

Proposed Catchment changes for Wellington Lions Primary Academy

Ascend Learning Trust is proposing changes to the catchment area of Wellington Lions Primary Academy to take align the admission arrangements for the area of Tidworth.

The current position:

Wellington Lions Primary Academy was opened in September 2014 as a newly built sponsor led academy to meet the expansion of Tidworth through a new housing development known as the North East Quadrant. This mix of Civilian/Military housing added circa 600 homes to the area.

This development and the building of Wellington Lions Primary Academy, was part of a wider expansion of local housing stock and infrastructure to meet the anticipated increased needs as part of the Salisbury Plain Army Basing programme which took place between 2014-2019, and formed part of the Army 2020 rebasing plan. The Corunna Barracks development delivered 246 family homes.

As such, Wellington Lions Primary Academy was built with the capacity of 420 students, therefore operating as a two-form entry primary school. As a newly built school, Wellington Lions Primary Academy formed a catchment that encompassed the new housing development and did not overlap the existing catchment areas of Zouch Academy to the North West of Tidworth and Clarendon Junior South which encompasses the remainder of Tidworth and extends into the surrounding countryside.

Other recent development in Tidworth, linked to the Salisbury Plain Masterplan (June 2014) was focussed to the south of the settlement for service family accommodation. This area falls into the catchment of Clarendon Junior School.

The 'Planning for Tidworth and Ludgershall' report details the need for sustained expansion to Ludgershall and Tidworth by approximately 1500 new houses in the coming years. Whilst development is already underway at Drummond Park in Ludgershall, the pool of four reasonable development sites in Ludgershall, along with the existing construction of Drummond Park, all fall within the catchment of Ludgershall Castle Primary School. There is currently no planned expansion in the 'Planning for Tidworth and Ludgershall' report for the existing catchment for Wellington Lions Primary Academy. Within this report, all future development sites identified are focussed on the town of Ludgershall, meaning there is no planned material change to the future development of Tidworth.

Within the 'Planning for Tidworth and Ludgershall report' the North East Quadrant site is highlighted as being 'built out' and therefore not available for any further expansion. The current catchment for Wellington Lions Primary Academy whilst circling the North East Quadrant, is made up with land that will not be developed as it constitutes a flood plain, as highlighted in the environmental surveys contained within the said report.

Since the formation of Wellington Lions Primary Academy, the demand for Primary school places in Tidworth has proved volatile. Over recent years, the actual uptake of Primary School places has ranged from 73-85% of anticipated demand, based on data provided by Wiltshire \County Council.

Accurate forecasting in a local context which is predominantly serviced by military personnel is challenging at the primary phase. Forecasting data from the Department for Education is linked with medical records of 0-4 year olds registered in local GP surgeries; within a military area, this data can prove unreliable.

The anticipated increase in primary school places outlined in the Salisbury Plain Masterplan has not materialised in Tidworth and there is a small surplus of school places across the three primary schools that serve the area. As there is no planned or likely future development in the current defined catchment for Wellington Lions Primary Academy, the status quo is unlikely to change in the medium term; with no known changes to deployment of Army personnel resulting in an increase of places, this further consolidates the position.

The proposal:

Ascend Learning Trust proposes a change to current arrangements to redefine the catchment area for Wellington Lions Primary Academy. This change will create a shared catchment area of the urban areas of the town of Tidworth with Zouch Academy and Clarendon Junior school.

The catchment area of Zouch Academy is focussed on a geographical area to the North West of Tidworth. By comparison, the catchment area of Clarendon Junior School encompasses the remainder of Tidworth incorporating the majority of Tidworth Camp, South Tidworth and extending towards Ludgershall to incorporate Perham Down.

Zouch Academy currently has a designated capacity of 420 and current published data available from the Gov.uk Get Information About Schools website shows that the current number on roll is 410 pupils. The school therefore has 10 places in its available capacity.

Clarendon Junior School currently has a designated capacity of 420 and current published data available from the Gov.uk Get Information About Schools website shows that the current number on roll is 271 pupils. The school therefore has 149 places in its available capacity.

Geographically, Clarendon Junior School has the largest catchment area of the three primary (junior) schools in Tidworth, with Zouch Academy have the second largest catchment and Wellington Lions Primary Academy the smallest.

The catchment area for Wellington Lions Primary Academy mainly comprises detached, or semi-detached family homes. By comparison, the catchment area for Zouch Academy comprises a much more densely populated area of housing stock, comprising military housing mainly in semi-detached or terraced housing and/or apartment blocks.

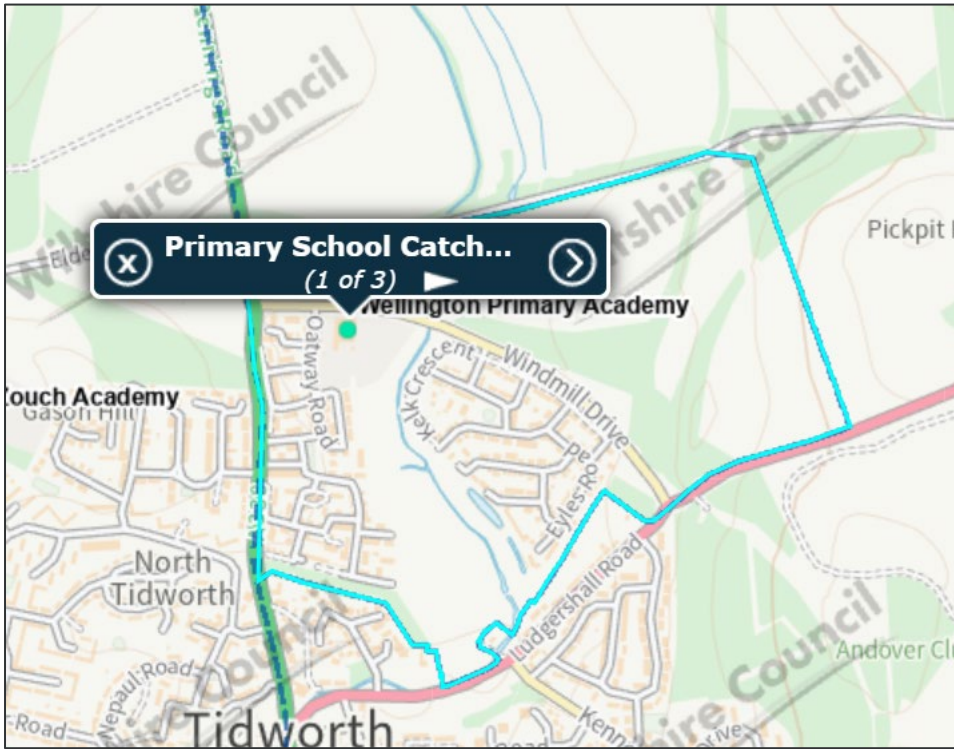
Zouch Academy and Wellington Lions Primary Academy are physically located in close proximity and there are safe walking routes to Wellington Lions Primary Academy from the North West area of Tidworth.

As Zouch Academy is close to its designated capacity, and given the larger population density of the areas to the North West, South Tidworth and Tidworth Camp, when compared to the North East Quadrant, the likelihood of Zouch Academy reaching capacity due to changes of family needs in local housing stock within their existing catchment are probable. As Wellington Lions Primary Academy is the closest school, with safe walking routes, Ascend Learning Trust believes it is prudent to alter the defined catchment area to be able to offer the local area the security of available school places in a defined catchment school.

Ascend Learning Trust also believes it would be prudent when re-drawing the defined catchment area to extend this to encompass South Tidworth and Tidworth Camp to allow for any influx in school places driven by the changing demographic of troops stationed in Tidworth base. As Clarendon Junior School's catchment extends beyond the immediate vicinity of Tidworth, this material change will support offering greater choice of catchment schools for the town of Tidworth. This will create a shared catchment for part of the local area with the existing schools of Zouch Academy and Clarendon Junior School.

It is therefore proposed that the catchment boundaries for Wellington Lions Primary Academy be redrawn for school admissions from September 2026 onwards.

Wellington Lions Primary Academy Current Catchment



Wellington Lions Primary Academy Proposed Catchment

