

## Froxfield CE Primary School

### Submission by the Governors of Froxfield School to the Hampshire Admission Forum relating to Froxfield School's catchment area

#### *Introduction*

1. The Governors of Froxfield CE Primary School ("Froxfield School") are making this submission to the Hampshire Admission Forum ("the Admission Forum") contending that the catchment area of Froxfield School is anomalous and requires adjustment (by way of extension) so as to be consistent with and consonant with the extent of the church parish to which Froxfield School (a voluntary controlled church school) relates.
2. This submission is **not**, however, a formal request that Froxfield School's catchment area should be adjusted now: following discussion with relevant officers of Hampshire County Council ("HCC"), as detailed below, it is considered that, since there is an over-supply of Year R places in infant and primary schools in the Petersfield area (which is a situation anticipated to continue for some years), Froxfield School is unlikely in practice to be in a position where it is unable to admit certain children by reason of the application of the catchment area criterion in its Admission Policy.
3. The Governors do, however, wish to place on record their view that the anomalies presented by Froxfield School's current catchment area should eventually be corrected, and most certainly if and when circumstances change so that the catchment area criterion in its Admission Policy becomes a "live" issue in prioritising which children should be admitted to Froxfield School. This submission is therefore a request for the Admission Forum to note the Governors' case (set out below) that Froxfield School's catchment area should be extended to correspond with the church parish: should the Governors subsequently decide to make formal application to change the catchment area, their expression now of their views and concerns will be on record. In short, the Governors wish to "put down a marker".

#### *Froxfield School and its catchment area*

4. Froxfield School was founded in 1876 and is a voluntary controlled church school located in the village of Froxfield in the Petersfield area of East Hampshire. It is the church school of St Peter's Church, High Cross, Froxfield, and the church parish is "the Parish of Froxfield with Privett". The church parish comprises the village of Froxfield and the neighbouring village of Privett, which lies to the west of Froxfield (see Appendix for a map). The "civil" parish (the area within the remit of the Parish Council, and the area which returns a councillor to East Hampshire District Council) also covers both Froxfield and Privett.
5. Froxfield School's catchment area (see Appendix for a map) is historic. It dates back to the time when the School was an infant school – it may date back further, to the time when Froxfield village was a separate parish from Privett village. At the time Froxfield School was given Primary School status (now some 10 years ago) the question of extending its catchment area was briefly raised, but (as appears from the documents recently supplied by HCC to the Froxfield School Governors) HCC took the

decision not to extend the catchment area to include Privett, but so far as appears no reason was given for this decision (which possibly calls into question the legality of the decision). The Governors do not feel that that decision at that time in any way precludes the Governors from raising now the question of what is the proper, natural and fair catchment area for Froxfield School; nor, should the Governors in due course make a formal request to the Admission Forum, should it preclude the Admission Forum from judging the issue on its merits.

### ***Froxfield School's Admission Policy***

6. Froxfield School's Admission Policy 2023-24 (and in all material respects this has been the case since at least Froxfield School attained primary status) provides (in summary) that if the school is oversubscribed then priority for admission will be decided in the following order:
  - (1) "Looked after" children;
  - (2) Children with exceptional medical and/or social need;
  - (3) Children of staff;
  - (4) Children living in the catchment area with a sibling at the school;
  - (5) Children living in the catchment area with a parent being an active member of the Church of England;
  - (6) Other children living in the catchment area;
  - (7) Children living outside the catchment area with a sibling at the school;
  - (8) Children living outside the catchment area with a parent being an active member of the Church of England;
  - (9) Other children.

### ***The Governors' case for extending Froxfield School's catchment area***

- 7 The Governors understand that the norm is that a church school will have a catchment area which is at the least consonant with the area of the parish of the church to which the school is related. There are two good reasons for this:
  - a. first, as a matter of what one might call "emotional attachment", families living in a parish will naturally assume that they live in the catchment area of what is the church school for that parish (the Governors know from comments made to them that families living in Privett are surprised that they are not within the catchment area of Froxfield School);
  - b. secondly, a church school's Admission Policy will normally have regard to the children of parents living and worshipping in the church parish.Church and school go hand in hand.
- 8 This is not the case at Froxfield School: a child of a family living in Privett is, in terms of admissions priority, in Category (9) (rather than (6)), whilst a child of a family living in Privett who is a member of the Froxfield with Privett parish church congregation is in Category (8) (rather than (5)).
- 9 Currently, Privett village is within the catchment area of both Langrish School and West Meon School, and part of Privett is within the catchment area of East Meon School. A further anomaly is that Froxfield village, despite (and obviously) being in the

catchment area of Froxfield School, is also within the catchment area of both West Meon School and East Meon School. In the Appendix there is a map of the catchment area of each of Langrish School, West Meon School and East Meon School. The extent of Langrish School's catchment area is particularly strange, especially now that Langrish School is no longer in Langrish village, but is further east, in Stroud village.

- 10 As a matter of geography, Froxfield School is the nearest school for any family resident of Privett.
- 11 It is the submission of the Governors of Froxfield School that all these anomalies should be resolved to the effect that both Froxfield village and Privett village come within the catchment area of Froxfield School. Common sense would also suggest that there should be no overlapping of school catchment areas.

### ***Discussions with HCC***

- 12 Earlier this year these matters were discussed by Froxfield School Governors with the relevant officers at HCC with a view to a possible formal submission to revise Froxfield School's catchment area and removing the anomalies identified. In summary, the outcome of those discussions was as follows:
  - a. HCC shared their internal projections which show that, for the next 5 years at least, the number of Year R places available in schools in the Petersfield area significantly exceeds the likely number of children seeking places in those schools.
  - b. Taking Langrish, West Meon and Froxfield Schools together, for Year R admissions for 2022/23 there were 57 school places available, but only 43 or 44 had (by July 2022) been taken up.
  - c. Froxfield School is successful at attracting children from outside its catchment area, including children from Langrish School and West Meon School catchment areas (both of which of course include Privett).
  - d. In view of the over-supply of Year R school places in the area by reference to the anticipated number of children seeking a place, Froxfield School is unlikely, for some time, to be in a position where it is having to apply its Admission Policy catchment area criterion in prioritising children for admission.
- 13 The Governors understood that, in view of these factors, HCC would not at this time support an application by Froxfield School to extend its catchment area to include Privett. The anomaly is not denied, but HCC were of the view that any such application might be opposed by Langrish and West Meon Schools (and possibly also by East Meon School, although its catchment area includes only a small part of Privett) and in circumstances where extending the catchment area would currently provide no "benefit" to Froxfield School, HCC were minded not to support a potentially contentious issue.

### ***Submission***

- 14 Having regard to all these factors, Froxfield School Governors are reluctant to make an application which may cause ill-feeling with the neighbouring schools, and which

would not have the support of HCC. Nevertheless, Froxfield School's case is a reasonable one – it appears to have been brushed aside without any discussion or explanation more than 10 years ago, and should circumstances change in the future, where the catchment area becomes a “live” issue, Froxfield School would not like the matter to be dismissed on the basis that the School had accepted without question the current catchment area arrangements.

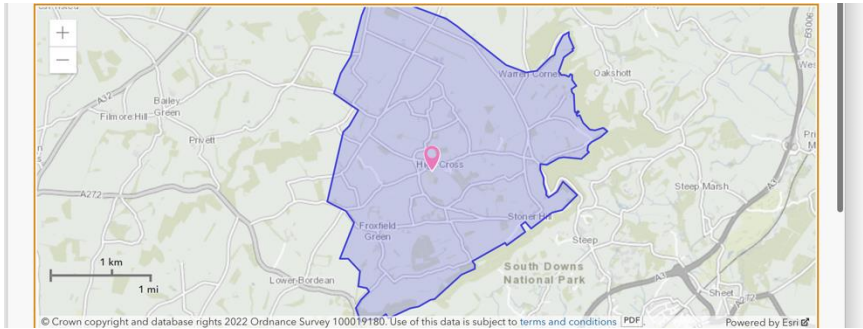
- 15 Accordingly, the Froxfield School Governors now make out their case to the Admission Forum for extending the catchment area as described above, asking for that case to be noted, but not asking for an immediate decision. Should, at some point in the future, the extension of the catchment area become a “live” issue, an application for a decision can and will then be made, and the long-standing views and concerns of the Froxfield School Governors can then be acknowledged and formally dealt with.

**Chair of Governors, Froxfield CE School  
Foundation Governor, Froxfield CE School**

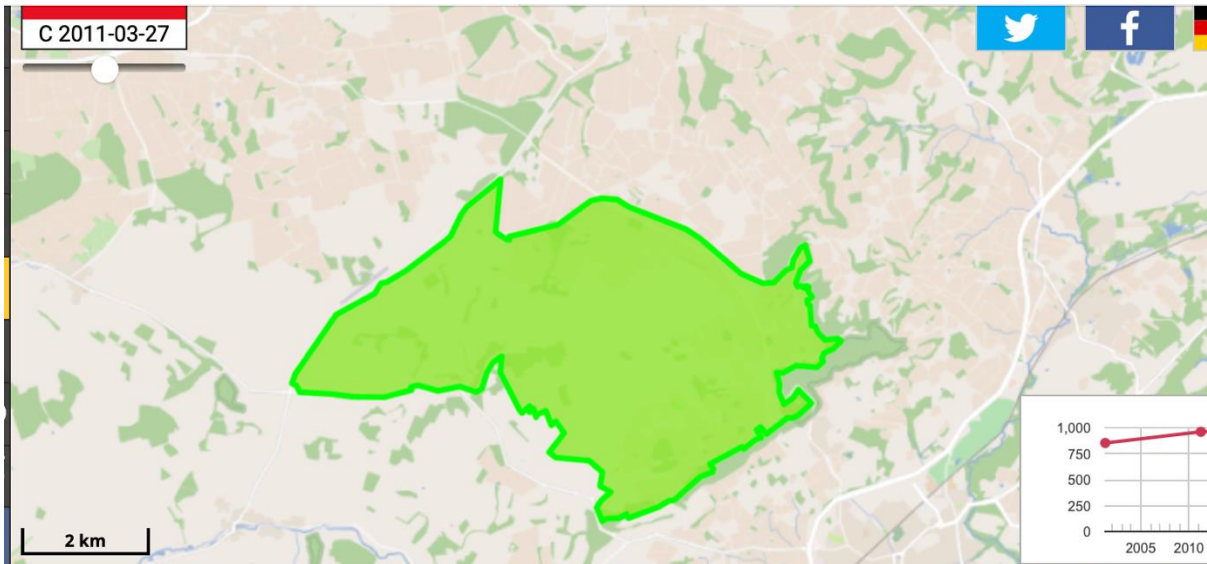
**6 December 2022**

## APPENDIX

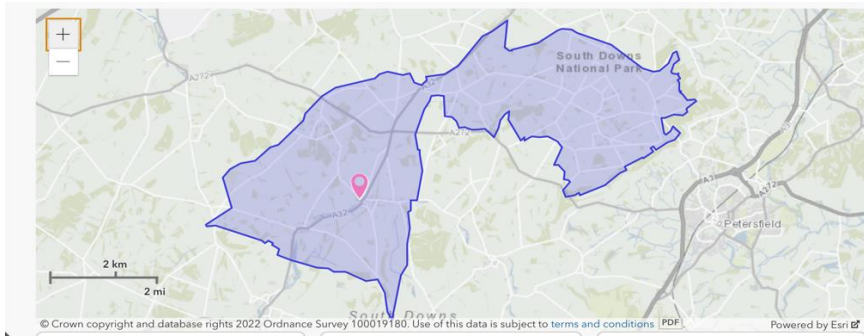
### Maps of relevant catchment areas etc.



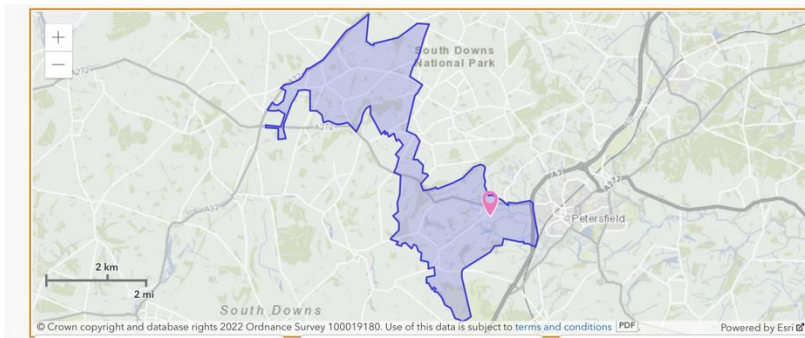
Froxfield School catchment area (includes Froxfield and excludes Privett)



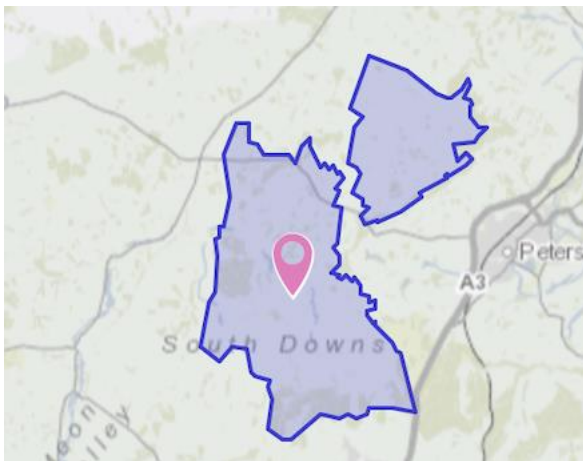
Map of Froxfield with Privett (Church parish and Parish Council)



West Meon School and its catchment area (which includes both Privett and Froxfield)



Langrish School and its catchment area (which includes Privett, but not Froxfield)



East Meon School and its catchment area (which includes Froxfield and part of Privett)