

Policy BSC 7: Meeting Education Needs

B.140 The provision of primary and secondary education, along with early years and lifelong learning will be needed throughout the District to accommodate population growth. The demand for pre-school facilities is likely to increase due to changes in lifestyles and work patterns.

B.141 We will support the growth plans of schools across the District and recognise the important role that viable schools have to play in maintaining the quality of life of communities across the District. Oxfordshire County Council as the Local Education Authority is usually responsible for the provision of new schools and school places. It has a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough school places. The District Council will work with the County Council and others to provide nursery, primary and secondary schools; further and higher education facilities; community learning facilities; special schools; free schools and other educational facilities. This will include for the strategic site allocations in the Local Plan. New schools will be provided where required, for example at North West Bicester (Policy Bicester 1) and South East Bicester (Policy Bicester 12). We will ensure sufficient primary and secondary school provision across the District to accommodate Cherwell's population growth. This may include seeking the provision of new schools, contributions towards these facilities or contributions towards expanding existing facilities. The County Council has identified the potential need for a new secondary school at Banbury with the location yet to be determined. A Planning Obligations Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared. Upon completion it will provide further details on how developer contributions for education facilities will be sought.

B.142 The District has historically had a relatively low education and skills base. We will encourage development that will diversify and develop the skills base of the District into the future.

B.143 We will support the University Technology College proposal or other similar proposals for Bicester as an opportunity to strengthen the education and skills base of the town.

B.144 We will seek to ensure that the design of these schools is flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs of their users and the communities they serve and future changes to the demographic profile of the District. Where appropriate the use of school and college buildings and land after hours will be encouraged to support learning among the wider community and may be able to contribute towards recreation provision. New school buildings should be located in sustainable locations on the edge or within the built up limits of settlements. New schools in the Green Belt and open countryside will be resisted. Policy ESD15 will apply.

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The Council will work with partners to ensure the provision of pre-school, school, community learning and other facilities which provide for education and the development of skills. New schools buildings should be located in sustainable locations. The co-location of other services and facilities with schools should be considered to create community hubs.