for pupil premium. Blenheim was asked to expand in 2010 and admit an additional 10 places due to increases in births in the area. Blenheim's Published Admission Number (PAN) is 90.

4.4 Chalkwell Hall Infant School (Community):

4.4.1 Chalkwell Hall Infant school has a history of receiving more applications than places and in some years has been unable to meet all catchment applications. Chalkwell's births are historically higher than their Published Admission Number (PAN), with an average of 9% of their catchment births applying for a reception place at a local Catholic school (Our Lady of Lourdes). The north of Chalkwell's current catchment area has a much higher percentage of children eligible for pupil premium than the rest of its catchment. This area lies adjacent to Darlington's catchment. Chalkwell recently increased its PAN from 108 to 120. The PAN increase reduces the previous risk of catchment oversubscription; however previous bucks in trends and multiple housing developments within the catchment area provide uncertainty for future catchment applications. Chalkwell Infant is situated on the same site as the Junior school. The site uses all available space to maximum efficiency both

inside and out and has no available space to expand further, without impacting negatively on the outside areas for outside play and sport.

4.5 Chalkwell Hall Junior School (Community):

4.5.1 Chalkwell Hall Infant School is a feeder school to the Juniors and as such the characteristics mostly mirror that of the infant school, including its PAN of 120.

4.6 Darlington School (Academy):

4.6.1 Darlington was identified early on by Council members as the solution to the shortage of school places in the South Western area of the town and increased its PAN after a successful development project from 60 to 120 from 2010 to 2012. At this time the schools Ofsted rating was 'good' and the school remains wealthy in land unlike other schools in the area that had particularly small sites for the numbers of pupils. The numbers of births within the current catchment for this school are particularly low. For 2019 admissions, births represent only 44% of the schools PAN, with no current indication of increasing. Darlington's catchment has areas of high deprivation, resulting in a higher percentage of children eligible for pupil premium.

4.7 Eastwood Primary School (Academy):

4.7.1 Eastwood Primary School, also has low births in relation to its PAN of 60 places. For the 2019 reception intake, births only represent 52% of their available places. Recent years have seen increased applications to Eastwood Primary from other catchment areas, most significantly from Blenheim's northern catchment area (those living South of the A127). Similar to Blenheim and Darlington, Eastwood Primary's catchment also has areas of high deprivation, resulting in a higher percentage of children eligible for pupil premium.

4.8 Fairways Primary School (Community):

4.8.1 Fairways PAN is 60 and historically is oversubscribed with more applications than places. Although births fluctuate above and below PAN, they have historically been able to meet all catchment applications. There is a pattern of parents within Fairways catchment areas choosing Blenheim as a higher preference and vice versa depending upon the year and area. Fairways have reasonably low numbers of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium. One unique factor of Fairways catchment is that a vast section of the South Western catchment, borders Belfairs Woods in West Leigh's catchment. It is due to the barrier of the woods that Fairways has not been considered as a solution to West Leigh's oversubscription.

4.9 Leigh North Street Primary (Community):

4.9.1 Leigh North Street is the smallest school in the southern part of Leigh with a PAN of 90. Similar to Chalkwell, they regularly receive more applications than places and in some years have been unable to meet catchment demand. Again like Chalkwell, years of unmet catchment has not necessarily correlated with the higher birth years. For example, the two highest years of births in this area met all catchment applications but previous lower birth years did not. For the 2019 reception intake, recorded births in area are higher than the previous two years but lower than 2016 where the school met all catchment applications. On average only a very small percentage of this population apply

to different schools. It has been suggested that Our Lady of Lourdes meets a high representation of this catchment population, however the reality is that from 2014-2016 only 1.6% of Leigh North Streets catchment gained a place in Our Lady of Lourdes reception. Similar to other South Leigh Schools, the school site is small which attributes to the reasons why this school was not expanded as part of the primary places strategy from 2010. This school has a low number of children eligible for pupil premium.

4.10 West Leigh Infant School (Community):

4.10.1 West Leigh's births have historically been less than their total number of available places, however there have been recent years where catchment applications have significantly exceeded places, with the most significant being 2016 where 27 catchment children did not receive a place at West Leigh on offer day. 2019 reception shows that for the first time, births within this area exceed available places, raising considerable concern and unlikelihood of a parental expectation for a place within catchment. It has been suggested that this high disparity of historically low births versus high years of catchment applications is attributed to parents making fraudulent applications or taking a second property under a short tenancy lease within area during the reception application round. There is a perception that many parents then move back out of catchment after securing a reception place and have commonly been referred to as 'gaming the system'. Local intelligence however does not suggest that this is a significant factor in the increase in applications. This area of Leigh has become very popular with inward migration both locally and regionally. From the recent engagement sessions, a number of parents, particularly those with children under five years, identified that they had recently bought property within the West Leigh catchment after having their first child, with the school being a primary factor for this decision making. Equally statistically, the 2016 January school census identified that West Leigh had the highest population at 91% living in catchment across the whole school (reception to year 2) compared with any other Southend school. West Leigh Infants PAN is 120. They have a particularly low number of children eligible for pupil premium.

4.11 West Leigh Junior School (Academy):

4.11.1 West Leigh Infant School is a feeder school to the Juniors and as such the characteristics mostly mirror that of the infant school. The main difference is the Junior schools PAN increases by 8 to 128, with many places offered from out of the catchment area.

5 Summary of Phase 1 Public Engagement Exercise

- 5.1 Council officers undertook a period of pre-consultation listening and engagement with the public to seek the views of a cross section of the community before reporting back to Council to consider a formal consultation on admission arrangements.
- 5.2 The listening and engagement exercise proposed two possible models for change to reduce risks for future years of schools meeting catchment applications and increase reasonable expectations of parents gaining a catchment school place in reception.

- 5.3 The exercise included the collaboration of 9 schools with a mixture of Community, Foundation and Academy status and specifically included those schools where there had been a pattern of not meeting catchment applications and oversubscription, where recent low birth numbers were impacting upon significant under subscription and those schools adjacent that support a mixed population from across the area.
- 5.4 The Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and Academy Trusts were involved in the possible solutions for redesigning the catchment areas to better represent numbers of places available and patterns of previous applications. These dialogues formed the Model A exemplified in the exercise.
- 5.5 Officers also sought to explore alternative methods for prioritising places based upon the areas of most risk, which formed the Model B example and allowed those less familiar with alternative methods for prioritising admissions to think beyond historic practice within Southend. Model B instead of catchment areas, focusses upon a shared priority area across 6 of the 9 schools
- 5.6 Of the two models, school leaders preferred Model A, although ultimately would rather no change was taken as anticipated that parents would struggle with any significant change. Agreement was gained from all 9 schools for the local authority to run the pre-consultation exercise on behalf of all 9 schools, as it was recognised that the reasonable expectation for parents to secure a catchment school in some of the schools was unlikely according to recent patterns of admission and continuing high numbers of births across the Leigh area.
- 5.7 The engagement exercise ran for 9 weeks, over the summer and during the first three weeks of the new school term. All 9 schools were asked to give existing parents a flyer to promote the exercise. Flyers were also sent to local children centres, libraries, pre-schools and nurseries. A number of media releases were shared with local newspapers.
- 5.8 Numerous information and data was made readily available via the Southend Borough Council Website, along with a catchment review public engagement document, frequently asked questions and public survey regarding opinions of the two proposed models.
- 5.9 In addition to the information available, 5 bookable public interactive sessions were offered as well as a drop-in session at the Civic Centre. The interactive sessions were offered during August (2) and September (3) both during the day and evening to allow a cross section of the community to attend. Of the 75 places available 46 people attended. On top of this, 10 people attended the public drop-in.
- 5.10 The council also received 337 individual email responses regarding the exercise and 434 usable responses to the online survey which includes any survey received via email or post up to the 22nd September.

5.11 The survey results provide evaluative responses, from those that provided feedback, regarding the popularity and anticipated impact of possible proposals as well as free comment boxes which identified common themes of areas of concern or need. The community was also invited to make alternative proposals either through the survey, email or from the interactive sessions. The below summary contains the key themes, evaluative responses and other viable options which have been given due consideration. Due to any change to the 2019 admission arrangements most affecting those with children currently not in school, responses where possible, have been split into comments from those with children not yet in school and all comments.

5.12 Model A

5.12.1 Model A focussed upon changes to all 9 schools and amended current catchment boundaries to better reflect demand and reasonable expectation. It was formed based upon previous patterns of over and under admission subscription, using a worst case scenario to avoid the need for year on year change over the next few years. This would not however remove the need for an annual review of arrangements as this is a requirement of the Admission Code but would remove the need for imminent significant changes.

5.12.2 The majority of respondents to the online survey when asked if they agreed with the changes suggested in Model A said 'No' with little difference according to the school in question. Those most against this model were in relation to Leigh North Street, Chalkwell Hall and West Leigh schools:

NB: Surveys where people have not provided a comment have been removed from the overall statistics

School	% Parents of children under school age from survey results		% All responses from survey results	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Blenheim	32.7%	67.3%	30.2%	69.8%
Chalkwell Hall Inf	30.1%	69.9%	29.5%	70.5%
Chalkwell Hall Jnr	30.1%	69.9%	29.5%	70.5%
Darlinghurst Sch	30.1%	69.9%	29.5%	70.5%
Eastwood Pri	34.0%	66.0%	32.0%	68.0%
Fairways Pri	34.0%	66.0%	31.3%	68.7%
Leigh North Street Pri	29.5%	70.5%	27.9%	72.1%
West Leigh Inf	30.8%	69.2%	28.8%	71.2%
West Leigh Jnr	30.8%	69.2%	28.8%	71.2%
Total	31.3%	68.6%	29.7%	70.3%

5.12.3 The most common themes received through email, feedback from the interactive sessions and from the free comment boxes in the survey regarding why people did not like this model included:

Changes were too drastic – areas being moved from one catchment to another were too large, based upon unusually high years of catchment oversubscription and should be based upon more realistic numbers

Environmental Impact – many felt these changes would increase travelling times to school and parents choosing to travel by car, increasing pollution around local schools and parking issues.

Community Impact – Leigh North Street community in particular raised this issue (as well as others). A number of responses spoke of the model dividing a close community with 2/3 of the current Leigh North Street community being altered by the changes. A number of people also commented on concern that the model would split siblings and require some to attend different schools, (the proposed criteria actually gave priority to all siblings and so in theory would not be a factor) .

Safety Concerns – many spoke of concerns with increased numbers of children needing to cross busy arterial roads and the need for increased school crossing patrols.

Financial Impacts – many commented on the possible negative effects upon house prices and that people had deliberately chosen to purchase houses within a school catchment area with the expectation of gaining a place at that school (a factor that cannot be guaranteed).

School Ofsted Ratings – a number of comments related to schools current Ofsted rating and reasons why they would or would not wish to be situated in particular schools catchment areas.

5.12.4 For many of the arguments against, there were also comments which were in conflict of these opinions although often in a minority. Such as: many people choose to drive to school now so would not impact the environment significantly; many children already cross busy arterial roads, in particular West Leigh and Chalkwell Hall as well as those travelling to other schools such as Our Lady of Lourdes with little or no serious incidents involving children; house prices should not be considered as they bear no relation to school places.

5.12.5 A number of people made alternative suggestions based upon a catchment model with reduced areas and alternative areas to where they lived. A number referred specifically to the area which moved from Leigh North Street to West Leigh a number of years ago and the area North of Chalkwell Hall's catchment an area subject to previous consultations.

5.12.6 There were very few comments specific to just Blenheim and Eastwood Primary and none regarding only Fairways Primary. Of those that did specifically refer to these schools 2/3's were not in favour of change.

5.13 Model B

5.13.1 Model B proposed the removal of catchment areas to 6 schools (Chalkwell Hall Infant and Junior, Leigh North Street, West Leigh Infant and Junior and Darlington School) and replace with a shared priority area. Due to some

schools not being central to their immediate area, Virtual School Points (VSP) was introduced to identify a more centralised point based upon current catchment areas encompassing the northern and southern boundaries. The reason behind the VSP was to achieve a greater equality of access to schools within the priority area.

5.13.2 The survey results when asked if people agreed with the changes suggested in Model B were less conclusive with no significant majority:

NB: Surveys where people have not provided a comment have been removed from the overall statistics. Responses regarding schools not included in the Model B proposal have been removed.

School	% Parents of children under school age from survey results		% All responses from survey results	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Chalkwell Hall Inf	46.8%	50.6%	47.5%	49.5%
Chalkwell Hall Jnr	46.2%	51.3%	47.5%	50.0%
Darlinghurst Sch	47.4%	48.7%	48.2%	48.8%
Leigh North Street Pri	48.1%	50.0%	49.3%	48.8%
West Leigh Inf	46.8%	51.9%	46.8%	51.4%
West Leigh Jnr	46.8%	51.9%	47.0%	51.4%
Total	42%	51.7%	47.7%	49.9%

5.13.3 The most common themes received through email, feedback from the interactive sessions and from the free comment boxes in the survey regarding why people did not like this model included:

Community Impact – those living in the closest roads situated next to West Leigh Schools were most at risk of not gaining a place at their local school and in high birth years would most likely need to travel to Darlinghurst rather than the next closest school.

Environmental Impact – many felt these changes would increase travelling times to school and parents choosing to travel by car, increasing pollution around local schools and in particular parking issues. In particular those living in roads surrounding West Leigh Schools, identified that parents often park over their drives blocking them in and if they then had to travel to another school would be unable to get their children to school.

Financial Impacts – there were comments regarding the possible negative effects upon house prices for those living closest to schools (West Leigh in particular)

Difficult to understand – a number of comments were in relation to finding the model confusing and being unable to easily determine their chances of gaining a place at a particular school (lack of reasonable assumption). This factor if not made clearer, may be in conflict with the requirements of the School Admissions Code 2014 item 14, ' *Parents should be able to look at a*

set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated'.

5.13.4 There were also a number of people in support for Model B, mostly from current areas of Leigh North Street and Chalkwell Hall schools. Comments in relation to support of this model themed around:

Longevity & Flexibility – comments that the model was more flexible and provided places for both high and low birth years with all children accommodated across the area. The strongest argument being that in low birth years, communities would see little to no difference from current arrangements.

Community – less negative impact upon communities, in contrast asserting that for most years there would be a reasonable assumption of gaining your local school.

Choice – allowed for greater choice and opportunity to gain a place at a number of different schools.

5.13.5 As requested at one of the interactive sessions, a trial of Model B was undertaken to identify how the applications would be afforded according to the priority area and proposed criteria. A full demonstration would include coordination with other authorities which was not possible, however the trial used all data and preferences from the previous 2016 reception round where 27 children from West Leigh catchment failed to gain a catchment place. This trial involved using over 2,100 primary applications using their previous preferences but under the proposed arrangements within model B. The most significant factors of this are below:

5.13.6 All children were accommodated and allocated a place. 83% of offers remained the same as in 2016. However the number of children unable to gain a place at West Leigh living within the current catchment was increased to 30, this differs from the original 27.

5.13.7 This change is due to 3 siblings living out of catchment gaining priority over previous in catchment applications. Of the 30 not offered a catchment place, 12 children were from the eight streets closest to the school (including the two roads where the school building is situated) rather than from those roads closest to the Borough border. Most of these children were offered either Chalkwell Hall or Darlington (not the next closest school). A smaller number of children living on the borough boundary did not gain a place, although those living furthest from the school continued to not gain priority at West Leigh. 6 children previously in Leigh North Street catchment were offered Chalkwell Hall except one who was offered Darlington. With little to no offer changes for applicants within current Chalkwell Hall and Darlington areas.

5.13.8 It should be noted that this is only a test of how the system would work and those parents using this system may well have applied their second and third preferences differently and as such those living closest to West Leigh School may have been accommodated at Leigh North Street.

5.13.9 Using this demonstration identified that using Model B would specifically displace two groups of children, those on the borough border of West Leigh (as current) and those living next to and surrounding roads of West Leigh Infant school, both have valid arguments for this being unreasonable.

5.14 The survey results when asked what people's preferred option was overall, the results did not mirror previous comments and as such are difficult to qualify, although Model B has the majority vote:

NB: Surveys where people have not provided a comment have been removed from the overall statistics

School	% Parents of children under school age from survey results				% All responses from survey results			
	Prefer Model A	Prefer Model B	Prefer No Change	Prefer alternative Model	Prefer Model A	Prefer Model B	Prefer No Change	Prefer alternative Model
Blenheim	15.4%	30.8%	27.6%	12.8%	15.4%	29%	26.5%	12%
Chalkwell Hall Inf	16.7%	34.6%	23.7%	11.5%	15.4%	31.3%	24%	11.8%
Chalkwell Hall Jnr	16.7%	34.6%	23.7%	11.5%	15.4%	31.3%	24.2%	11.8%
Darlinghurst Sch	14.7%	33.3%	27.6%	10.9%	14.7%	30.6%	26.3%	10.8%
Eastwood Pri	15.4%	30.8%	28.8%	11.5%	15%	29.3%	27%	11.3%
Fairways Pri	14.7%	30.8%	29.5%	11.5%	14.5%	29.3%	27.4%	11.3%
Leigh North Street Pri	14.1%	36.5%	24.4%	11.5%	14.3%	32.9%	23.7%	11.5%
West Leigh Inf	18.6%	34.0%	21.2%	12.8%	18%	32%	20.3%	12.2%
West Leigh Jnr	18.6%	34.0%	21.2%	12.8%	17.7%	32%	20.3%	12.2%
Total	17.5%	33.7%	23.2%	10.8%	16.6%	30.9%	23.1%	10.8%

5.14.1 Overall, Model B was preferred by a small majority from the survey. From the email responses, those that identified a clear preference, the majority preferred Model B. However, an E-petition supported the preference for no change.

5.15 No Change

5.15.1 Collectively from the survey results alone 23% of parents of children under school age and overall responses wanted no change. The most significant risk of doing nothing is that admission authorities are knowingly ignoring those schools very unlikely to not offer places to catchment children and creating repeats of 2016 where families are required to travel unreasonable distances (over 2 miles) to get their children to school. Similarly in doing nothing, currently two schools significantly undersubscribed from births in their areas, will continue to run at risk of being considerably below PAN. The recent Adjudication identified 'In this context the catchment area, where normally there are sufficient places for all those who live in the catchment area, seems reasonable in 2018.' However it would most likely seem unreasonable in relation to 2019 as admission authorities are aware that at least West Leigh Infants are very unlikely to have sufficient places.

5.15.2 Should it be decided that there is no change to the catchment area the following should be noted: firstly the Council would continue to meet its duty to offer places to all children as provision is available at alternative schools, secondly parents have the option to apply to any school, including faith schools and to neighbouring LA area schools, for example, Hadleigh Infant School in Essex.

5.16 Alternative Models

5.16.1 11% of parents of children under school age and overall responses wanted consideration of an alternative model. 7 specific examples of alternatives were received either through the interactive sessions or via email. All examples that had enough detail that explained how the model could be administered were given due attention and were measured against the following criteria:

- 1) Are solutions in line with the Admissions Code
- 2) Would the model provide a viable solution to the problem
- 3) Does it displace or have a considerable knock on effect to other children
- 4) Would it have unforeseen consequences on other schools/areas
- 5) Can we administer it within the confines of the Capita Admissions System
- 6) Will it be agreed by other admission authorities

5.16.2 Five examples were alternate catchment changes similar to model A and 2 were alternative solutions similar to model B. To ensure Fairness, the above criteria was also applied to Model A and B. The results appear inconclusive however, as all models (including A and B) although offer solutions, also offer areas of risk to at least one area of the community.

5.17 Responses to proposals for admission criteria:

5.17.1 The public was also asked to share their views on proposed criteria that support overall admission arrangements

	% Parents of children under school age from survey results		
	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Not sure
Pupils who have a sibling attending the school	29.5%	42.3%	21.2%
Pupils of Staff (before catchment)	5.1%	52.6%	35.3%
Pupils of Staff (after Catchment)	12.2%	37.2%	43.6%

% All responses from survey results		
Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Not sure
23.3%	44.7%	23.3%
5.5%	50%	35.7%
13.4%	35.9%	41.9%

5.17.2 **Siblings** Interestingly, although model A & B proposals gave priority for all siblings, the majority felt that this would impact them negatively. Some quantified this answer by identifying that siblings living out of catchment and priority areas should not gain priority over those living in. As where others identified that it was important to ensure that all siblings remained together. Some went to lengths to suggest that if a child moved out of catchment that they should be made to leave the school. This action is not permissible within the Pupil Registration Regulations. Others also suggested that pupils applying to a feeder junior school should have separate priorities according to whether they lived within or out of catchment, allowing those within catchment

previously unsuccessful in gaining a place to have priority over a child who has been a member of the school community since reception..

5.17.3 **Pupils of Staff** – many were unsure of how this would affect their family with very few identifying that this had a positive impact.

5.17.4 **Pupil premium** – there was not a specific question regarding pupil premium, however a number of people commented on this added criteria, with the majority in favour for not just West Leigh but across most schools with some questioning why other schools did not feel this group should have priority.

5.17.5 **Distance** – the majority of respondents wanted to measure distance from the school rather than a Virtual School Point or alternative method. When asked specifically to comment if people agreed with moving the measuring point from the school to a more central point, most were unsure 43.8% and 37.8% disagreed.

5.18 Further Comments Raised through Responses:

5.18.1 **Future Housing Developments** – many people identified that availability of school places should be considered before agreeing further developments that increases housing across all three catchment areas south of the London Road

5.18.2 **Make it a requirement to use all three preferences when making admission applications** – although this can be encouraged admission authorities cannot insist applicants add three choices

5.18.3 **Build a new school/annex/expand current provision** – as explained in 4.2 Leigh has sufficient spaces to meet need, just not currently within the current catchment areas. The council is unable to apply for basic need funding from central government unless they can demonstrate that there are insufficient places across an area.

5.18.4 **Overlapped catchments** – allowing parents to gain priority to more than one school if one is oversubscribed.

5.18.5 **Fraudulent applications** – refer to 4.10.1. Many refer to the council having more robust checks to identify potential dishonest applications. Some responses wanted all applicants to provide their council tax number and to have lived in the area for more than 12 months. The Council could explore enhanced data sharing agreements with council tax, however this may not provide the necessary information, due to people also altering their property that Council Tax is registered to. For some parents, they are not registered under Council at all i.e. living with parents, relatives etc. Further legal advice is required regarding the School Admissions Code and requesting additional information on admission applications (previous advice was that this was not in keeping with the requirements of the code). There were a number of suggestions that people should be living in the area for more than 12 months, although technically possible legal advice was that this was not 'good public administration' and could be challenged. It would likely create a 'bias' in the admission system. The bias would be 'people who have lived in the area for more than 12 months' and 'people who have not lived in the area for more than 12 months'. As most tenancies are initially for 6 months any policy that restricted priority to a school based on length of residency would place people that rent at a disadvantage for priority to their catchment school. This is in direct conflict with the Schools Admissions Code 2014, in that arrangements would not be 'objective'. Although a core group of respondents felt that there was a high proportion of address fraud, the data does not highlight a real problem with 'fraudulent applications'.

5.18.6 **Improve standards at underachieving academy schools** – reasoning behind this is that once improved, parents will be more inclined to place such schools in their preferences. It is the role of the Regional Schools Commissioner to improve standards at academy schools and not the local authority, however where possible the LA continues to work closely with academies and support and challenge where appropriate.

5.18.7 **Questioning councils data and forecasts** – there have been many challenges to the councils forecasting data refer to section 3.10 – 3.13. Specific queries have been responded to on an individual basis. The council has based its findings and recommendations on previous patterns of over (and under) subscription to school admissions, recorded birth data and historic patterns of parental preferences.

6 Feedback from Admission Forum and Preferred Way Forward

6.1 Forum members discussed the merits and disadvantages of all models and the impact upon children and families, discounting those models that didn't provide a clear solution. Discussions particularly centred on Model B, Model E and Model K.

6.2 Model B had a clear advantage due to its flexibility in years of high and low births and recognition that this had been favoured by the community. However there was concern that in high birth years, large numbers of children continued to be displaced, namely those living on the Southend border and those living next door and in surrounding roads to school. These children would likely not gain a place at their local school (West Leigh Specifically) and would likely receive a school some distance from their home address. For these reasons Model L was particularly disliked.

6.3 Representation from two Own Admission Authorities identified that they would not support Model B. Reasons were different dependent upon the academy, however main concerns were in relation to disadvantaging those living closest to the school and not supporting a shared catchment area model.

6.4 An alternative model was appreciated for considering the advantages of Model B with the added advantage of removing all the risk factors. Recognition was given to a significant change to Leigh North Streets current catchment area; however those living closest to the school remained unaffected. There was also discussion regarding the ability for both schools in each area to work closer together and reinforce and build upon a wider united community catchment area.

6.5 One Own Admission Authority remained unsupportive of this model. Their reasoning was that they wanted to focus their work around serving a specific neighbourhood and develop links with the local community to strengthen the school and the community with a catchment area that reflects the size of their PAN. Due to one admission authority refusing, this model could not be further considered by the local authority.

6.6 Model K received support from all forum members. It was identified that the model continued to provide choice and prioritises all current catchment arrangements in lower birth years. It also addresses and allows parents to have a reasonable expectation on a catchment area for years of higher demand,

providing greater assurance for those living on the Southend borders. Members recognised that the model was a softer and less drastic approach to Model A and demonstrates that community and school concerns have been listened to.

- 6.7 One own admission authority raised concerns regarding the size of the areas being moved (too small) and lack of clear break away from the current catchment model.
- 6.8 A private vote, excluding all local authority officers and admission forum members, schools and academies with a vested interest, with a unanimous outcome recommending Model K.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 There is no single model that provides a clear solution that meets need across Leigh with no adverse impact upon specific groups of children, areas or schools and is agreeable to all admission authorities. Some models provide reduced adverse impact but all contain some risks, including no change.
- 7.2 A recommendation will need to be reached that is agreeable to all admission authorities and caters for all children across Southend.
- 7.3 Based upon the results of the survey, feedback from the general public via email and representation at engagement sessions, Admission Forum's views and the position of Own Admission Authorities, the recommendation in relation to Leigh Primary School catchment areas is to formally consult the public on Model K
- 7.4 Further consultation with own admission authorities identified that Model K as originally proposed was not accepted by one Own Admission Authority and required amendments in order to agree a way forward. The final recommended model is a result of these negotiations.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 School Admissions Code 2014 – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code> and School Admission Appeals Code 2012 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 Models A and B (original proposed models), Model K (Admissions Forum preferred model) and final recommendation for consultation.

Appendix 1
Model A, Model B, Model K and Final Recommended Model

**Leigh Primary Community School and Own Admission Authority Catchment Area
Review for Admissions Arrangements 2019/20**

Model A

Model A reduces the catchment areas for six schools, enlarges catchment for two schools and incorporates small changes to one other school.

- Area 1 would move from the West Leigh Infant catchment area to Leigh North Street Primary School catchment. This would reduce the size of the catchment area and therefore parents would have a reasonable expectation for priority in the admission arrangements.
- Area 2 and 3 move from Leigh North Street Primary School catchment to Darlington School. In this proposal, distance continues to be measured from the pupil's home to the school.
- Area 4 moves from Chalkwell Hall Schools to Darlington School
- Area 5 moves from Darlington School to Blenheim Primary
- Areas 6a and 6c move from Blenheim Primary School to Eastwood Primary School

Model A - Average Pupil Number Impacted by Change

Births Registered to Areas 1 to 7		West Leigh	Leigh North Street	Leigh North Street	Chalkwell	Darlington	Blenheim	Blenheim	Fairways
Yr of Birth	SchYear	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	SixA	SixC	Seven
2012/13	NurseryTwo	19	20	36	15	4	20	4	12
2013/14	NurseryOne	28	15	32	20	4	7	1	15
2014/15	TwoYrOld	23	18	27	23	3	6	7	14
2015/16	OneYrOld	27	17	33	22	3	19	5	12
<i>Average Group Size</i>		<i>24</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>13</i>

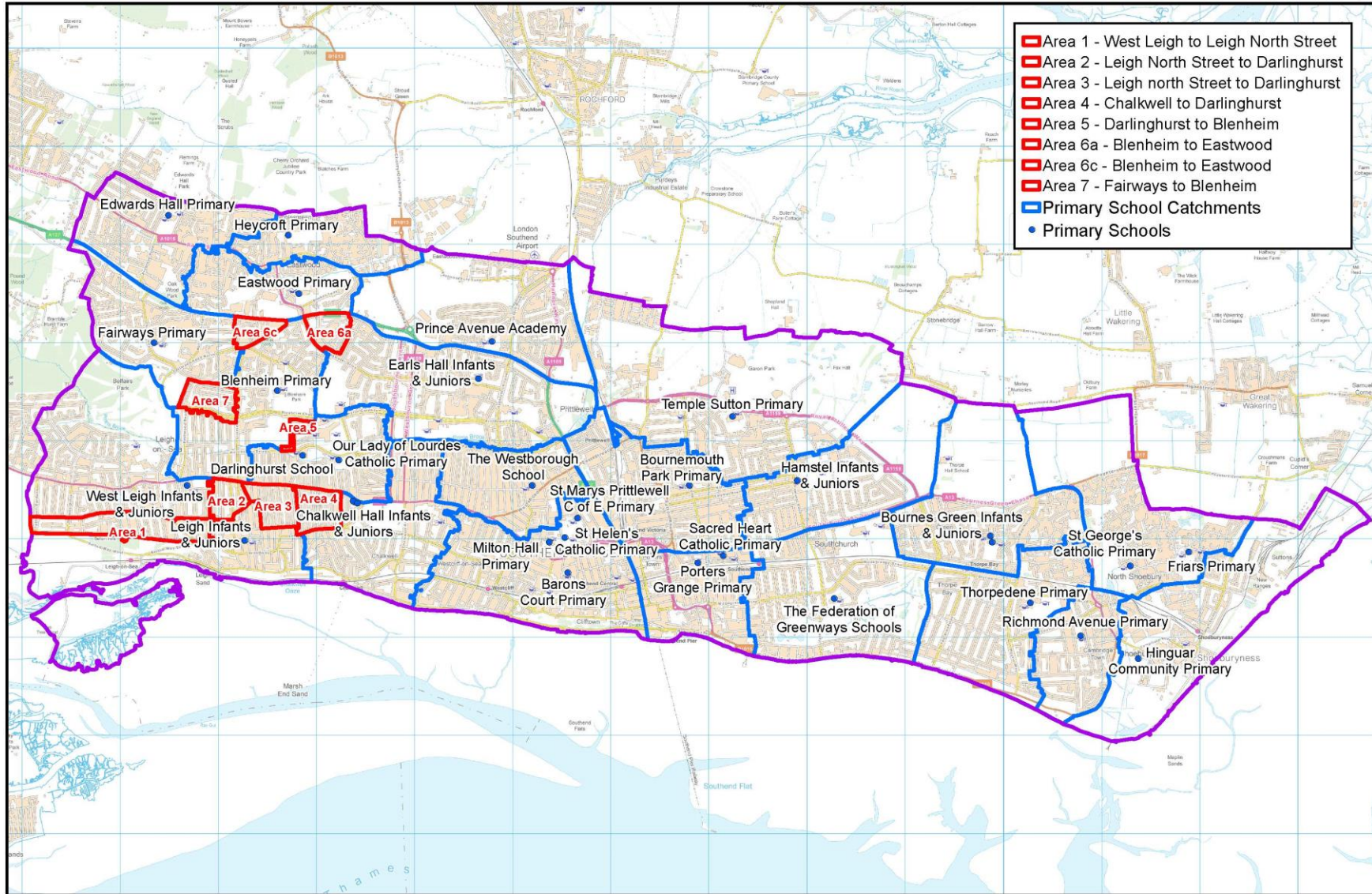
CURRENT PUPIL NUMBERS IN THESE AREAS

		West Leigh	Leigh North St	Leigh North St	Chalkwell	Darlington	Blenheim	Blenheim	Fairways
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five	SixA	SixC	Seven
2011/12	Reception	27	22	35	18	6	18	7	13
2010/11	One	23	17	25	23	7	14	6	18
2009/10	Two	20	18	40	19	5	14	6	8
2008/09	Three	17	18	42	23	5	24	3	11
2007/08	Four	28	14	28	17	10	12	5	13
2006/07	Five	27	16	35	19	9	15	6	11
2005/06	Six	24	10	24	17	4	22	5	12
2004/05	Seven	24	10	27	12	4	11	2	16
2003/04	Eight	20	7	18	22	9	10	3	15
2002/03	Nine	21	13	31	10	5	18	6	10
2001/02	Ten	18	12	25	14	5	10	2	15
2000/01	eleven	17	12	26	13	6	16	4	14
<i>Average Group Size</i>		<i>22</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>13</i>

	Loss	Gain	Result		Loss	Gain	Result
West Leigh	24	0	-24	Blenheim	17	17	-1
Leigh North Street	50	24	-25	Fairways	13	0	-13
Chalkwell	20	0	-20	Eastwood	0	17	17
Darlington	4	70	66				



Maps showing the proposed Areas 1-7 catchment adjustments



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Scale 1:51,000

Model B

Model B removes the catchment areas for West Leigh Schools, Leigh North Street Primary School, Chalkwell Hall Schools and Darlinghurst School. Catchments for these schools have been replaced with a shared priority area.

Increases in the birth rate and housing development mean some school catchment areas have more children living in them than there are places at the school. Inward migration leads to some schools being oversubscribed in catchment. By removing the catchment areas for this smaller group of schools, there are greater allowances for further fluctuations in the population.

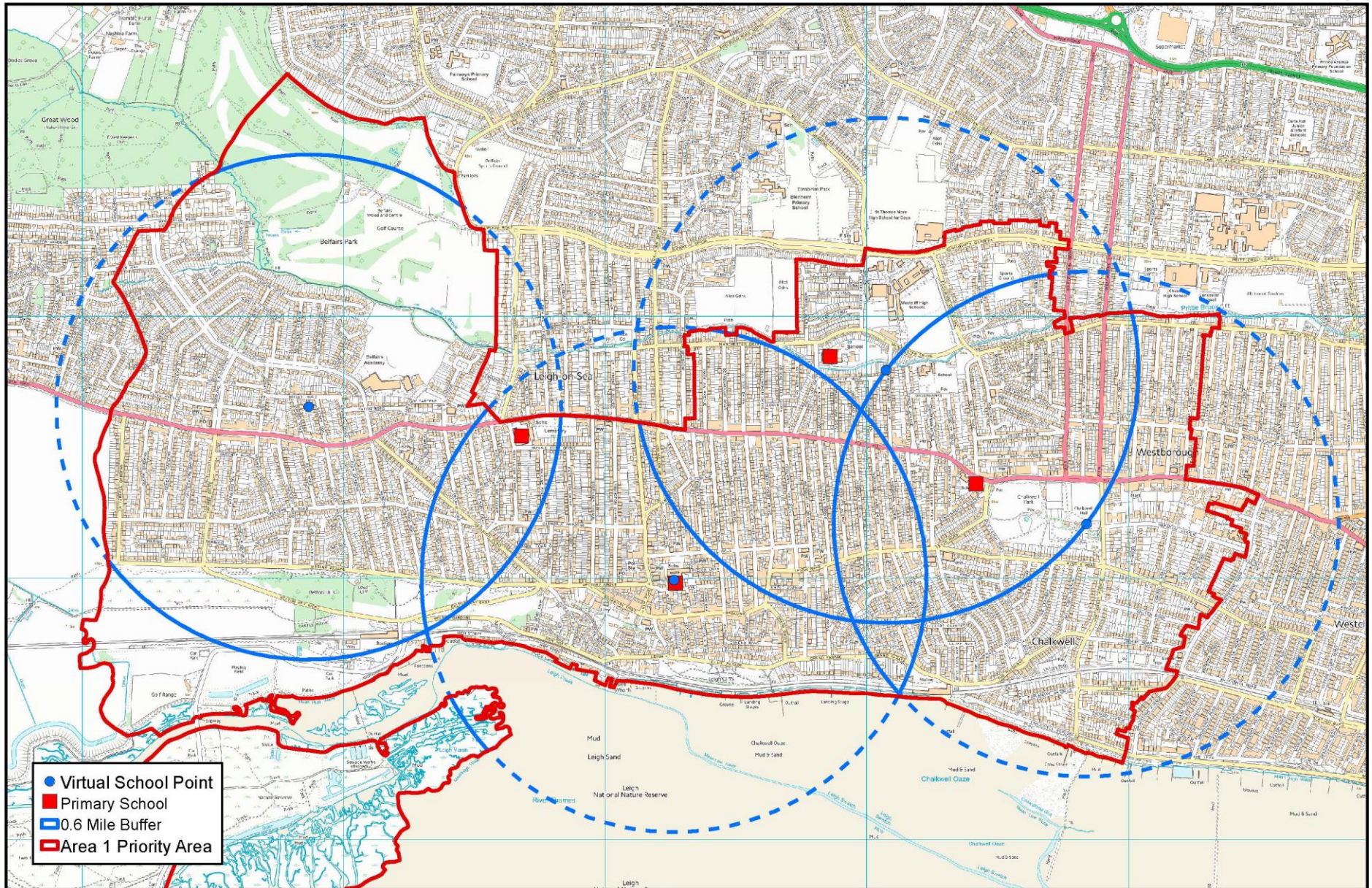
In order to achieve a greater equality of access to the nearest school a Virtual School Point was used instead of the school building for measuring distance from the school to the child's home. Currently, some of the schools in this area are not situated in the centre of their catchment area, which can disadvantage some families living on the catchment borders, particularly those living on the borough boundary.

The distance measurement point was moved from the school to a more centralised location ensuring that all residents would be within a 0.6 mile radius of the nearest Virtual School Point. The Virtual School Point is only used for measurements and ranking applications from nearest to the Virtual school point.

Model B



Area 1 - Potential School Catchments



Model K

Model K was derived from the original Model A but provides flexibility for admission in years of low and high births. The areas identified for change in the oversubscribed areas have been based upon an average pupil loss based upon current PAN and previous patterns of over subscription, rather than worst case scenario. The model addresses risks and allows parents to have a reasonable expectation on a catchment area for years of higher demand, providing greater assurance for those living on the Southend borders.

For West Leigh Infant and Junior School, Leigh North Street Primary and Chalkwell Hall Schools (schools that have been previously oversubscribed in recent years), the model provides priority areas within the arrangements for those areas being removed from the catchment area. In practice, these areas have priority over any remaining places over other out of catchment areas, particularly relevant in in lower birth years.

Births Registered to Areas 1 to 7		West Leigh	Leigh North Street	Chalkwell	Darlinghurst	Blenheim	Blenheim	Fairways
Yr of Birth	SchYear	One	Three	Four	Five	SixA	SixC	Seven
2012/13	NurseryTwo	14	17	4	4	20	4	12
2013/14	NurseryOne	20	17	4	4	7	1	15
2014/15	TwoYrOld	13	9	4	3	6	7	14
2015/16	OneYrOld	13	10	6	3	19	5	12
<i>Average Group Size</i>		<i>15</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>13</i>

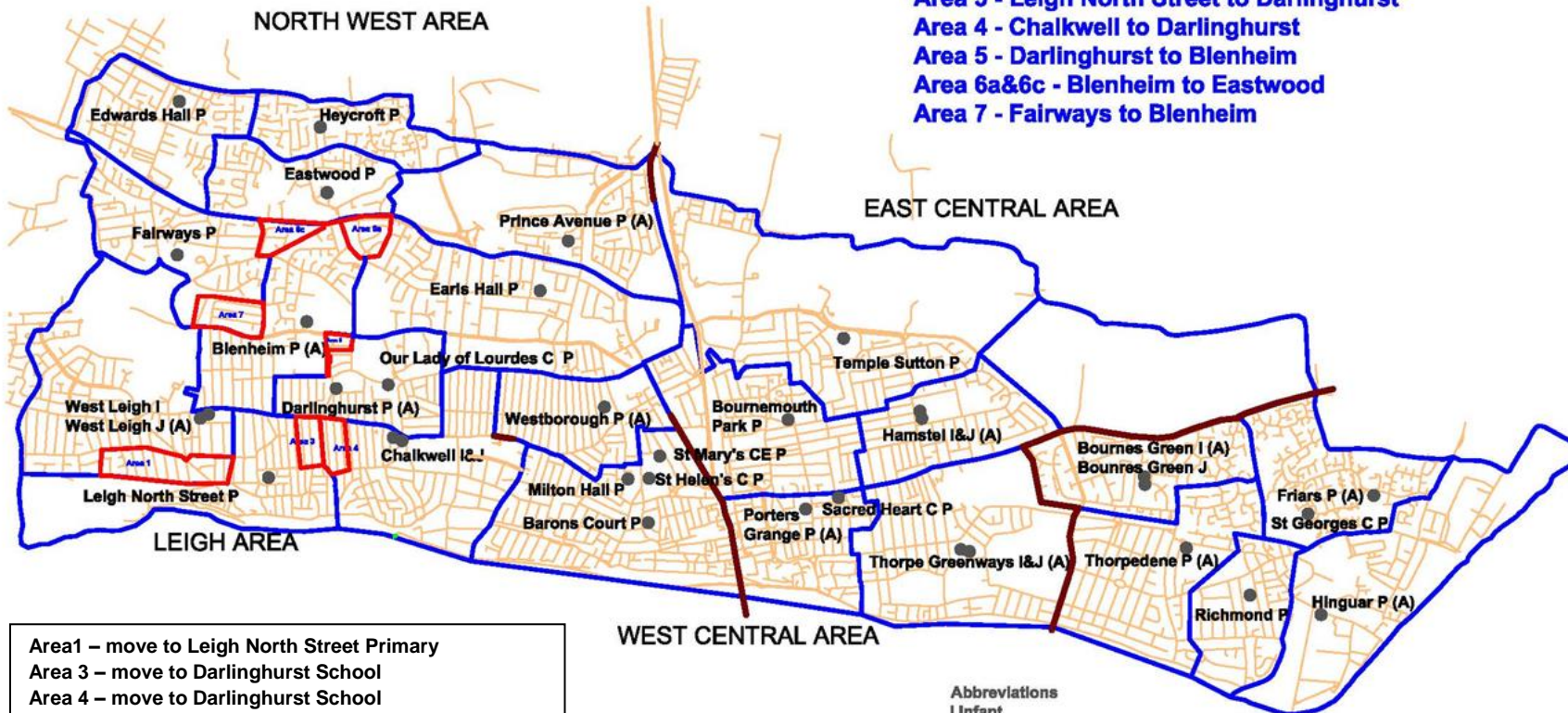
<i>CURRENT PUPIL NUMBERS IN THESE AREAS</i>								
2011/12	Reception	19	16	3	6	18	7	13
2010/11	One	12	12	4	7	14	6	18
2009/10	Two	9	28	1	5	14	6	8
2008/09	Three	13	22	9	5	24	3	11
2007/08	Four	18	15	7	10	12	5	13
2006/07	Five	20	14	8	9	15	6	11
2005/06	Six	20	13	6	4	22	5	12
2004/05	Seven	14	11	4	4	11	2	16
2003/04	Eight	11	12	7	9	10	3	15
2002/03	Nine	16	19	5	5	18	6	10
2001/02	Ten	13	11	4	5	10	2	15
2000/01	eleven	10	13	8	6	16	4	14
<i>Average Group Size</i>		<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>13</i>

Model K reflecting proposed catchment changes

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SOUTHEND ON SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL
Maps showing all Community Primary Schools with Catchment Areas
and the Primary Voluntary Aided Faith Schools

- Area 1 - West Leigh to Leigh North Street**
- Area 3 - Leigh North Street to Darlingtonhurst**
- Area 4 - Chalkwell to Darlingtonhurst**
- Area 5 - Darlingtonhurst to Blenheim**
- Area 6a&6c - Blenheim to Eastwood**
- Area 7 - Fairways to Blenheim**



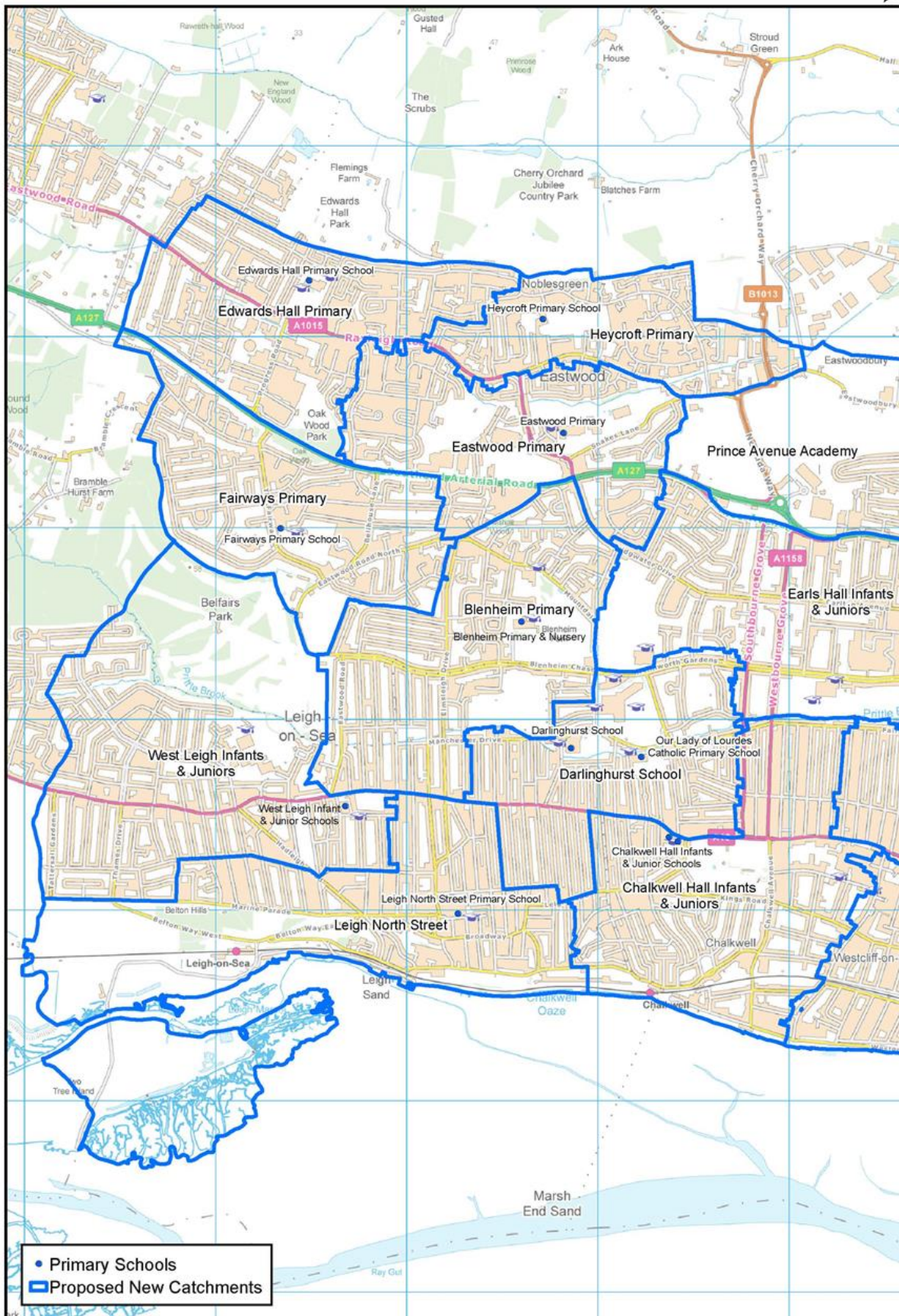
Area1 – move to Leigh North Street Primary
 Area 3 – move to Darlingtonhurst School
 Area 4 – move to Darlingtonhurst School

NB-
 1 - Catchment lines are indicative only, for exact details please consult www.southend.gov.uk/info
 2 - The Voluntary Aided Schools do not have designated Catchment Areas
 3 - Barons Court P and Milton Hall P share the same catchment area

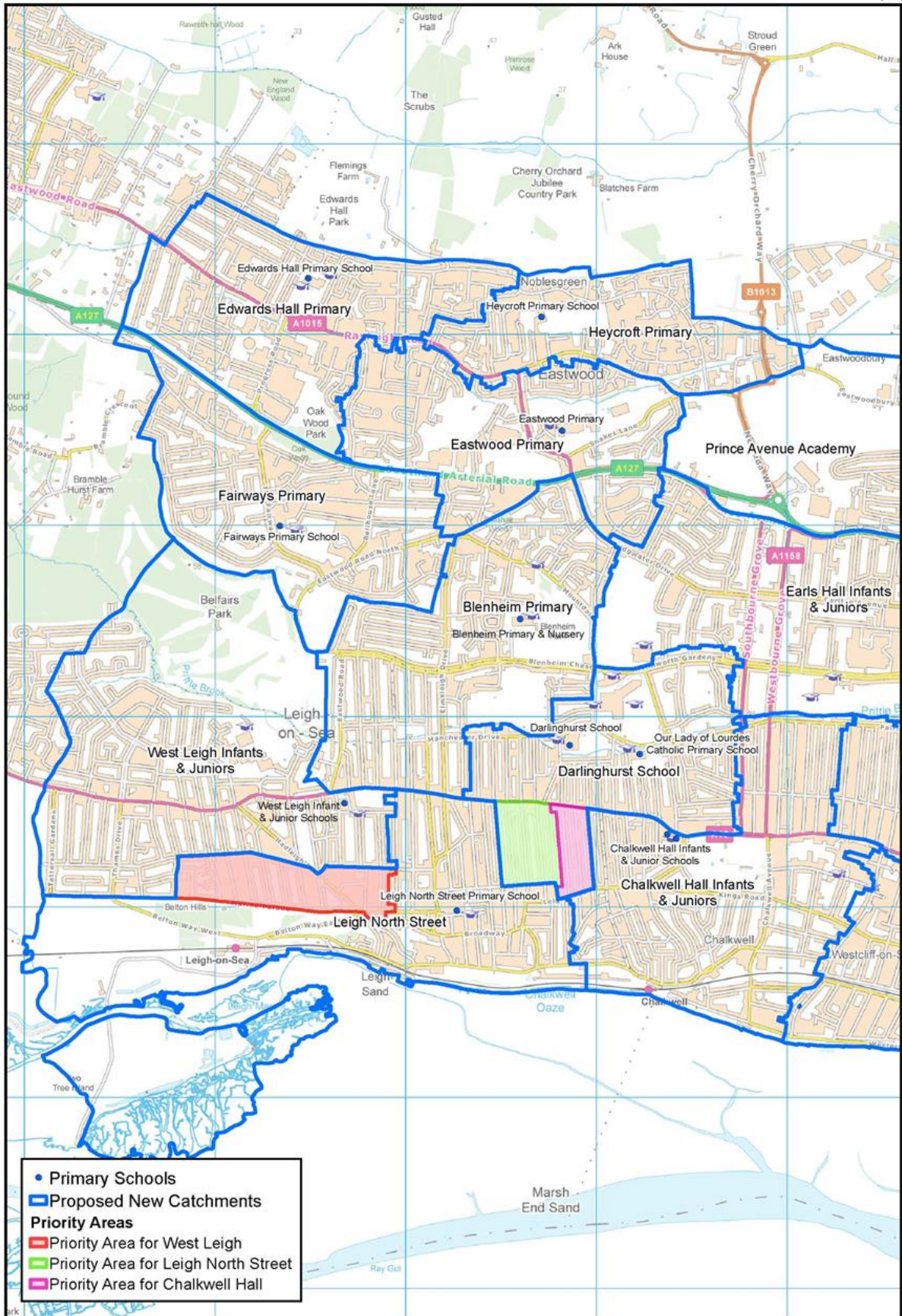
Abbreviations
 I Infant
 J Junior
 P Primary
 CP Catholic Primary
 CE Church of England
 (A) Academy

SOUTH EAST SOUTHEND & SHOEBURYNESSE AREA

Proposed New Catchments



Proposed New Catchments with Priority Areas



Recommended Model for formal consultation

This model is based upon the alternative Model K. The areas identified for change in the oversubscribed areas have been centred on an average pupil loss based upon current PAN and previous patterns of over subscription, rather than worst case scenario. The model addresses risks and allows parents to have a reasonable expectation on a catchment area for years of higher demand, providing greater assurance for those living on the Southend borders.

For West Leigh Infant and Junior School it identifies those removed from the catchment area and provides a priority area within the arrangements prioritising places over other out of catchment area applications, particularly relevant in in lower birth years.

Area 2 (current Leigh North Street) has been increased by one road, to represent an average loss in previous years of oversubscription taking account of numbers gained through pupils in Area 1 moving into Leigh North Street catchment.

The area previously identified to be moved from Darlington's catchment to Blenheim Primary has been reinstated to ensure sufficient pupil numbers within Darlington School's catchment area.

Births Registered to Areas 1 to 6		West Leigh	Leigh North St	Chalkwell	Fairways	Blenheim	Blenheim
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
2012/13	NurseryTwo	14	27	4	12	20	4
2013/14	NurseryOne	20	28	4	15	7	1
2014/15	TwoYrOld	13	20	4	14	6	7
2015/16	OneYrOld	13	23	6	12	19	5
Average Group Size		15	25	5	13	13	4

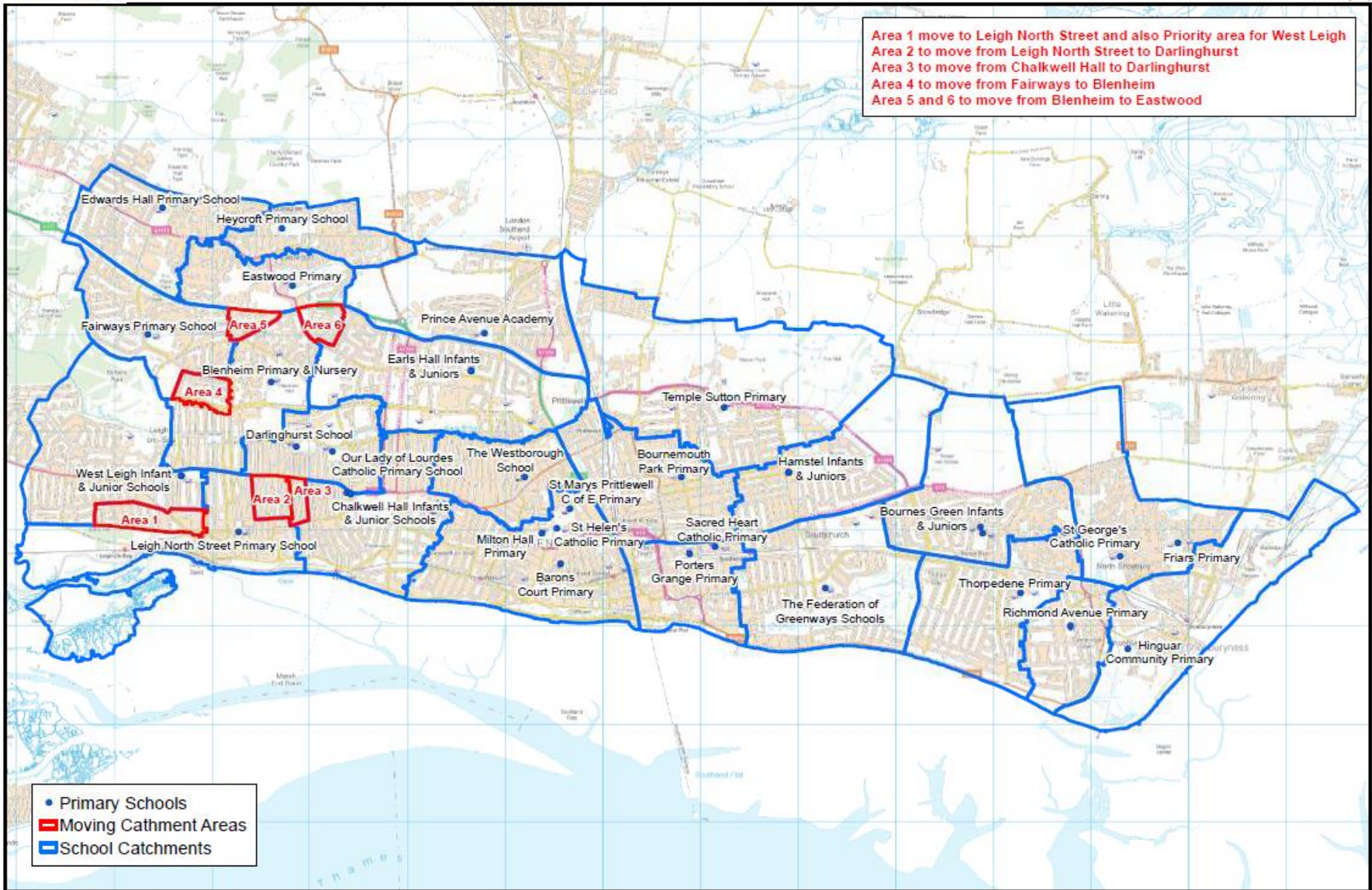
CURRENT PUPIL NUMBERS IN THESE AREAS							
		West Leigh	Leigh North St	Chalkwell	Fairways	Blenheim	Blenheim
2011/12	Reception	19	25	3	13	18	7
2010/11	One	12	23	4	18	14	6
2009/10	Two	9	28	1	8	14	6
2008/09	Three	13	35	9	11	24	3
2007/08	Four	18	22	7	13	12	5
2006/07	Five	20	22	8	11	15	6
2005/06	Six	20	20	6	12	22	5
2004/05	Seven	14	22	4	16	11	2
2003/04	Eight	11	20	7	15	10	3
2002/03	Nine	16	23	5	10	18	6
2001/02	Ten	13	20	4	15	10	2
2000/01	eleven	10	22	8	14	16	4
Average Group Size		15	24	6	13	15	5

	Avg. Loss	Avg. Gain		Avg. Loss	Avg. Gain
West Leigh	15	0	Fairways	13	0
LNSt	25	15	Eastwood	0	17
Chalkwell	5	0	Blenheim	17	13
Darlington	0	30			
Total Loss 75			Total Gain 75		

Recommended Model for Consultation



Map showing all Primary School with Catchment Areas, Primary Voluntary Aided Faith Schools and proposed catchment areas to be changed from September 2019



Recommended Model for Consultation



Map showing all Primary School with Catchment Areas, Primary Voluntary Aided Faith Schools and proposed catchment areas to be changed from September 2019

