

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS UPDATE

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

REASON FOR ITEM

To provide the Committee with an update on the allocation of primary and secondary school places offered in the Borough for September 2019 through the PAN-London joint admissions process. Every pupil received an offer on the primary and secondary offer days.

The overview for September 2019 continues the trend previously reported in February 2019: primary rolls have stopped rising but are still high and stable overall with vacancies pooled in a few schools particularly affected by volatility and in-year movement; and in secondary Year 7 intakes are rising sharply and all but one school will be absolutely full. There will be over 50,000 total pupils in primary and secondary schools, more than before, in better buildings than ever before, and with the majority graded good or outstanding by Ofsted.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee notes the information presented in the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Secondary School Places

PAN-London data on secondary school places offered was released on 1st March 2019. This provides information about the preferences of school places met across London.

- The following table summarises the offers made to secondary school places in Hillingdon for the last five admission years and also compares the preferences met across London in 2018.

	Preferences for a School Place – Met/Offered						Preference 1-6	Other Offer
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th		
2019 number of apps	2514	471	230	119	85	77	3496	207
2019 % of applications	67.89%	12.71%	6.21%	3.21%	2.29%	2.07	94.41	5.59

PAN London average 2019 %	65.89%	13.94%	6.52%	3.32%	1.72%	1.00%		
2018 number of apps	2329	472	227	126	71	48	3273	168
2018%	67.68%	13.72%	6.60%	3.66%	2.06%	1.39%	95.11%	4.89%
2017 number of apps	2305	497	235	116	54	36	3243	173
2017%	67.48%	14.55%	6.88%	3.40%	1.58%	1.05%	94.94%	5.06%
2016 number of apps	2359	477	179	100	65	31	3211	112
2016%	70.99%	14.35%	5.36%	3.00%	1.95%	0.93%	96.58%	3.37%
2015 number of apps	2267	400	177	55	42	16	2957	87
2015%	74.47%	13.14%	5.81%	1.81%	1.38%	0.53%	97.14%	2.86%

Notes: percentages may not sum to 100% as applications which are then withdrawn by parents/guardians are not shown in the table.

- There has been an increase in applications across London. Hillingdon had a new record high of 3,703 applications in total for secondary school places, 262 more than last year's previous record. Despite the increase, Hillingdon remains as the top borough in west London for families receiving an offer at one of their preferred secondary schools.
- Every pupil applying received an offer on National Offer Day, due to the significant investment and expansion in secondary schools by the Borough in the past few years. Also, one school made offers exceeding its Planned Admissions Number (PAN).
- 94.3 per cent of Hillingdon residents received one of their preferred schools, above the London Average of 92.39%, and 67.8% of Hillingdon residents received their first preference school above the London average of 65.89%.
- There are greater complexities given that Hillingdon borders three London boroughs, three counties and one unitary; and some parents do mix preferences across borders and include selective and denominational schools with very specific criteria.
- Every school, except two, were full on national offer day, reflecting the increase in secondary demand. There was a rise to 207 in pupils receiving an offer which was not one of their preferences. Some parents declined offers, taking up offers out of the Borough or London. There were disproportionately high numbers of declines of offers to two schools. All parents who declined offers had been advised to keep them whilst considering alternatives and they will be contacted by the participation team to track what education provision they have secured for their child in September.
- Meanwhile, applications received late, after the October deadline for Pan-London have now been processed and offers made, and now all but one school

is absolutely full. At this stage, another school made an extra thirty places available above their PAN, which went to their waiting list but freed up spaces.

8. Clearly, the projected secondary bulge has now arrived. Discussions will continue with schools to consider how best to plan for September 2020 admissions, as the numbers leaving primary school are again larger than before. Options and proposals will be reported to Committee.

Primary School Places

9. This report was prepared before the PAN-London data on primary school places offered was released on 16 April 2019. Therefore, the report provides summary information prepared before the final date. The details of preferences of school places met, and the London comparison will be available on the day of the committee and will be provided to the meeting.
10. Every applicant received the offer of a place, mainly meeting preferences.
11. It is expected that 3,867 offers of reception places will be offered. This is only 42 pupils, 1%, fewer than the 3,909 offers made in 2018 and 3921 in 2017. Therefore overall Reception rolls have been relatively stable for the past few years across the 70 schools. But again there are big differences between schools, 55% are effectively full and vacant places have risen to 11% overall but are pooled in a small number of schools.
12. This decline in demand for primary places, and variation in parental preferences between schools creating some pockets of surplus places, is a London-wide change over the past few years. There are a range of reasons, as reported to Committee in February; lower birth rate, lower migration in and increasing migration out due to high housing costs, welfare reform changes, uncertainties linked to Brexit and Heathrow proposals. Most of the schools with spaces are graded good or outstanding by Ofsted. No school with a lower roll has only a single explanation.
13. Discussions are underway with schools and proposals will be brought back to committee following discussions with the Cabinet Member.

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.

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

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report at this time.

Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report at this time.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.