

Policy 3: Surplus and Deficit Places

Surplus places within schools represent a poor use of resources, and under Welsh Assembly guidelines all authorities must keep the level of surplus places under review. Some surplus is desirable to allow schools to cope with changes in demand, but high levels of surplus are unproductive (Cambridge Education, Modernising Education, 2007).

An acceptable level of surplus places within schools has not been clearly defined. However, the Wales Audit Office, Estyn and the Assembly Government work on the assumption that the total percentage of surplus places within individual schools should not rise over 25%.

Schools which have had over 25% surplus place for the previous 3 years will be reviewed.

With regard to deficit places within schools, the authority recognises that this factor can be attributed to the popularity of the schools and the demand from housing development within an area. It is also recognised that in some instances there are no alternative schools of the same language or faith based provisions within the area. However, consideration needs to be given to the educational and/or health and safety impact of overcrowding within schools. The Council expects schools to adhere to the admissions policy thereby removing the likelihood of deficit places within schools. Where schools have had more than 10% deficit places for three years in succession, the authority reserves the right to review provision.

Any review on the basis of surplus or deficit places will take into consideration both retrospective numbers and county projections for the schools involved.

Measuring School Capacity.

The capacity of a school is the number of pupils it can accommodate. This is based on a Welsh Assembly Government calculation.

http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/circulars/measuring_capacity1?lang=en

The Council reserves the right to review schools where:

- a) Schools have had more than 25% surplus places for three years in succession.
- b) Schools have had more than 10% deficit places for three years in succession.
- c) An immediate health and safety issue has arisen.