

# Sufficiency of Special School Education Provision in Worcestershire 2022

Document Details:

Status: v2.6A Cabinet

Date: Autumn 2022

Contact: Kirstie Rushton, Provision Planning Analyst

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## Introduction

Worcestershire County Council has a statutory duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure there is a sufficiency of school places available to meet the needs of all children and young people living within our authority. This includes having regard to the need to secure provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). In addition, s315 of the Education Act 1996 requires that arrangements for children with SEND be kept under review.

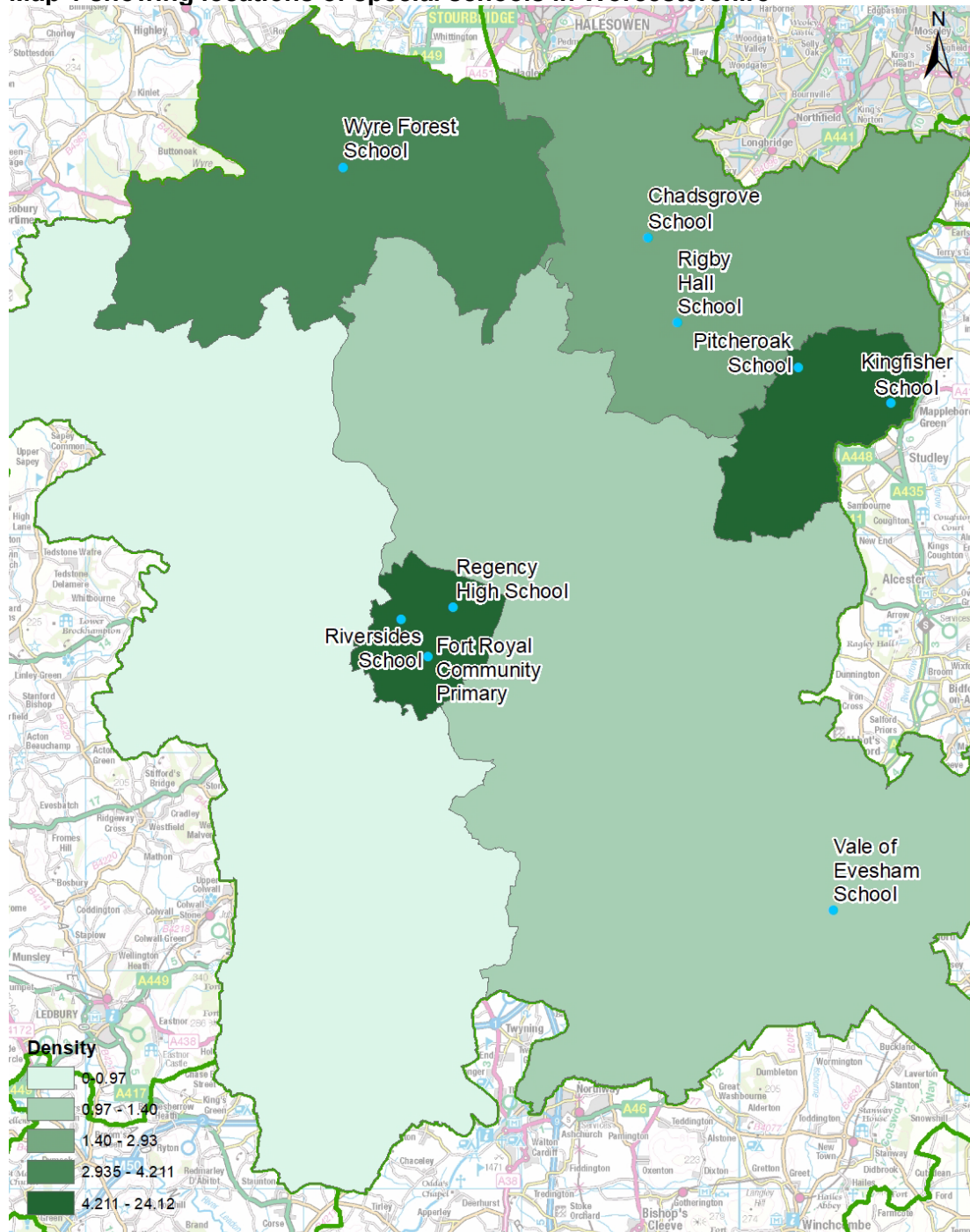
'Special educational needs'<sup>1</sup> is a legal definition and refers to children with learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children the same age or a disability which prevents or hinders them to make the same use of mainstream education. An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is ordinarily available through special educational needs (SEN) support and sets out the additional support required to meet those needs.

Worcestershire has a total of 9 special schools, 6 generic special schools which were designed to cater for a wide variety of special needs. Chadsgrove School in Bromsgrove specialises in sensory and physical needs. Worcestershire also has 2 schools which specialise in Social, Emotional and Mental Health, Kingfisher Special School in Redditch and Riversides Special School in Worcester. The other special schools are deemed generic special schools, Wyre Forest School, Kidderminster, Fort Royal Primary Special School, Worcester, Regency Secondary Special School, Worcester, Pitcheroak School in Redditch, Rigby Hall in Bromsgrove and Vale of Evesham in Evesham.

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<sup>1</sup> Children and Families Act 2014

**Map 1 showing locations of special schools in Worcestershire**



<b>WORCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN FIRST</b>	Scale: 1:150,000	
County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP	<b>Children attending Worcestershire Special Schools</b>	© Getmapping Plc and Bluesky International Limited 2018

As can be seen most of the schools are in the north of the county and there are none in Droitwich or Malvern. The higher levels of need are in Worcester, Kidderminster, Stourport and Redditch.

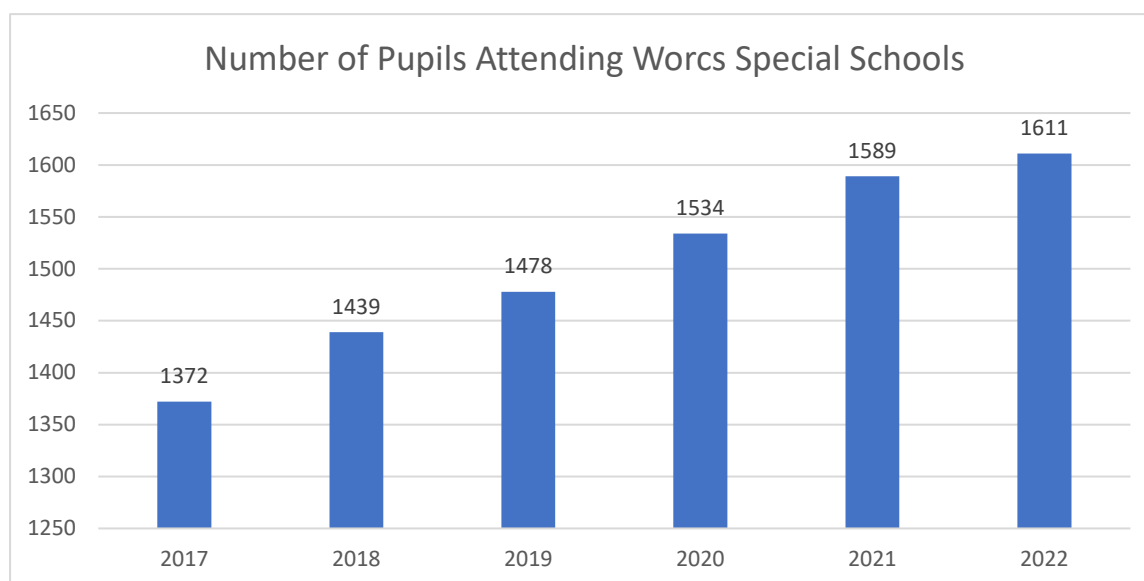
The darker green areas are those with the highest population density with an EHCP.

## General Observations for Worcestershire Special Schools

The SEN2 <sup>2</sup>statutory return reported that there were 4,555 children and young people in Worcestershire, with Education, Health and Care plans in January 2022, whom the Authority has responsibility for. This represents a 59% increase on the 2692 children and young people with EHCPs in January 2017, a trend that has been seen over the last several years.

Of the 4,555 children and young people in Worcestershire with an EHCP 1,611 are recorded to be attending one of the 9 Worcestershire Special Schools in January 2022.

**Graph 1: Growth of pupils in Special Schools**



Source: January Census and SEN 2 February

Special Schools	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Chadsgrove School	132	128	125	126	128	132	137
Fort Royal	193	220	212	208	218	220	241
Kingfisher	68	74	83	92	99	137	135
Pitcheroak	143	146	153	155	151	156	152
Regency	172	178	199	207	233	241	248
Rigby Hall	133	137	134	166	166	196	202
Riversides	62	66	65	63	69	66	69
Vale of Evesham	163	169	189	178	190	177	184
Wyre Forest	238	256	257	261	267	289	323

Source: NOR January Census

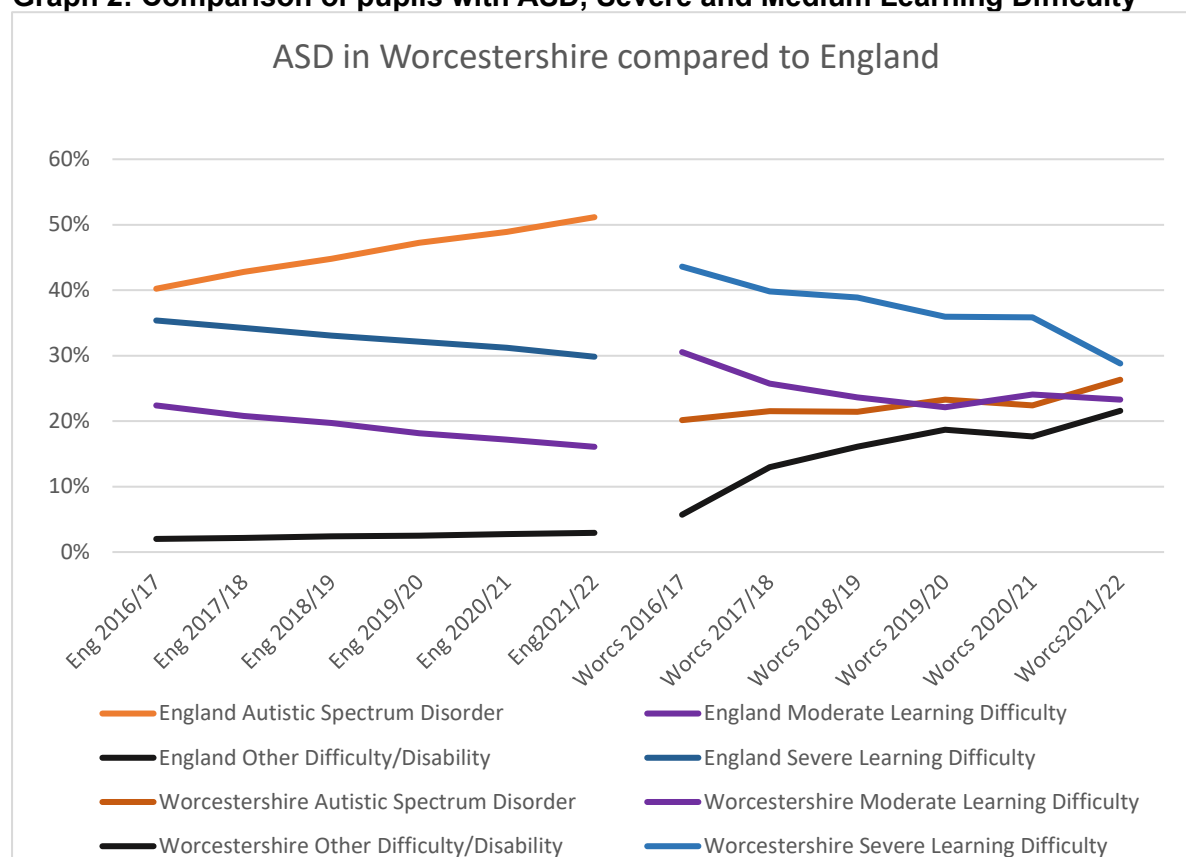
<sup>2</sup> The annual SEN2 survey is a statutory duty of the LA collecting data on all children and young people with Education and Health Care Plans. Such data can be compared across all of England.

All of the special schools recognise there is an increased level of severity and complexity of special need than was the case 10 years ago. There is a trend between the needs of ASD and Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD), this may be linked to an increase in diagnosis of ASD as health and education professionals recognise signs earlier and the underlying condition is becoming more prevalent.

The chart below shows how the number of pupils in state funded Special Schools with a primary MLD need is reducing by roughly 1-2% each year and numbers of pupils with primary ASD need are increasing around 2% each year in England.

More pupils are being recorded with a primary need of 'Other difficulty/disability' in Worcestershire Special Schools, this category has seen a 4% rise since 2020/2021 and a 16% increase since 2017. There is an assumption that pupil with more complex difficulties and disabilities are being recorded this way. The number of pupils with Severe Learning Difficulty primary needs, like MLD, are reducing in both Worcestershire and England

**Graph 2: Comparison of pupils with ASD, Severe and Medium Learning Difficulty**



Source: DfE statistics England and Worcestershire children with EHCPs in state-funded special schools by Primary Need.

Each special school is experiencing higher numbers of consultations for placements. Some schools have been able to increase class sizes to accommodate more pupils into the schools. Children attending special schools have differing levels of need.

The number of consultations by school does not amend the forecasting methodology, as there is usually more than one school consulted for the same child.

The demand for post-16 and 19-25 are growing and most of the schools are considering expanding in this direction. For 19+ provision, a special school must register separately as an establishment of specialist further education.

## Methodology of Forecast

The 'Known Children forecast' uses the last 5 years of pupils on roll at each school to model the arrivals and departures of children as well as likely cohort progression. The forecast combines these trends with the forecast SEND by age, primary area of need and geographical spread of SEND demand. Forecasts were shared with each school, to review and provide local intelligence.

For schools with Reception classes, the 'Special School Forecast based on Known Reception Figure' uses the known Reception number and forecasts totals based on this known figure.

For schools that don't include Reception classes, the 'National Trend Forecast' uses school trends, the county mainstream forecast of which children with EHCPs are a subset. The national average suggests that 37% of children with EHCPs at all public funded schools (R-14) are placed in special schools. This figure is then split according to where the children live and which special schools pupils are most likely to attend.

## Forecast by School

### 3.1 Chadsgrove School (Physical Disability)

Chadsgrove School is a Community Special School specialising in physical disabilities (PD). The school has an age range of 2 – 19 years and an 'outstanding' Ofsted grading (March 2020). 69% of children at this school have PD as a primary need, the largest year group on roll currently is year 7.

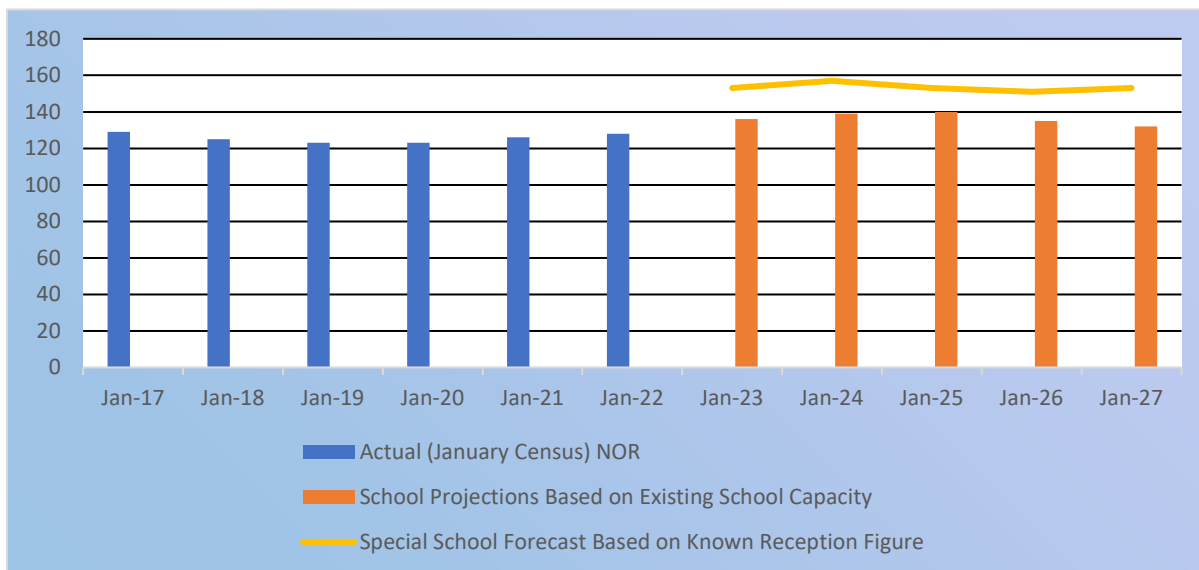
**Table 1** shows the forecast number of pupils on roll expected based on the known Reception figure for September 2022. The numbers of pupils in higher year groups (Years 7+) are expected to continue to increase whereas those between reception and Year 6 are forecast to stabilise.

**Table 1: Forecast numbers on roll at Chadsgrove 2023-2027**

Forecast	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total Excl N1 + N2
Jan-23	3	1	9	11	10	7	6	6	10	8	18	8	8	9	16	18	9	153
Jan-24	4	4	9	9	11	11	7	7	5	11	9	18	9	7	11	18	15	157
Jan-25	4	6	9	9	9	12	11	8	6	6	11	9	18	8	9	13	15	153
Jan-26	4	6	9	9	9	10	12	11	8	7	7	11	9	18	10	11	10	151
Jan-27	4	6	9	9	9	10	10	12	11	9	8	7	12	8	19	12	8	153

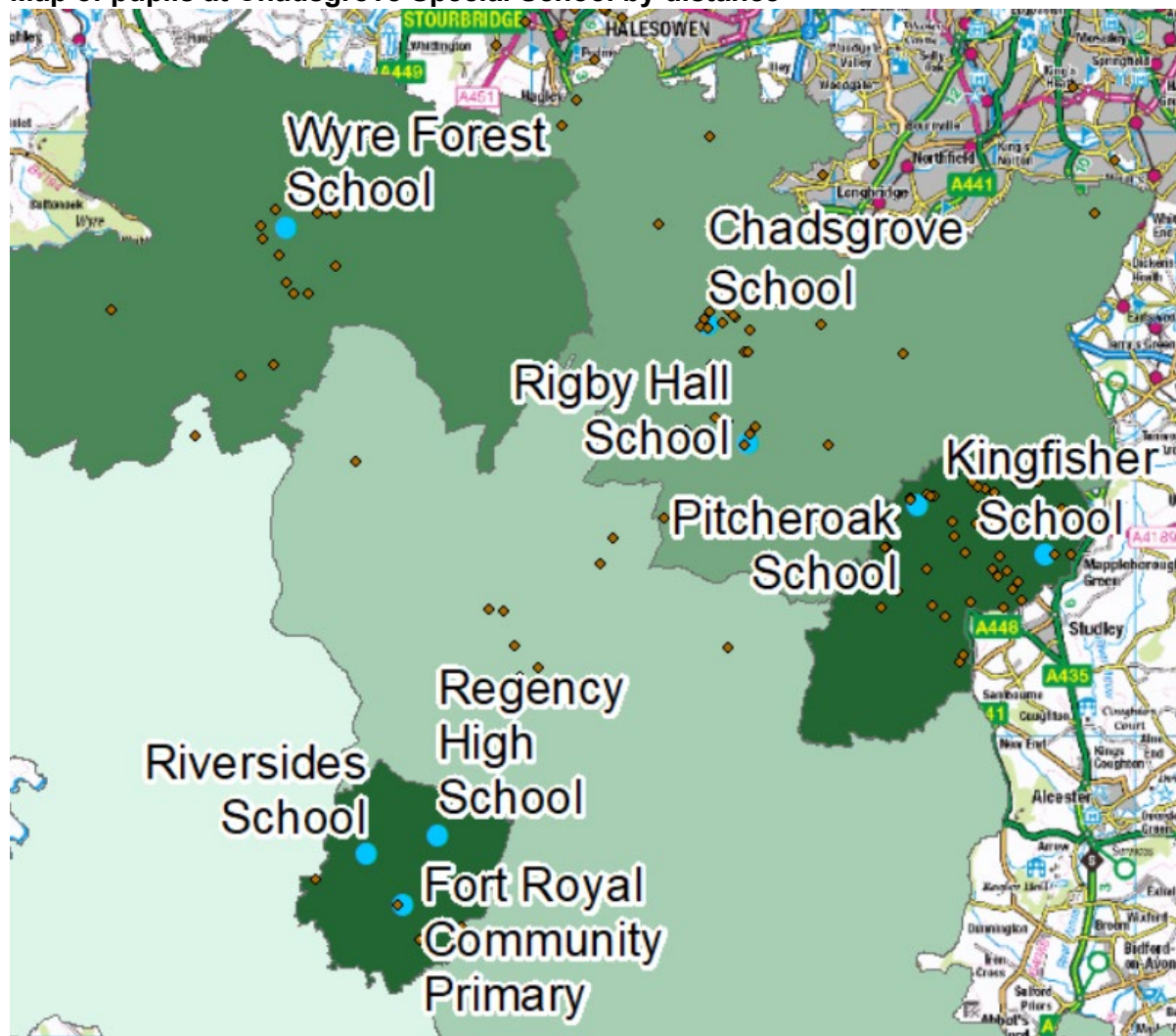
**Graph 3: Numbers on roll, forecast and trends for Chadsgrove School**





Graph 3 includes numbers on roll from January 2017 to January 2022 and then two variations of forecasts, one from the school's projections based on local knowledge and expectations.

#### Map of pupils at Chadsgrove Special School by distance





The largest cohort of children attending Chadsgrove school are from the Redditch district. The children travelling the furthest distance to attend (20km+) are from Worcester and Wychavon.

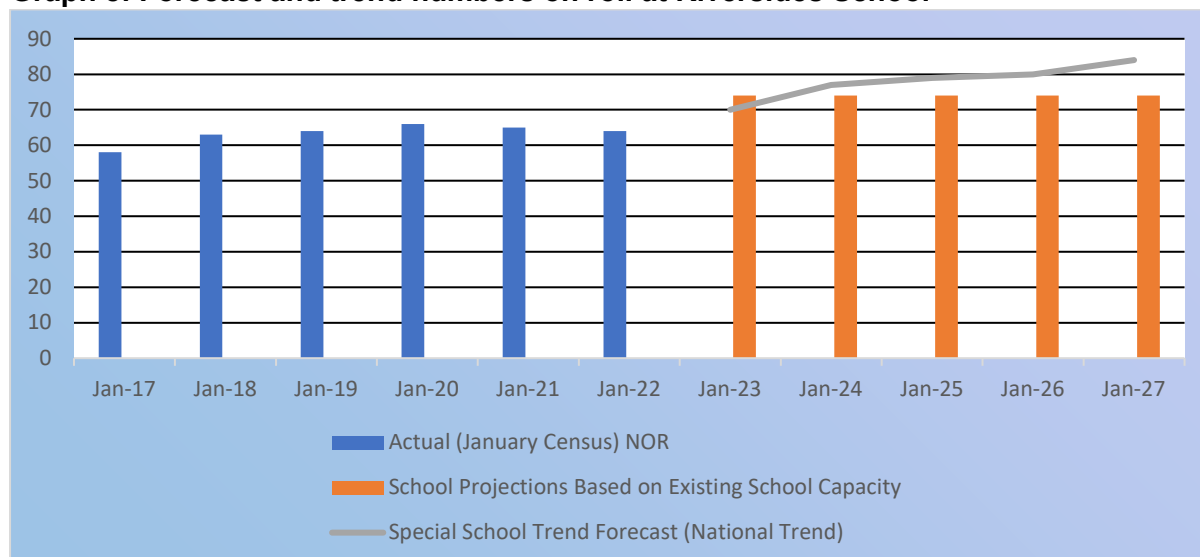
## Riversides School (SEMH)

Riversides is an Academy special school, one of two specialist SEMH schools in the county and has maintained a 'Good' Ofsted rating from their inspection in 2021. The school has an age range of 7-16 years old.

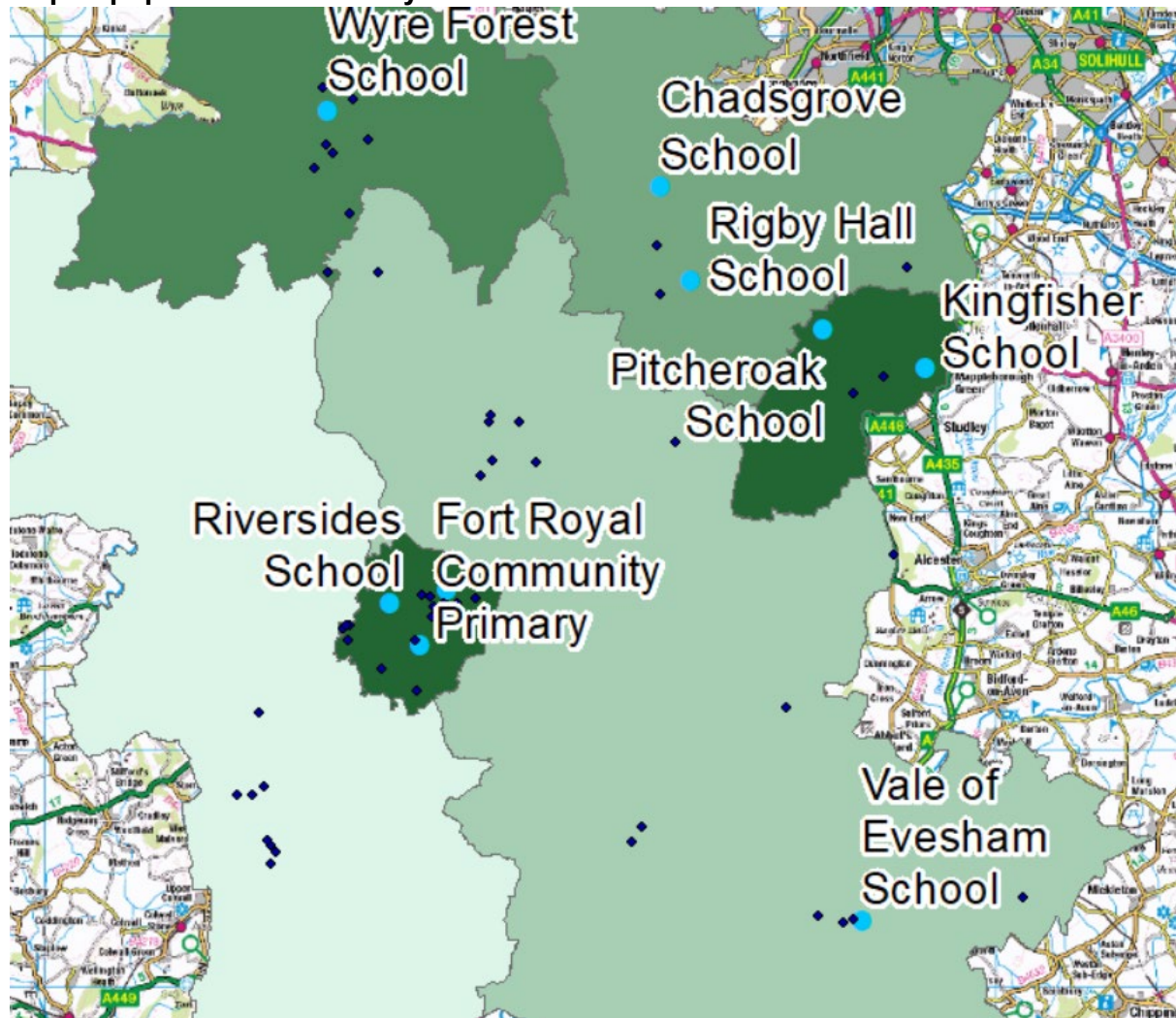
**Table 6: Forecast numbers on roll at Riversides School**

Forecast	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Jan-23	-	-	-	2	3	8	11	8	8	12	12	6	-	-	-	70
Jan-24	-	-	-	4	4	5	10	13	8	8	13	11	-	-	-	77
Jan-25	-	-	-	5	7	8	8	9	12	14	9	9	-	-	-	79
Jan-26	-	-	-	5	7	8	8	9	12	14	9	9	-	-	-	80
Jan-27	-	-	-	5	7	8	11	10	9	12	14	9	-	-	-	84

**Graph 8: Forecast and trend numbers on roll at Riversides School**



Map of pupils at Riversides by distance



Outside of Worcester, children are travelling over 5 miles to attend Riversides. Just under 10% of its pupils in Redditch and Bromsgrove who are closer to Kingfisher (also an SEMH specialist school) who are travelling 10km+ to attend Riversides.

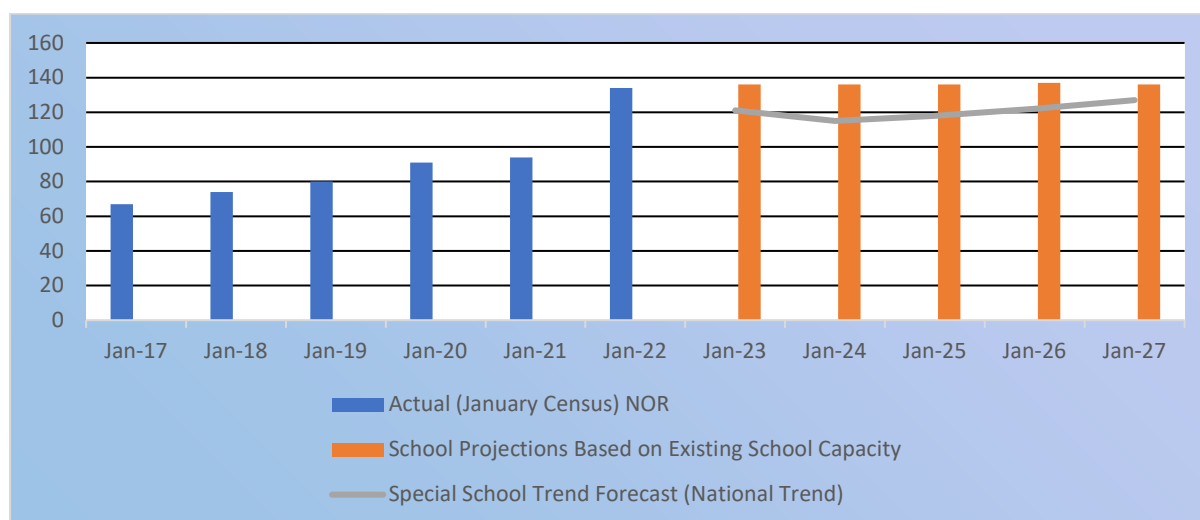
## Kingfisher School (SEMH)

Kingfisher school is also an Academy special school specialising in SEMH needs, rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in 2019. Kingfisher increased the capacity of the school and changed the age range from September 2021 to include provision for post-16.

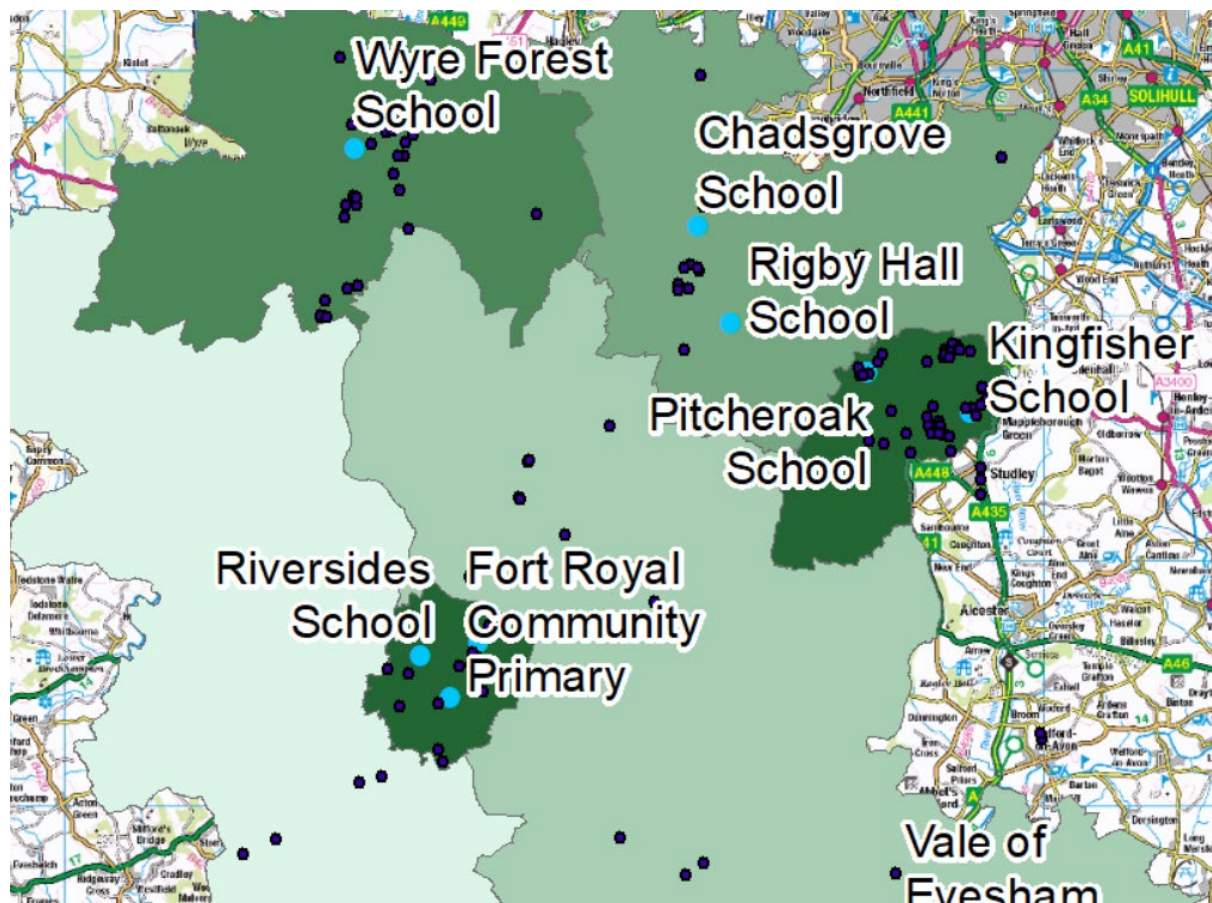
**Table 5: Forecast numbers on roll at Kingfisher School**

Forecast	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Jan-23				1	5	8	7	17	17	13	12	15	8	18	-	121
Jan-24				2	6	6	11	10	18	18	15	12	6	11	-	115
Jan-25				2	7	7	9	15	11	20	20	15	3	9	-	118
Jan-26				2	7	8	10	13	15	13	21	20	7	6	-	122
Jan-27				2	7	8	11	13	14	17	14	21	11	9	-	127

**Graph 7: Forecast and trend numbers on roll at Kingfisher School**



Map showing pupils of Kingfisher Special School by distance



35% of Kingfisher's pupils are within the Redditch district and travel less than 5km to attend. Kingfisher has children attending from all over the county, 43% travel over 20km between their home and the school.

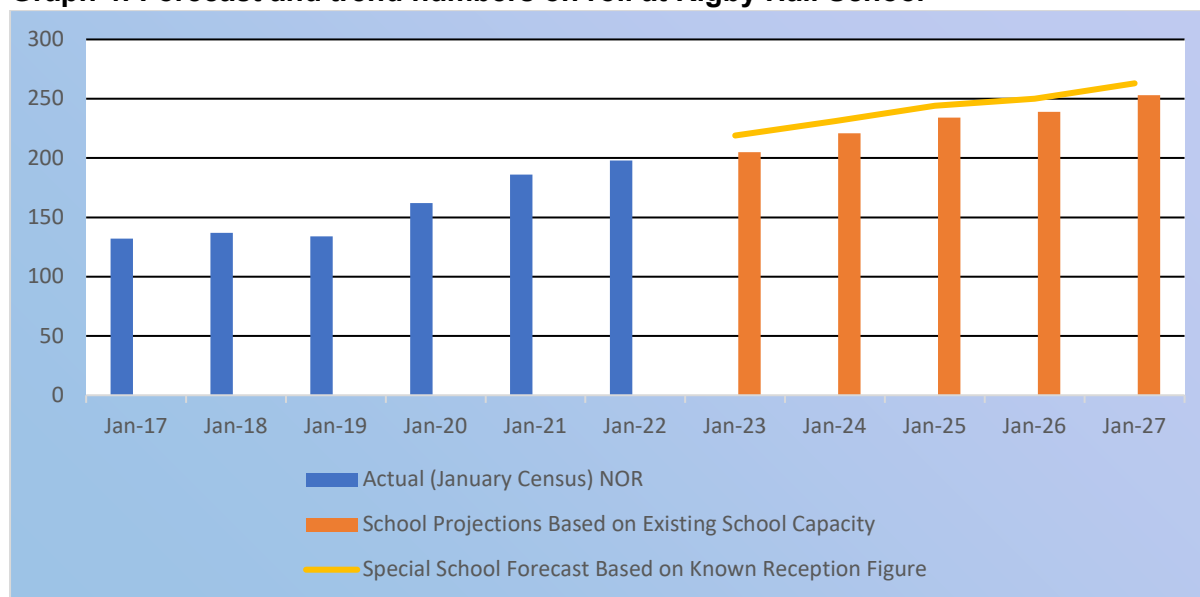
Rigby Hall School is a Community Special School, the school has an age range of 4 – 19 years and a 'Good' Ofsted grading (February 2022). The majority of children at Rigby Hall have Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) or Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).

Table 2 shows the forecast number of pupils on roll expected based on the known Reception figure for September 2022

**Table 2: Forecast numbers on roll at Rigby Hall School**

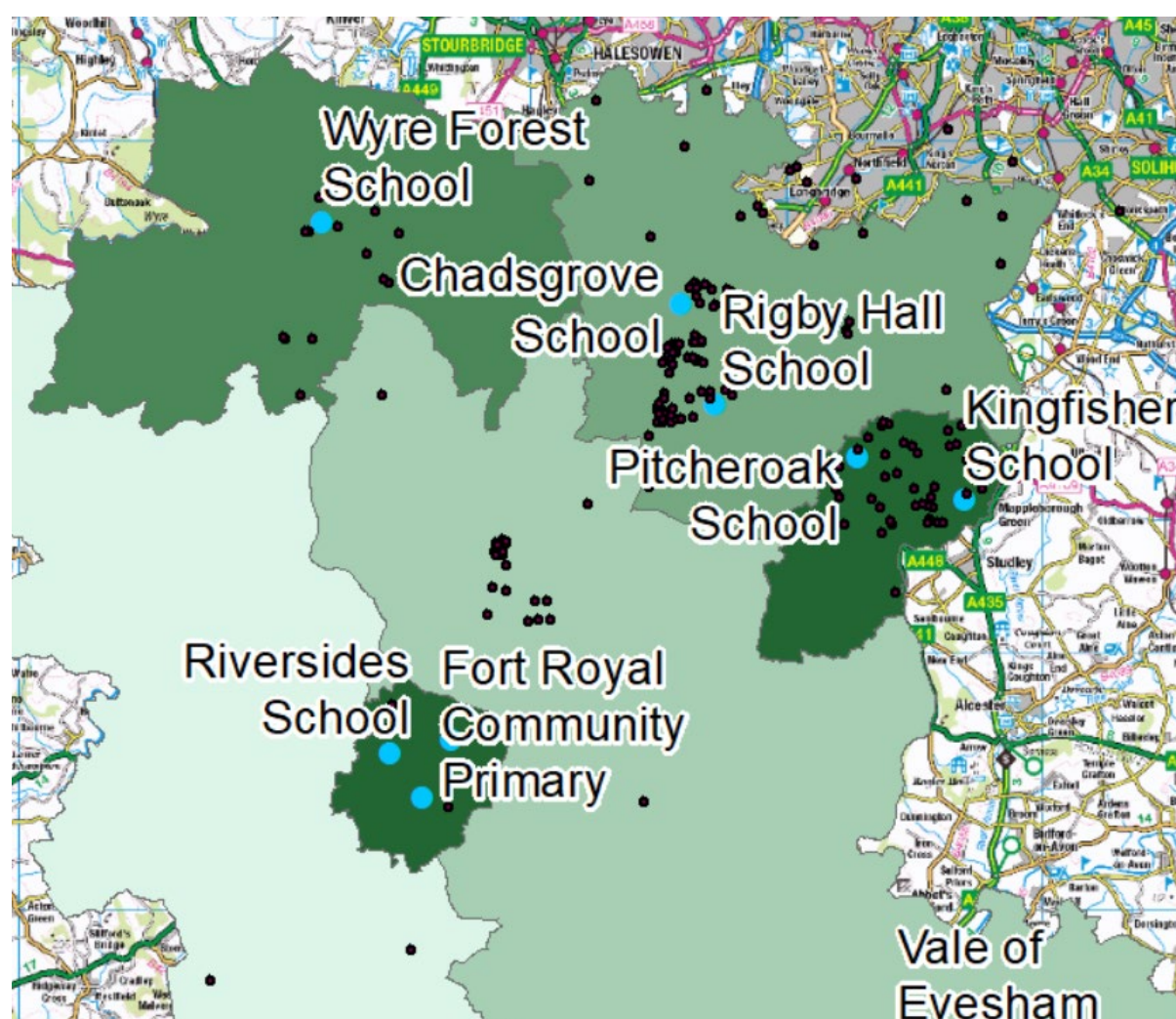
Forecast	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Jan-23	10	14	13	15	21	17	22	11	18	16	16	21	13	12	0	219
Jan-24	10	13	16	16	18	23	17	24	13	19	16	16	21	9	0	231
Jan-25	10	13	15	18	19	20	24	19	26	14	19	16	15	16	0	244
Jan-26	10	13	15	17	21	21	20	25	21	27	14	19	16	11	0	250
Jan-27	10	13	15	17	20	24	22	22	27	22	27	14	19	11	0	263

**Graph 4: Forecast and trend numbers on roll at Rigby Hall School**





## Map of pupils at Rigby Hall Day Special School by distance



38% of Rigby Hall students are within 5km of the schools location. However, there is also a large percentage of children travelling 10km+ to attend the school (33%).

## Wyre Forest School (Generic)

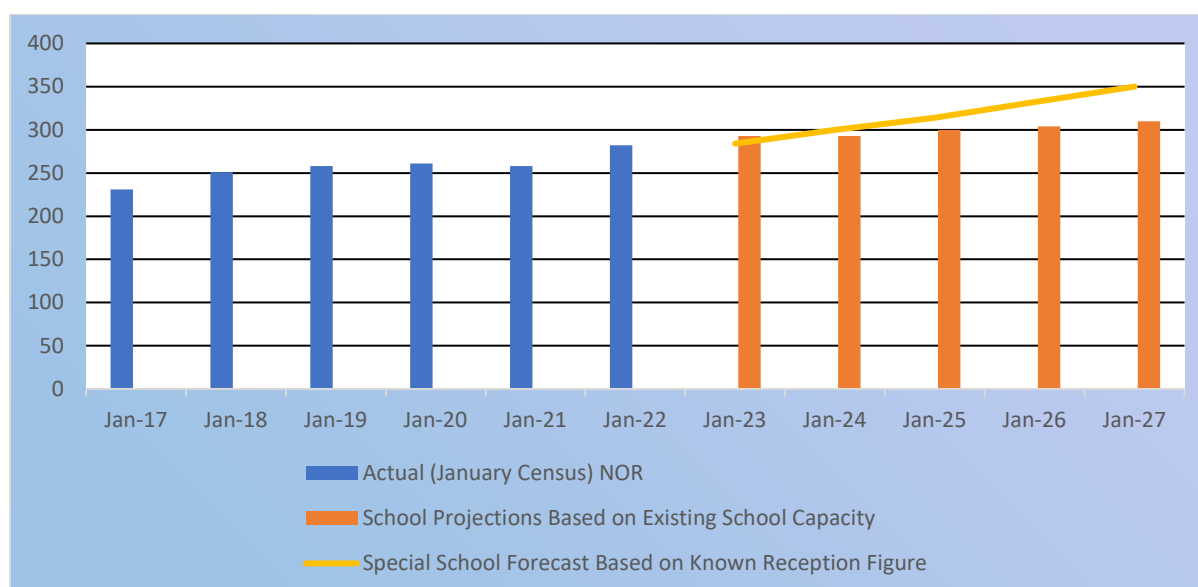
Wyre Forest is a generic community special school for children aged 2-19, rated 'Good' by Ofsted in 2019. This school also has a Nursery Assessment Unit which can accommodate 25 pre-school age children on a part time basis.

This generic school is relatively large and there is no specific peak age group.

**Table 3: Forecast numbers on roll at Wyre Forest School**

Forecast	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total Excl N2
Jan-23	14	26	11	21	20	22	25	27	24	21	22	9	24	14	13	5	284
Jan-24	16	26	26	13	22	21	23	27	31	25	20	22	9	18	11	6	300
Jan-25	13	26	26	28	14	23	22	25	30	31	25	20	22	3	15	4	314
Jan-26	13	26	26	28	29	15	25	24	28	31	31	25	20	16	-	8	332
Jan-27	13	26	26	28	29	30	16	26	27	29	30	31	25	14	13	-	350

**Graph 5: Forecast and trend numbers on roll at Wyre Forest School**



The map displays the Wyre Forest area, highlighting the catchment areas for several schools. The schools shown are:

- Wyre Forest School
- Chadsgrove School
- Rigby Hall School
- Pitcheroak School
- Kingfisher School
- Riversides School
- Fort Royal Community Primary
- Vale of School

The map also shows the surrounding towns and roads, including Stourbridge, Halesowen, and Birmingham.

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[www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk)

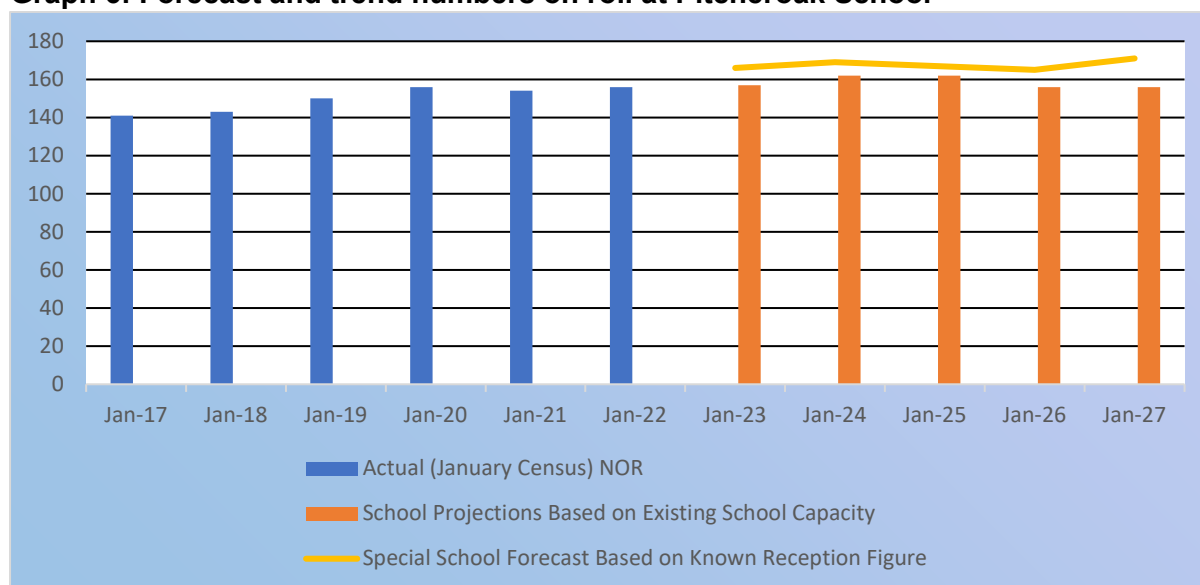
## Pitcheroak School (Generic)

Pitcheroak in Redditch provides provision for children age 4-19 and is also a generic special school. Pitcheroak was also rated 'Good' following a short Ofsted inspection in 2018. They aim to have no more than 10 children per year group as there is currently no building work plans to expand and allow them to accept more children. Most year 13 young people at Pitcheroak until recently left school or moved into further education but it is now expected that they will stay for year 14.

**Table 4: Forecast numbers on roll at Pitcheroak School**

Forecast	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Jan-23	7	14	12	10	10	10	9	14	10	10	10	11	16	17	6	166
Jan-24	8	10	15	13	10	11	10	11	13	10	10	10	10	16	10	169
Jan-25	8	11	11	16	13	11	12	12	10	14	10	10	9	10	10	167
Jan-26	8	11	13	12	16	14	11	13	11	10	14	10	9	9	4	165
Jan-27	8	11	13	13	12	17	15	13	12	11	10	14	9	10	2	171

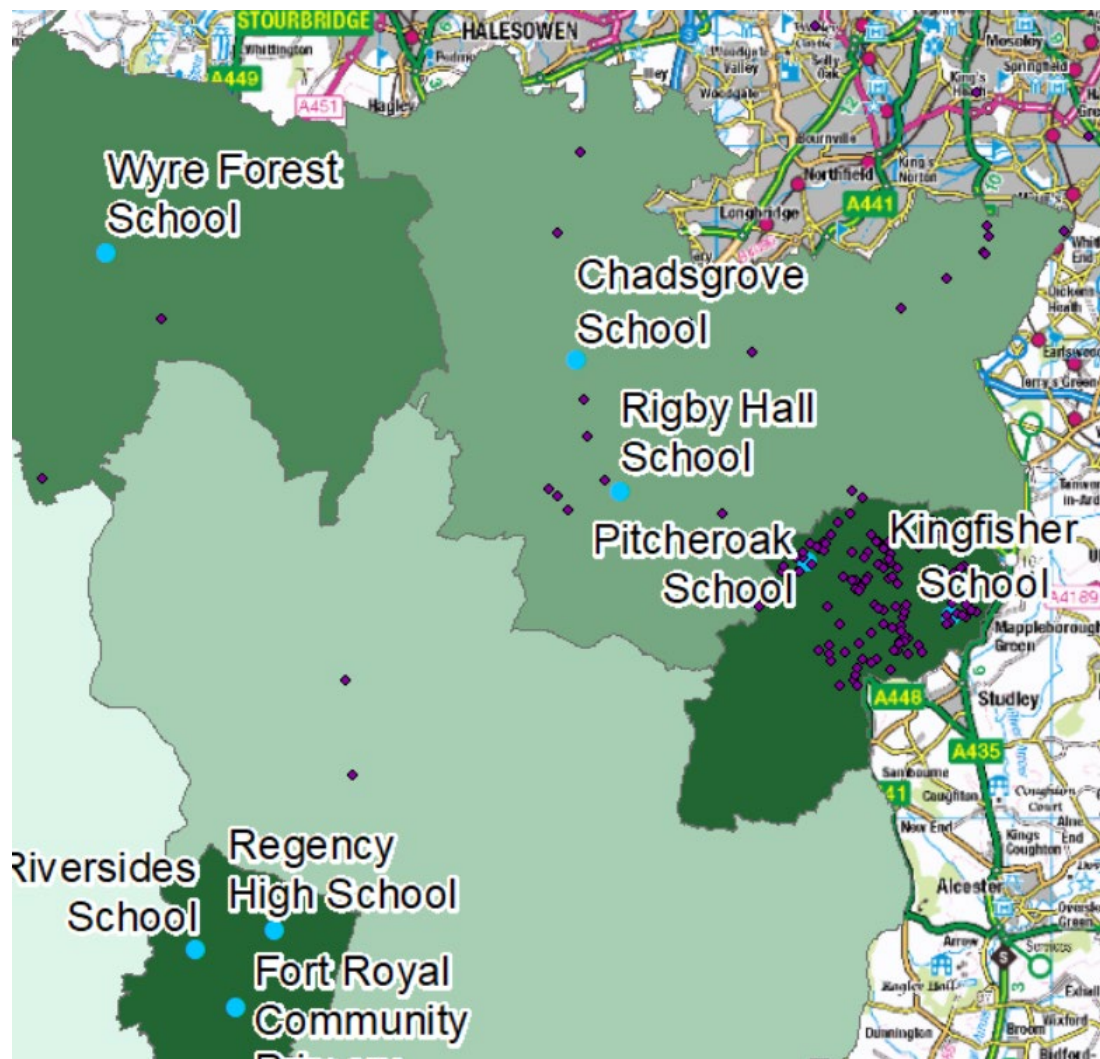
**Graph 6: Forecast and trend numbers on roll at Pitcheroak School**



The higher forecast numbers in this table reflect those children from Redditch currently at Wyre Forest School and Rigby Hall Day Special School.



### Map of pupils at Pitcheroak School by distance



The map above clearly shows a large proportion of children attending Pitcheroak are also within the Redditch district (83%). The second largest cohort are within Bromsgrove, where the majority are travelling between 5-10km from home to Pitcheroak school.

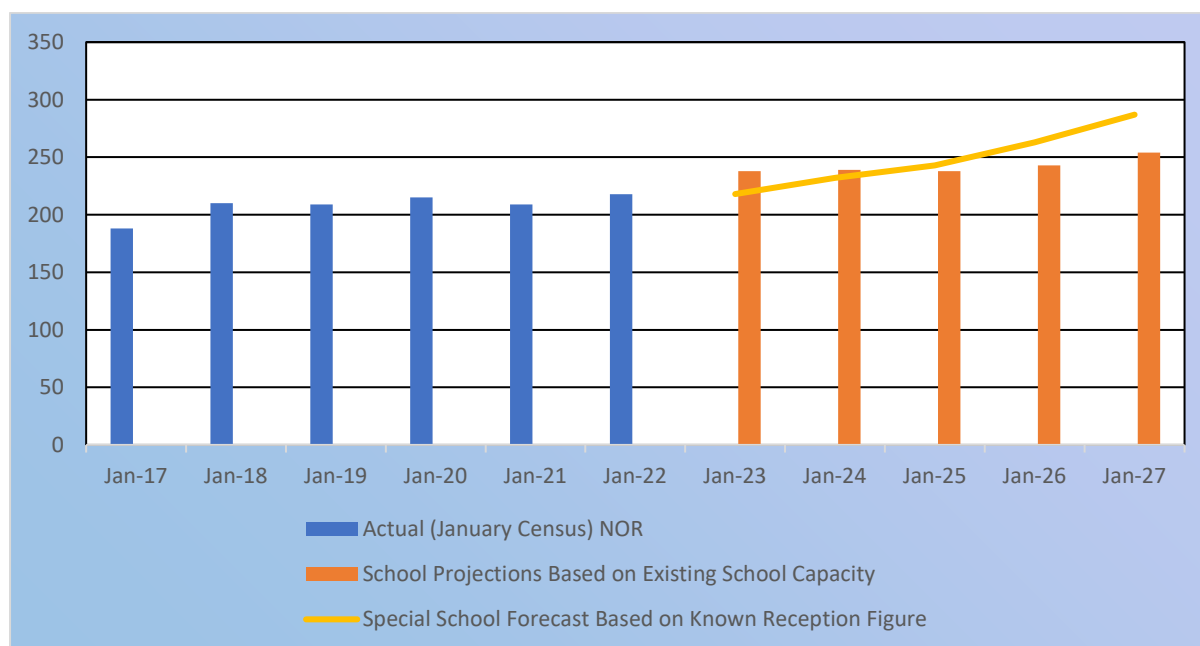
## Fort Royal Primary School (Generic)

Fort Royal Primary School is a community special school for children aged 2-11, and is an Ofsted rated 'Good' special school. They also operate a nursery assessment unit where children are assessed to determine the level of support they may need on entry into school.

**Table 7: Forecast numbers on roll at Fort Royal Primary School**

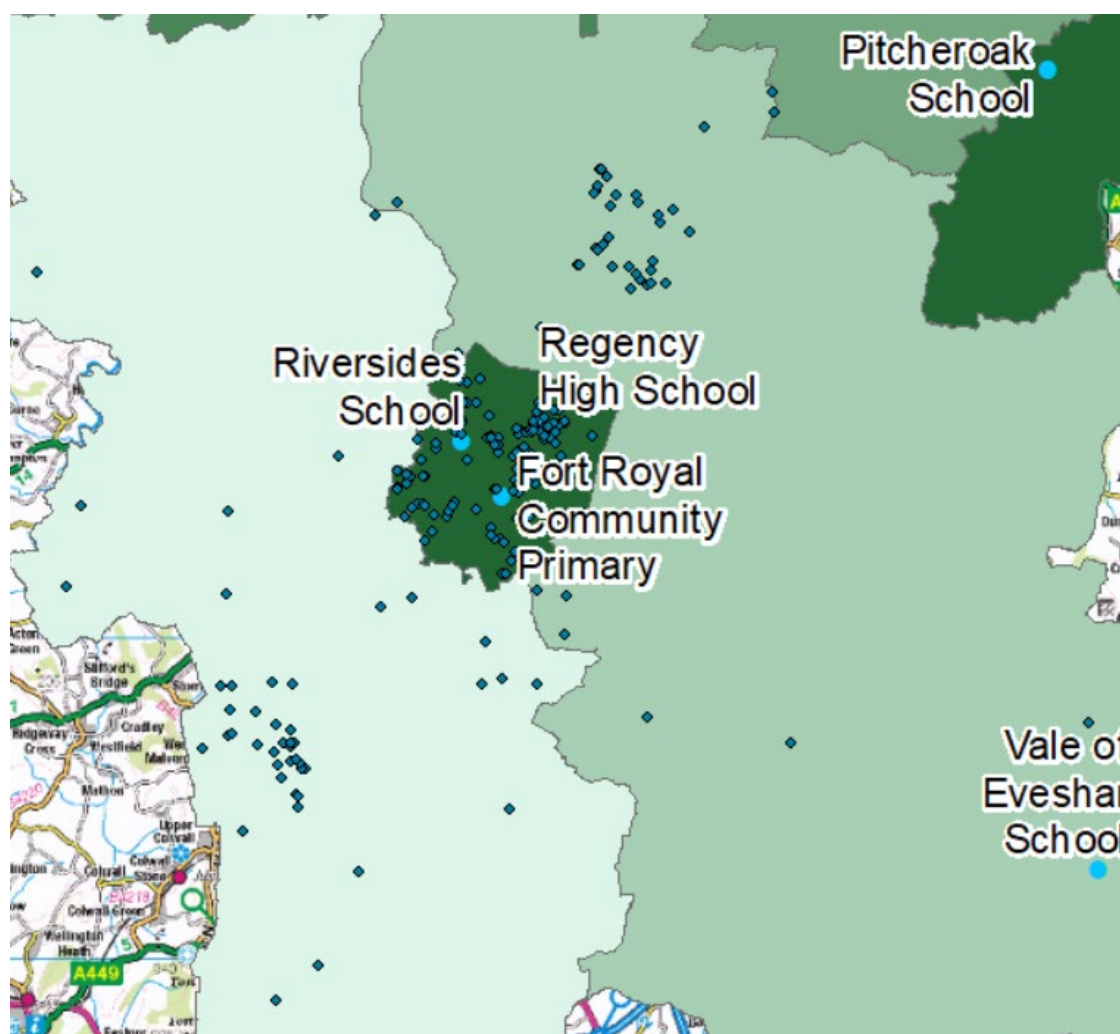
Forecast	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Excl N1+N2
Jan-23	1	30	48	12	30	26	30	38	34	218
Jan-24	3	30	48	49	13	30	26	29	37	232
Jan-25	3	32	48	49	50	13	30	25	28	243
Jan-26	3	32	48	49	50	50	13	29	24	263
Jan-27	3	32	48	49	50	50	50	12	28	287

**Graph 9: Forecast and trend numbers on roll at Fort Royal Primary School**





Map of pupils at Fort Royal Primary Special School by distance



Fort Royal and Regency have the highest percentage of pupils attending from the Malvern area. These are the two closest generic special schools to the district. The majority of Fort Royals pupils live within the neighbouring districts, Worcester, Wychavon and Malvern.

## Regency High School (Generic)

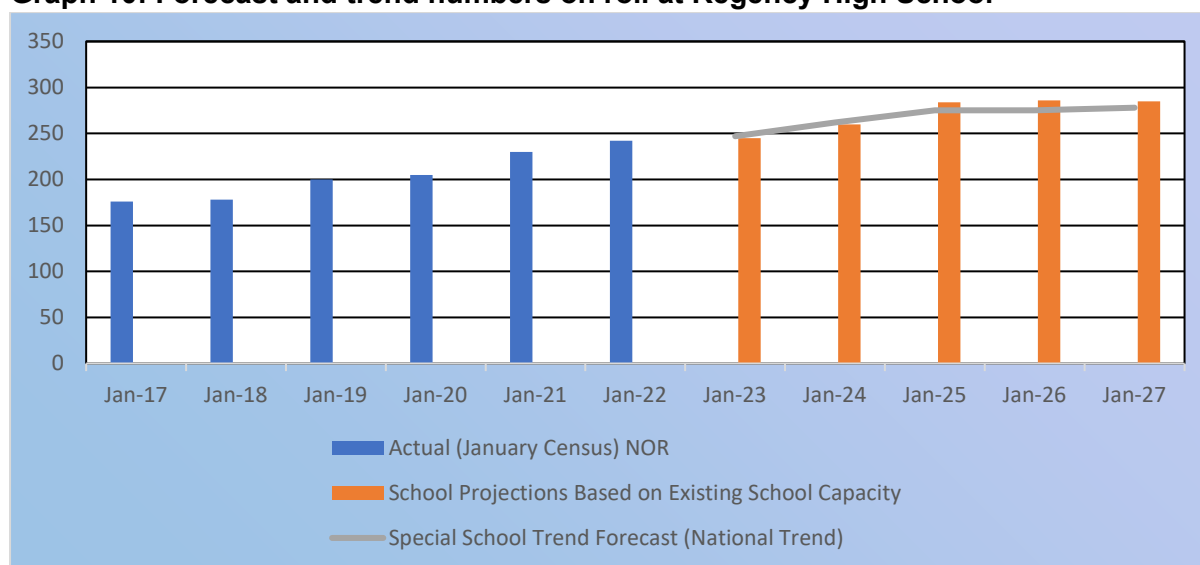
Regency High School is an Academy generic special school for children aged 11-19. In 2019, they were rated 'Good' following their Ofsted inspection. Regency High school has an informal feeder relationship from Fort Royal Primary School whereby they accept all the previous year's year 6. They also expect on average another 10 students in year 7 with newly arising special needs.

Together with Fort Royal Primary School, Regency High covers the areas of Malvern, Upton, Martley, Worcester and some of the children from Droitwich.

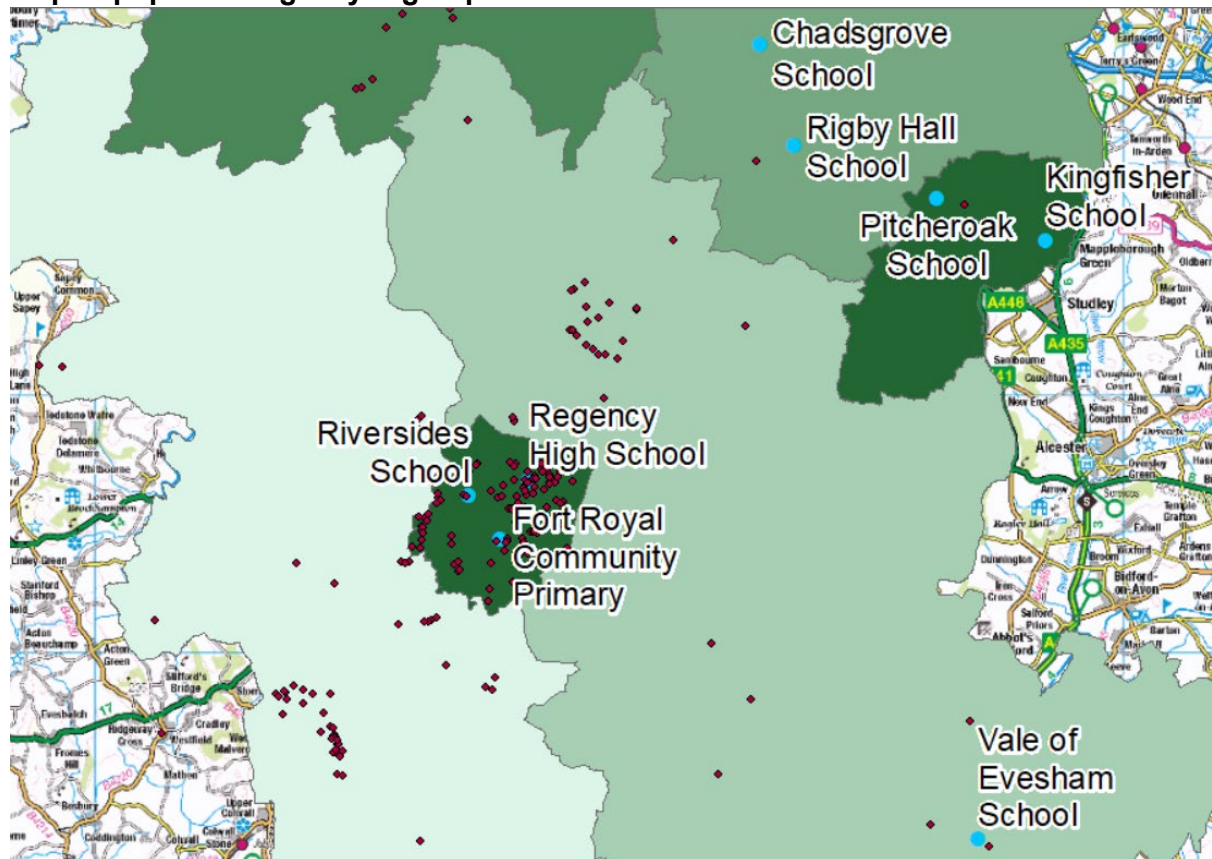
**Table 8: Forecast numbers on roll at Regency High School**

Forecast	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Jan-23	35	33	40	33	49	26	26	6	247
Jan-24	38	37	35	41	33	48	24	8	262
Jan-25	36	40	38	36	40	32	46	7	275
Jan-26	38	38	42	39	35	39	30	14	275
Jan-27	36	40	39	43	39	34	37	9	278

**Graph 10: Forecast and trend numbers on roll at Regency High School**



## Map of pupils at Regency High Special School



32% of Regency High students are travelling over 10km to attend. Children in Wyre Forest are the largest cohort traveling over 20km.

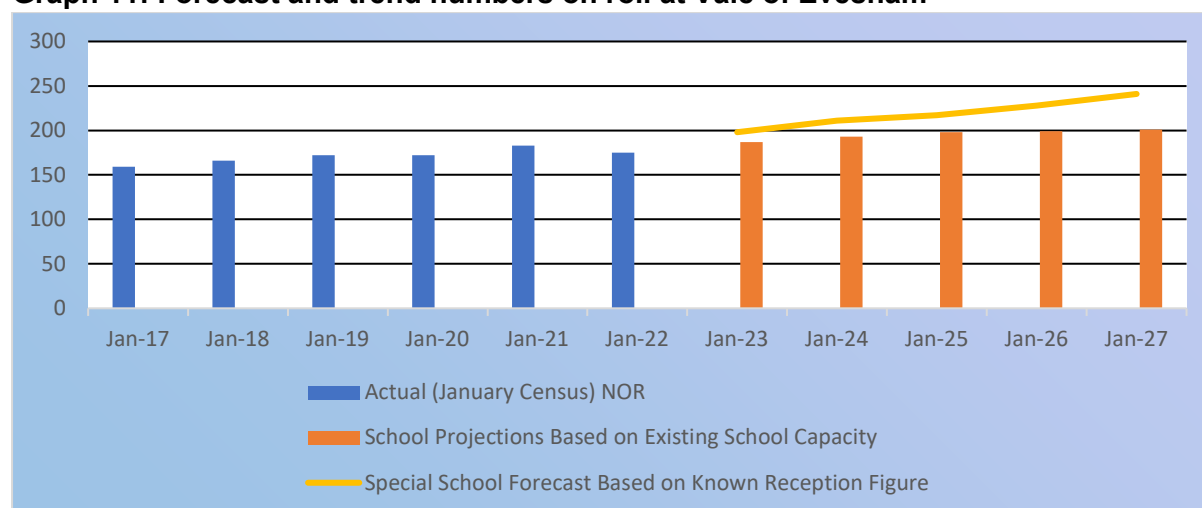
## Vale of Evesham School (Generic)

Vale of Evesham is also an Academy generic special school. Children aged 2-19 are able to attend This school covers most of Wychavon district, a wide rural area, so most of the pupils are driven in.

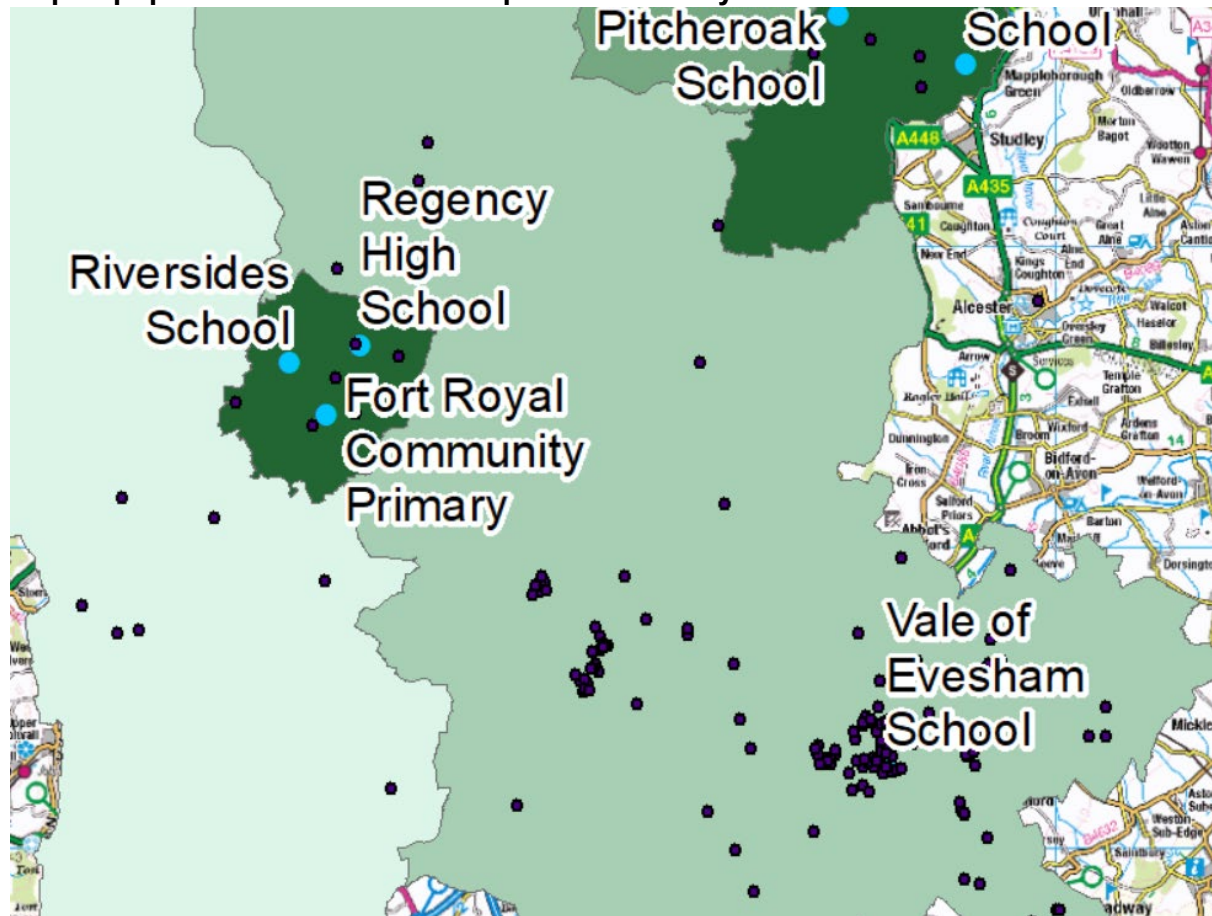
**Table 9: Forecast numbers on roll at Vale of Evesham**

Forecast	N1	N2	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Total Excl N1+N2
Jan-23	3	9	20	11	14	10	16	15	17	11	17	7	14	12	16	15	3	198
Jan-24	3	12	20	20	11	13	11	18	16	18	12	18	7	14	12	15	6	211
Jan-25	3	13	20	20	20	11	15	12	19	16	18	12	17	7	13	11	6	217
Jan-26	3	13	20	20	20	20	12	16	14	19	17	18	12	18	7	13	2	228
Jan-27	3	13	20	20	20	20	21	14	18	14	20	17	18	12	17	6	4	241

**Graph 11: Forecast and trend numbers on roll at Vale of Evesham**



Map of pupils at Vale of Evesham Special School by distance



The Vale of Evesham school is located in the Wychavon district, 86% of its pupils also live within this district. 19% are still travelling over 10km to the school even though they live within the Wychavon district. The second largest cohort of children attending Vale of Evesham are from Malvern, with just under 4% of those within Malvern Hills with a travel distance of over 20km.



## Conclusion

Chadsgrove is the only special school which specialises in physical disabilities. 60% of children attending Chadsgrove School are travelling 10-20km from their home address. Note that there are several children from north of the county boundary attending Chadsgrove school also. As Chadsgrove is the only special school that specialises in physical disability within Worcestershire, there are a significant number of children travelling from Wychavon/Wyre Forest which is the reason for such high travel distances.

It is expected that children with SEMH will be attending Riversides, Worcester or Kingfisher, Redditch as there is no other state funded specialist SEMH provision in the county. Children in Malvern that would be better suited to go to Riversides out of the two due to location, are travelling over 20km to attend Kingfisher. The majority of children attending Riversides live within Worcester or Wychavon. 29% of children are travelling over 20km to attend the school, with the majority coming from Wychavon.

At the generic special schools, there are children travelling further distances while there is a closer Special School within their own district. For example, 23% of children in Redditch are attending Rigby Hall school, when there is Pitcheroak Special School closer.

For Wyre Forest school, there are several pupils from Redditch, whose needs could be met at Pitcheroak School with much less travel distances and time. The majority of children attending Pitcheroak (57%) school live within the district of Redditch. Just under 3% of children attending travel a distance of 20km or more.

63% of attendees at Fort Royal school live within 0-5km of the school. The longest distance travelled to attend Fort Royal school is 40km. A large number of children attending live within Malvern as there currently isn't any Special School provision within this district, they are having to travel 10-20km to access provision.

12% of children attending the Vale of Evesham school are travelling over 20km. One would expect that children from Malvern would be better placed in special schools in Worcester as this is nearer. There is also provision in Redditch that children within this district could attend, which would prevent them from having to travel so far.

There is evidence to suggest Special School provision is needed in the Malvern that would alleviate some of the current pressures on Worcester and Wychavon Special Schools. There is additional demand for more generic special schools places in Worcester City, Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wychavon.

We have to take into account that parental preference is a key factor, particularly when it comes to special schools and specialist provision.