

QUARTERLY SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING UPDATE

Committee name	Residents, Education & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee
Officer reporting	Dan Kennedy, Residents Services
Papers with report	None
Ward	All

HEADLINES

The purpose of this report is to provide the Residents, Education & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee with an update on planning for primary and secondary school places in Hillingdon and an opportunity to question officers, following the annual refresh of the pupil number forecast.

The key points from the 2018 forecast are as follows:

- The future need for primary school places in most areas of the Borough has largely been met through the comprehensive and successful primary school expansion programme and the provision of three new primary schools in the Borough.
- In the primary phase, total pupil numbers (i.e. across all year groups) are forecast to remain fairly stable throughout the forecast period and this is also true of the forecast Reception intake. There are variations in forecast take-up of places between the 14 Place Planning Areas (PPAs) across the Borough. However, at this stage, it is expected that demand for places can be accommodated, which includes two areas which are indicating further growth in demand, largely attributed to further residential development.
- The 2018 forecast has confirmed the outcome of the previous year's forecast - that the need for additional secondary school places is building more slowly. However, based on current Published Admission Numbers (PAN), a significant need for additional places remains - a peak 'excess' demand of 7fe (forms of entry) in the north of the Borough and of 6fe in the south. Further, as the larger primary cohorts of earlier years progress through the secondary phase, the overall number pupils will continue to rise.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee:

- 1. Note the update.**
- 2. Question officers about the update.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Background

Demand for school places is affected by a number of factors, both local and national, such as birth rates, housing availability and development, parental preference and migration patterns. Pupil forecasts are updated annually, the 2018 update having been finalised in July. However, given that the demand is changeable, monitoring demand for places and related analytical work takes place throughout the year. Following completion of the pupil forecast, the potential implications of any changes from the previous forecast are assessed.

1.1 School Place Planning

The Pupil Forecast

The update of the forecast for school places takes place every year using the latest population projections for Hillingdon from the Greater London Authority (GLA), calibrated by the GLA using actual pupils on a school roll, movement of pupils in and out of Borough to other schools and the latest residential development data. In accordance with the DfE rubric, the pupil forecast can only include housing development within the scope of the Council's Five Year Supply of Deliverable Housing Sites document, or where it can be demonstrated with a strong degree of certainty that the development will go ahead within the timeframe of the forecasts. Developments that meet the DfE criteria for inclusion are factored into the pupil forecast.

The period covered by the forecast is up to the 2025/26 school year. The forecast is the expected position at the midpoint of the school year (i.e. January). As a general point, forecasting demand for school places beyond five years does carry a higher risk of volatility in trend analysis given the various factors at play, including parental preference and housing development.

Capacity Planning

The aim of school place planning is to have sufficient places, with no shortfall nor excessive unused capacity. Some margin of capacity needs to be maintained in order to manage year-to-year fluctuations and to facilitate a level of parental choice. The margin needed will depend upon local factors (such as how volatile demand is), with 5-10% generally being considered an appropriate margin.

Sufficient places also need to be available with a reasonable travelling distance/journey time of children's homes. It may be possible to manage a modest forecast shortfall in places in a particular PPA (Place Planning Area) if places are available in a neighbouring area. Account also needs to be taken of the impact of individual schools' admission criteria e.g. a popular faith school is more likely to admit children from a wider geographical area than popular schools of other types.

Individual Admission Authorities (e.g. voluntary aided schools and academies) are able to determine a change to their Published Admission Number (PAN), thereby adding or removing capacity. There are currently 4 schools that have determined a reduced PAN for 2019/20, subject to the final decision by the Schools Adjudicator.

In the primary phase, schools generally have admission numbers that are multiples of 30 and therefore changes to admission number will reflect this. Whilst a specific school may have unfilled capacity in excess of 30, removing places could leave local capacity below a workable margin.

Admission authorities can decide to admit above the Published Admission Number in a given year and/or can undertake the formal process set out in the School Admission Code to make a permanent change to the PAN. However, schools must be willing to admit up to PAN for the Admission Year (i.e. Reception & Year 7). The lead-in time to make a permanent change to a PAN is around 18 months. For example, for a change to a PAN to be made for 2020/21 school year, the first stage of the required statutory process would need to be completed by January 2019.

1.2 Management of Demand for September 2018 Admission

Factors Affecting Demand for Places

As previously reported, all applicants for Year 7 and Reception were offered places on offer day. Schools have been made aware that lower birth rates in 2014 could affect the number of children starting primary school in London this year. A range of other factors, including property prices in some areas and welfare reform changes, are possible contributory factors. Hillingdon experienced a 0.7% increase in Year 7 applications, reflecting a growing population and a higher demand for school places (a record high of 3,441 applications).

Some schools remain more popular than others with parents. This can be for a variety of reasons, including academic performance, religious ethos, proximity to the parents' home or work, whether the child already has siblings attending or because the school offers a specialism which would benefit the child.

At this early stage in the new school year, pupil numbers for the new intakes have not yet reached a steady state. During late September/early October, information on vacancy levels is requested from own admission authority schools in order to compile the Annual Sufficiency Survey which must be returned to the DfE by 12 October. This means that the position regarding Reception and Year 7 vacancies levels is subject to change. The data used in this report is the most complete data set available for Reception and Year 7 offers (August 2018). Subject to data from schools being available, an update on admissions will be provided at the committee meeting.

Reception (Primary Stage)

	Place Planning Area (PPA)	Remaining Places	Number of schools with more than 30 vacant places
1	Harefield	23	
2	Northwood	64	2
3	Coteford/Whiteheath	36	
4	Ickenham	1	
5	Ruislip	33	1
6	Uxbridge/Cowley	50	1

7	Hillingdon	82	2
8	Charville/North Hayes	27	
9	Belmore/Yeading	38	1
10	Colham Manor/Yiewsley	12	
11	Central Hayes	23	
12	Cranford/Pinkwell	78	1
13	Harmondsworth	7	
14	West Drayton	48	
		522 (11.5%)	8

Given that the above figures are prior to the start of term and the forecasts are for the midpoint of the school year, the final figure for overall Reception vacancies could be lower.

As can be seen, a significant issue is the distribution of the available capacity, which is concentrated in a limited number of schools. The majority of schools were full or close to full for Year 7 entry by August, with only 15 schools with more than 10 Reception vacancies.

Year 7 (Secondary Stage)

Place Planning Area (PPA)	Remaining Places	Number of schools with more than 30 vacant places
North of A40*	97	2
South of A40	142	2
	239 (6.5%)	4

* Note: Douay Martyrs has offered additional places

Total vacancies in August were well within a reasonable margin. As with the primary phase, the majority of the remaining capacity was in a small number of schools. 13 schools had no remaining vacancies (or less than 5 with a waiting list and therefore expected to be full). The effect of the uneven distribution of remaining capacity is there were no free places in some parts of the Borough.

1.3 Primary Places - Key Points from the Forecast

The following tables show changes in demand over the forecast period. The tables assume that the Schools Adjudicator will approve the 60 place PAN reduction at Pinkwell Primary and the 30 place PAN reduction at Bishop Winnington Ingram from 2019/20. This is the expected overall position. However, the position varies from PPA to PPA.

The total number of primary pupils is forecast to remain fairly stable up to 2021/22, then decline slightly (a reduction of 1.3% between 2019 and 2024). In 2017, pupil ‘exports’ to other boroughs was 4.1% (pupils who live in the Borough but attend a school in another Borough), with ‘imports’ at 7.5%.

North of A40 (PPAs 1-5) - Reception

School Year	2018/19	2022/23	2025/26
Forecast	1301	1200	1152
Forecast Vacancies (%)	11	16	19

South of A40 (PPAs 6-14) - Reception

School Year	2018/19	2022/23	2025/26
Forecast	2805	2815	2822
Reception Vacancies (%)	10	10	10

Forecast Deficits of Reception Places

There are only two areas in which more than a marginal deficit is forecast. These are PPA 6 (Uxbridge) and PPA 11 (Central Hayes).

Area 6 - Uxbridge

A small deficit of places is forecast from 2021/22, rising to one form of entry by 2024/25. However, capacity is forecast for PPA 7 that could meet demand in the Uxbridge area. In addition, the popularity of John Locke Primary and the slower than expected completion rate of new housing development in the area has meant that places at the new school have been taken up by children living further away. In time, it is expected that the school will admit more pupils from the local area. Therefore, at this stage it is expected that future demand can be managed, with the position being monitored closely.

Area 11 - Central Hayes

A small deficit of places is forecast from 2020/21, rising to 2 fe by 2025/26. However, there is forecast to be capacity in adjacent areas in the Borough (PPAs 8 & 9). In addition, should intakes to the Free School, Nanaksar Primary resume, this would add up to 120 admission places (4fe). Therefore, it is recommended that the position be closely monitored at this point.

Areas where higher levels of used Reception capacity are forecast

There are some areas in which the forecast take-up of Reception places is such that the level of unfilled capacity will rise and margins increase beyond generally accepted levels. Taking into account the planned PAN reductions at Pinkwell and Bishop Winnington Ingram, the following

PPAs are forecast to see reducing demand for places, such that unfilled Reception places will be above one form of entry by the end of the forecast period or sooner. These are Northwood, Coteford, Ruislip, Hillingdon, Charville/North Hayes, Brookside/Yeading and West Drayton.

A thorough analysis is underway to see how far these places will be needed to meet demand in adjacent areas, whilst still maintaining an appropriate place margin.

1.4 Secondary Places - Key Points from the Forecast

The overall number of pupils is rising as the larger primary cohorts progress through the secondary phase (a forecast increase of 26.3% on the 2017 roll). In 2017, pupil 'exports' to other boroughs was 15.8%, and 'imports' 18.4%, the largest net gains being from Ealing and Harrow. Many more pupils travel from the south to the north of the Borough for a school place. This largely reflects local factors (e.g. the geographical proximity of Vyners to North Hillingdon and the wider geographical intake of Douay Martyrs) and parental choice.

The earliest date for the planned new free school for the north of the Borough is now likely to be the 2022/23 school year. This means that temporary expansions may be needed in advance of this. Based on the forecast, some additional permanent forms of entry will also be needed in the south of the Borough.

Given that forecasts beyond a five year horizon are more likely to be subject to change, it is probably too early to judge whether the reduction in demand towards the end of the forecast period will occur. Therefore, it would be prudent for plans to be based on meeting peak demand, especially considering that a reasonable working margin of capacity also needs to be maintained. One of the factors that will need to be considered is the need to achieve a reasonable geographical distribution of capacity in order to place pupils within a reasonable distance of their homes and offer a degree of parental choice.

Haydon and Uxbridge High have determined reduced admission numbers from the start of the school year 2019/20, by 12 and 20 places respectively. If these reductions are approved by the Schools Adjudicator, the forecast number of forms of entry needed will increase slightly. The peak shortfall of admission places is for the 2022/3 school year in the north of the Borough and in 2023/24 in the south of the Borough. Bulge year groups are likely to be needed in advance of delivery of a free school in the north of the Borough.

1.5 Next Steps

Further analysis of the updated forecasts will be undertaken, together with analysis of take-up of places when information from the October School Census is available. Officers will progress options for meeting the future forecast need for school places and report these to Members in the first instance.

Implications on related Council policies

A role of the Policy Overview Committees is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet which is responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

The outcome of the pupil forecast is fed into updates of the Strategic Infrastructure Plan, which contains details of expected changes to pupil numbers, any consequential requirements for additional places, in which geographical areas these places and the delivery time scales required.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

The recommendation of this report ensures that there is effective scrutiny of the school place planning process, thereby contributing to ensuring that there are sufficient school places for Hillingdon residents.

Financial Implications

The possible implications for capital investment in schools arising from any changes in the pupil forecast are considered within the Council's Medium Term Financial Forecasting process. This ensures that sufficient capital resources are available.

Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report at this time. However, as indicated in the report, a statutory process would need to be followed by the Local Authority in relation to Admission Number changes at community schools. Own admission authorities, such as faith schools and academies, would be responsible for undertaking the required statutory process for changes to their admission arrangements

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.