

QUARTERLY SCHOOL PLACES PLANNING UPDATE

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REASON FOR ITEM

To update the Committee about the demand for school places in Hillingdon.

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

1. To note the update about the demand for school places.
2. To question officers about the update and the future demand for school places.

INFORMATION

Introduction

This paper presents to the Children, Young People and Learning Policy Overview Committee an update on planning for primary and secondary school places in Hillingdon, including information on the annual update of the pupil forecast. For ease of reference, this update also re-states some background information previously presented to the Committee.

Background to School Places Forecasting

The forecast for future school places predicts that the demand for additional school places will be sustained. In Hillingdon, the demand for additional school places is driven by rising birth rates, new residential developments, and families moving into the Borough. Forecasts are updated annually. However, monitoring of demand for places and other analytical work is ongoing, and continues throughout the school year.

Future Demand for Primary School Places

Overall, the 2015 school places forecast has confirmed that the future need for primary school places over the next 5 years has largely been met through the delivery of the successful schools expansion programme. New provision has included three new primary schools (Lake Farm Park and John Locke Academy, which opened in September 2014 and St Martin's CE, which will open in September 2015). Hewens Primary (free school) has also contributed to the supply of new places in an area of high demand. As previously reported to the Committee, Nanaksar Primary (free school), will not have a Reception intake in 2015. Until the position is clarified by the Education Funding Agency (EFA), no further intakes have been factored into the pupil forecast.

This year, there appears to be a greater degree of mobility in some parts of the Borough, with parents expressing a preference for a school outside of their immediate area (e.g. 6 children living in West Drayton whose parents have chosen John Locke Academy).

Remaining place pressures are mainly in the north/north-east of the Borough. Harrow is currently implementing a programme of primary school expansions and there is a possibility that this may reduce demand from Harrow residents for places in Hillingdon schools. This will be monitored.

Further information on areas where additional places are forecast to be needed is set out below.

Primary Planning Area 2 – Northwood – the 2015 forecasts have confirmed a need for up to one additional form of entry in this area. A large contributory factor is children living in south Hertfordshire applying to attend a primary school in the very north of the Borough (Frithwood and Hillside schools in particular). The net gain of Reception children from Hertfordshire is expected to be 30 pupils in September 2015. This demand from families living just outside Hillingdon is expected to continue into future years.

Primary Planning Area 3 – North Ruislip – the 2015 forecasts have confirmed a need for an additional one form of entry in this area, which seems to be mainly driven by rising birth rates and families moving into this area. A bulge year group may be required in 2016.

Primary Planning Area 5 – Ruislip / South Ruislip - the 2015 forecasts are indicating a slightly higher level of additional place need - up to two forms of entry. Increased demand seems to be mainly driven by rising birth rates and also children from neighbouring Boroughs travelling to Hillingdon schools. On average, children from neighbouring boroughs have generated a 1.5 form of entry need.

Primary Planning Area 11 - Hayes Wood End Park - for 2015, it has been possible to manage the impact of the loss of the 120 Reception places at Nanaksar Primary by offering places at alternative schools. However, as demand for places in the Hayes area grows in future years, this will no longer be possible and therefore additional places (at least 3-4 forms of entry) may be needed if the situation at Nanaksar Primary School is not resolved.

Action Being Taken

Feasibility studies of three school sites to assess potential for expansion are now underway. Findings are expected to be available in September 2015 and will be reported back to members for consideration. A first phase of permanent expansion projects could be facilities for temporary expansion, whilst the building programme is underway. At this stage, planning permission has been obtained for modular classrooms at two schools. In relation to the uncertainties regarding future admissions to Nanaksar Primary, officers are monitoring demand for places and will continue follow-up with the Education Funding Agency. Officers are also reviewing the admissions criteria and the number of planning areas used for place planning purposes (currently 14) in order to assess whether changes would better meet local needs.

Future Demand for Secondary School Places

The updated forecast for secondary school places in Hillingdon shows that the profiled demand for additional school places from September 2016/17 onwards is high and will grow in future years. This position is similar across London, with 73,000 additional secondary school places forecast to be needed in the London area over the next five years.

The 2015 Hillingdon forecasts show a need for 24-25 additional forms of entry between 2016 and 2020. 5.5 additional forms of entry are already in the pipeline, giving a residual need for 19 forms of entry (14 in the north of the Borough and 5 in the south of the borough) over the period.

In the **north** of the Borough, a small residual excess demand for places is expected in 2016, following the expansion of Northwood. However, a new free school, Pinner High, is planned to open in Harrow in September 2016. This school will offer 180 Year 7 places and is situated very close to the boundary with Hillingdon. Therefore there is a strong likelihood that the school will assist in mitigating the residual place pressure in Hillingdon. Subject to parental preference, this means that demand in 2016 would be manageable. Alternatively, a bulge year group at a Hillingdon school may be needed.

In the **south** of the Borough, the proposed expansions of Abbotsfield and Swakeleys schools mean that additional places are not forecast to be needed until 2019.

Action Being Taken

As a general point, forecasting for school places beyond 5 years does carry a higher risk of volatility in trends and so for the purposes of secondary school places planning, proposals are being developed initially which focus on the need for school places in the period to the academic school year September 2020/21.

The project to rebuild and expand Northwood School by 1fe from 2016 is now on site. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) is managing projects for the rebuilding and expansion of Swakeleys and Abbotsfield schools. A planning application has been submitted and completion during 2017 is expected. These three projects will add a total of 5.5 forms of entry. Statutory proposals have been approved for Abbotsfield to become co-educational (beginning in Year 7) from September 2017.

Officers have been investigating a range of further options for the provision of additional places, including the possibility of expanding five further secondary schools in the Borough. Options have been prepared and are being considered by Members.

Starting Primary School/Starting Secondary School 2015 - Place Allocations Update for entry into Reception and Year 7

94% of Reception places have now been allocated. At 64% of primary and infant schools, all Reception places have been offered. 22% of schools have 5 or more Reception

vacancies. 92% of Year 7 places have been allocated for September 2015, with 6 schools (3 in the north and 3 in the south of the borough) having places available.

As expected, there are proportionately more Reception and Year 7 vacancies in the south of the borough. The above vacancy levels provide a margin to manage late applications and changes to school preferences (e.g. as a result of home moves). The above statistics are therefore a snapshot of the position and some movement is to be expected, especially early in the autumn term. Actual take-up of places will be confirmed through the October census.