

# QUARTERLY SCHOOL PLACES PLANNING UPDATE

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## REASON FOR ITEM

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

## SUGGESTED COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Notes the update about the demand for school places.
2. Questions officers about the update.

## 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. For ease of reference, this update also re-states some background information included in previous updates.

### Background to School Places Forecasting

Demand for school places has been 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 related analytical work is ongoing throughout the year.

Work on the next update of the pupil forecasts will commence in early May, with updated forecasts prepared by June/July 2016, as the required data (such as birth rates and projected population figures) become available.

### Future Demand for School Places

The 2015 forecast confirmed that the future need for places had largely been met through the large and successful primary school expansion programme and the provision of three new schools. The forecast showed some residual demand, mainly in the north of the Borough (Northwood and Ruislip areas), with a total of three to four additional forms of entry required. However, some additional demand is also forecast in the south of the Borough (Hayes area). As previously reported, the Reception intake to Nanaksar Primary School has been suspended by the school in the absence of sufficient classroom accommodation for Reception year groups. The loss of 120 places each year is inevitably increasing place pressures in the area.

## Allocation of Reception Places for 2016 Admission

The offer date for Reception places for 2016 entry is 18 April 2016. Work is underway to finalise offers and a verbal update on progress will be given at the meeting.

### Action Being Taken

Feasibility studies for the permanent expansion of three primary school sites in the north of the Borough are progressing in order to meet the forecast need for additional school places.

Since the previous update to the Committee, changes to admission criteria for community schools were approved by Cabinet in February 2017. These changes will come into effect for admissions from September 2017 and will enhance local residents' access to places at their local school.

## **Future Demand for Secondary School Places**

The larger primary pupil cohorts are now beginning to move into the secondary phase. As previously reported, over the next five years, 24.5 additional forms of entry in the secondary phase will be needed, mainly in the north of the Borough. This reflects the position across London. 5.5 additional forms of secondary school entry are in the pipeline, leaving 19 additional forms of entry to be provided (14 in the north of the Borough and 5 in the south of the Borough).

### Secondary Places Offers for 2016 Admissions

Offer day for admission to Year 7 in September 2016 was 1 March 2016, with the closing date for acceptance 15 March. All on-time applicants were offered a secondary school place, with 91 per cent of Hillingdon applicants receiving one of their top three schools. This is despite an eight percent rise in applications (compared with the London-wide increase of 3.3 per cent). A record high of 3,323 applications for secondary school places were received. Seventy-one per cent of children applying for school places in Hillingdon have been offered their first choice of school (higher than in Hounslow, Ealing and Harrow).

### Action Being Taken

The rebuild and expansion of Northwood School by one form of entry in 2016 is on track to open during the Autumn 2016. Two further projects, at Abbotsfield and Swakeleys schools, which are being delivered by the Education Funding Agency, are expected to be completed in 2017.

Officers are continuing to work with five further schools to explore options for expansions and a decision is expected shortly on these options. In addition, the Council has been informed by the Department for Education (DfE) of five expressions of interest submitted to them for new free schools in the Borough. These proposals are at a very early stage and are subject to formal evaluation by the DfE and identification of sites.