

SCHOOL CAPITAL PROGRAMME - UPDATE

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Susan O'Brien Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Children, Families & Education Property, Highways & Transport
Officer Contact(s)	Bobby Finch, Place Directorate
Papers with report	None

HEADLINES

Summary	This bi-annual report provides Cabinet and the public with an update on the primary, secondary and special school expansions, the school condition works programme and other school capital works.
Putting our Residents First	Putting our Residents First, Our Built Environment; Our People; Financial Management Investment in schools to adequately address the impact of the population increase within the London Borough of Hillingdon on existing school places. This project also forms part of the Hillingdon Improvement Programme.
Financial Cost	Continuing investment in mainstream school places provision from 2022-27 amounts to £2,893k. The future SEND programme is estimated to cost £22,199k and will deliver 416 additional places, reducing the DSG deficit.
Relevant Select Committee	Children, Families & Education
Relevant Ward(s)	All Wards

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet note the progress made with primary and secondary school expansions, the school condition programme and other school capital projects.

Reasons for recommendation

The proposed works outlined in this report will meet the changing need for school places in the Borough, particularly the increasing demand for special needs places which has led to the

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit. These places are crucial to delivering the Council's (DSG) deficit recovery safety valve agreement with Department for Education (DfE).

Progressing the School Condition Programme will allow the necessary remedial or replacement works to be undertaken in the schools to avoid the potential impact on their daily operations due to parts of the building fabric being beyond repair, or equipment which is at the end of its life. Ensuring these works are undertaken will minimise the risk of health and safety related issues or the possibility of a school closure occurring.

Select Committee Comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. PRIMARY SCHOOLS

School places forecast

The demand for primary places in Hillingdon rose continuously for over ten years up to 2018, stabilised and has declined since 2020 due to a lower birth rate affecting primary intakes and in addition to the effects of the pandemic leading to movement across the borough and out of the borough which is affecting most schools. In addition, some parents are choosing to change schools when places arise in another school they prefer. This volatility continues across London with increased movement throughout the academic year. Ideally there would be a few places in each school to enable parental choice and cope with new families moving in.

Officers are working closely with schools to meet residents' demands and present options to reduce operational capacity in some instances to respond to changing demand from residents, whilst continuing to monitor the changing demand including movements across the Borough boundary.

2. SECONDARY SCHOOLS

School places forecast

The secondary phase is under pressure from continuing increased demand in Year 7 for the next six years at least. For the 4th year, all but four schools offered 100% of their places for September 2022, and extra temporary places were required to make offers to all parents across the Borough.

The current cohorts in primary are larger than the 2021 intake with higher numbers in primary cohorts than the current total Year 7 PAN of 3,707. One planned secondary expansion (Harlington) is scheduled to be completed for September 2023. The DfE has put the proposed new free secondary school, Bishop Arden, under review. Officers are involved in ongoing discussion about this free school with the DfE.

Secondary rolls are far less linked to locality than primary, and more to parental preferences and perception of the education experience, high standards, faith and their willingness to travel to a school of choice (and away from a nearer school that does not meet these criteria). The popularity of schools is always relative to each other (or to further away choices) and changes each year.

The Council are reviewing cross-borough flows with the 7 neighbouring LAs. Until 2018 these were equal overall or a slight net 'importer' at year 7 intake. Since then, 'imports' have decreased to 10.6% as most schools in the Borough have been popular and recruit from smaller distances, and 'exports' of resident pupils to schools in other LAs have increased to 14.2% of residents, so the LA is a net exporter. In recent years neighbouring LAs have warned they too have rising numbers and their schools are under increasing pressures so distance criteria will mean fewer Hillingdon Pupils will secure places in 2022 onwards. Parental preferences are still low for a few schools, adding pressure on parent choice in some areas of the Borough. As parents cannot be forced to accept a place it means a shortage of actual places residents will take up.

Currently there are two projects to add permanent secondary places to meet demand being progressed that were bids in 2015-16 and are funded and managed by DfE:

- Expanding Harlington School by 1.5 forms of entry – 45 places each year from 2023. This is part of the complete rebuilding of the school and library.
- Reviewing the need for the new Bishop Arden Free school +6FE – 180 places each year with the DfE. It will have no faith admissions criteria, distance will be the main criteria, though it is to be part of a Church of England Trust – their aim is to 'bring together pupils of all faiths and of none'.

Both schools will also have new units for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) who will have some integration into mainstream part of the school with specialist teaching and support.

3. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

Special schools are under pressure from rising demand from pupils with Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) who require a special place. This reflects national policy and is creating huge planning and financial pressures in every LA. Currently all seven special schools in the LA are full as demand and new entrants has been continuous throughout the year, not just at the normal ages of transfer. The largest growth is in pupils with autism conditions, many with other complex needs. Temporary extra places have been added to meet demand in most schools.

Additional places have been added each year, where possible and significant growth was agreed in 2016 with the approval of three new free special schools and Special Resource Provision units for pupils with ASD at the proposed new secondary free school and Harlington School. All these projects are funded and delivered by DfE.

These extra 241 places (see table 1) were previously considered sufficient to meet demand, however demand has risen faster than expected in recent years and due to a combination of

factors from Brexit to Covid, the DfE are experiencing delays with two projects (both within the Eden Academy Trust) that are funded directly by them and linked to the deficit recovery plan.

Table 1: DfE agreed projects that include additional SEN provision

Provider	Project	Additional places	Total final places
Orchard Hill Academy Trust	New Free school to replace the Young Peoples Academy	45	110
Eden Academy Trust	New Free school: Grand Union Village	80	80
Eden Academy Trust	New Free school to replace Grangewood: Pinn River	90	180
Harlington School	Designated Unit for pupils with ASD	15	15
Bishop Arden Free school (Veritas Trust)	Designated Unit for pupils with ASD	21	21
Total		241	406

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit recovery safety valve agreement

Rising demand and costs have put pressure on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and the LA has developed a DSG Deficit Recovery Programme with a 'safety valve' agreement with the DfE linked to bids for revenue and capital funding. This is a key strategic priority for the Council, underpinned by sufficient resource and capability to ensure timely and successful delivery.

The purpose recovery plan is to:

- Put mainstream inclusion and high-quality SEND services at the heart of education in Hillingdon.
 - Reduce total costs of special placements
 - Add more specialist places in the Borough
 - Embed financial sustainability
 - Reduce the in-year deficit in 2021/22 as far as possible
 - Eliminate the in-year deficit completely by 2024/25, and no later than 2025/26
- All this reflects the aims and direction set out by the DfE in the March 2022 publications of the White Paper for schools and the Green Paper for SEN.

Extra specialist places are needed in Hillingdon in the next few years to meet the rising demand and gaps in need and to minimise use of independent provision and long travel for residents. The aim is to maximise the use of local education spaces and promote integration of pupils into mainstream where possible. Following discussions, new projects were selected that can be delivered in partnership with schools and academies that have surplus physical capacity and have commitment to inclusion and expertise in managing change. Plans are underway to adapt the largest groups of surplus physical capacity in four primary and one secondary school, to create new extra places for pupils with special needs.

Capital Bid linked to Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit recovery safety valve agreement

A bid for additional capital grant was made in March 2022 to deliver the projects in the DSG Deficit Recovery Programme which, with exception of the new SEN Free School proposal, have been approved by the DfE.

The proposed new SEN Free School is subject to a separate application process and deadline for submission is 21 October 2022. If the application is approved the project will be delivered directly by the DfE. The table below provides a summary of the proposed projects.

Table 2: DfE funded DSG SEN Projects

Location	Description	Type	Phase of Education	Number of additional places to be created	Project due to open
Meadow High School	Create a satellite unit at the Harefield Academy site and the replacement of the modular units at Meadow. Both open Sept 2024	Community Special	Secondary	98	Sept 2024
Eden Trust: Grangewood Primary & Moorcroft Secondary	The Eden Trust to open a temporary MLD Unit at Pinkwell Primary School for extra Grangewood and Moorcroft pupils from Sep 2022	Academy Special	Grangewood Primary	16	Completed in Sept 2022
			Moorcroft Secondary	24	
Wood End Park Primary Academy	New ASD Unit to open Sept 2023	Academy Primary	Primary	24	Sept 2023
Ruislip Gardens Primary School	Specialist Early Years Assessment Base. Adaptions to remodel primary school from 3FE to 2FE and create the space for the unit. Open Sept 2023	Community Primary School	Primary	16	Sept 2023
Ruislip Gardens Primary School	New ASD SRP integrated into school, working alongside the Early Years Assessment Base. Open Sept 2023.	Community Primary School	Primary	12	Sept 2023
Charville Primary Academy	New ASD SRP. Remodel primary school from 3FE to 2FE to create space for SRP. Open Sept 2023	Academy Primary	Primary	16	Sept 2023
Orchard Hill Special Further Education College - Independent post-19 (Brookfield Adult Education Centre)	Lease of Brookfield Adult Education Centre site to Orchard Hill Special for use as a Further Education College. Open Sept 2022.	Independent Special College multi-site	Post 16	30	Completed in Sept 2022
Pinkwell Primary School	Agree permanent status beyond 2024 of the temporary unit used by Eden Trust 2022-24. Adaption to create unit linked to on-site primary school	Academy	Primary	TBC	Sept 2024
New Special Free School Bid	Proposed new SEN Free School. Application to be submitted to DfE in Oct 2022.	Site to be confirmed	Primary	180	Sept 2025 or later
Total				416	

MLD: Moderate Learning Difficulties

ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorders

SRP: Specialist Resource Provision

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit recovery safety valve – Council managed projects

Meadow High School expansion

In summary the proposed school expansion works consist of the following:

- Relocating some pupils from Meadow High School to the unused Harefield Academy boarding block (which is separate and apart from the main Academy building) which will be adapted and extended to become a new satellite unit that is directly managed and run by Meadow High School; and
- Providing a new classroom block at Meadow High School to replace the existing temporary modular classrooms which are currently in poor condition and no longer suitable for use.

A works contractor has been appointed and has commenced enabling works on the Harefield site. The overall completion date across both sites is September 2024.

Charville and Ruislip Gardens adaptation works

To help address the need for additional SEND places the following projects have been proposed:

- Ruislip Gardens Primary School: The school has reduced its intake from 3 forms of entry to 2 forms of entry and it is proposed the unused spaces within the schools is adapted to form a nursery age pupil Assessment Base (AB) and a separate Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Specialist Resource Provision (SRP). The AB will have 16 places and the SRP will have 12 places
- Charville Academy: The school has reduced its intake from 3 forms of entry to 2 forms of entry and it is proposed the unused spaces within the school is adapted to form ASD SRP. The SRP will have 16 places.

Both projects are at the design development stages and are scheduled to be completed for the start of the school year in September 2023.

4. SCHOOLS CONDITION PROGRAMME

The status of agreed projects in the School Condition Programme can be found in the table 3 below.

Table 3: School Condition Works Programme

School	Works	Status
Hillside Infant	Asbestos panel replacement	Onsite
Coteford Infant	Roof replacement works	Onsite
Grange Park Infants	Basement water ingress works	Onsite
Grange Park Junior	Toilet refurbishment & external lighting	Onsite
Frithwood Primary	Roof replacement works	Onsite
Whiteheath Junior	Roof replacement works (section 2)	Pre-construction stage
Yeading Infant/Junior	Canteen building works	Pre-construction stage
Lady Bankes Primary	Refurbishment of modular units	Pre-construction stage
Breakspear	Refurbishment of modular units & upgrade of fire alarms and emergency lighting	Pre-construction stage
Oak Farm	Refurbishment of modular units	Pre-construction stage
Colham Manor	Roof replacement works and asbestos works	Pre-construction stage

Future works

Officers have assessed further requests received from schools for assistance with condition works required on their premises. Proposals will be presented to Members for consideration on potential projects that could be taken forward which will form future phases of the School Condition Programme.

5. OTHER SCHOOL PROJECTS

The DfE is directly managing and funding 5 projects under Priority School Building Programme Phase 2 (PSBP2) and a further 6 projects under the Free Schools Programme. These projects total a significant DfE investment and help ensure the Council as an education authority meets its statutory duty to provide sufficient places, and to promote high standards of education and fair access to education.

Table 4: DfE Free School and PSBP2 Projects

School	Phase	Governance	DfE Fund Route	Planned additional places	Estimated year of completion	Current Status
New school on site of Young People's Academy (YPA) - The Pride	Special Secondary	Orchard Hill College Academy Trust	Free School	Up to 45	2022	Completed
Nanaksar Primary	Primary	Guru Nanak Sikh Academy Trust	Free School	840	2022	Completed
Queensmead	Secondary	QED Trust	PSBP2	0	2022	Completed
Meadow High	Special Secondary	Community	PSBP2	0	2022	Completed
The Skills Hub	Alternative Provision Secondary	Orchard Hill College Academy Trust	Free School (next to YPA)	Up to 4	2022	On site
Harlington rebuild and expand to 8FE and Special ASD Unit	Secondary	Foundation	PSBP2	225 (SEN 15)	2023	On Site
Douay Martyrs	Secondary	London RC Diocesan MAT	PSBP2	0	2023	On site
Minet Infant and Junior	Primary	Community	PSBP2	0	2024	On site
Primary Grand Union Village Special Primary	Special Primary	Eden Academy Trust	Free School	80	2023	Pre-construction
Pinn River Special (on site of current Grangewood School)	Special Primary ages 4-19	Eden Academy Trust	Free School	Up to 80	Jan 2025	Pre-construction
New Secondary Free School north of A40 - Bishop Arden	Secondary	Multi Academy Trust	Free School	1260 (SEN 21)	TBC	Pre-construction

School Rebuilding Programme

In 2020 the Government announced their intention to rebuild 500 schools in the worst condition over a 10 year period, and this programme is called School Rebuilding Programme. The first 100 schools including in the programme were announced in 2021 based on the information held by the Department for Education (DfE) Condition Data Collection surveys carried out in 2017. Rosedale College was approved in 2021 list and officers have joined early discussions with the School and DfE. Feasibility study for the project is due for submission in October 2022 and the estimated completion date for works is December 2026

In February 2022 the DfE opened nominations for the next phase of schools. The criteria for determining which school buildings could be included were “(a) *Structural or safety issues that mean a block is not fit for use or is likely to become unfit for use imminently because it poses a risk to users, (b) severe deterioration in the main building fabric (external walls, roofs, windows or doors). This means that the most efficient way of returning a block to good condition is to rebuild it or carry out a significant refurbishment. (c) Mechanical and electrical*

systems that are close to failure and could cause a school block to close in the near future, but only if there is another need in the building fabric that makes a refurbishment or rebuild most efficient overall.”

A bid has been submitted to DfE to include Hedgewood School in this next phase School Rebuilding Programme. As part of the DfE’s decision making process, a DfE surveyor visited the school in August 2022 to gather more information about the condition of the school. The DfE has not confirmed their decision on this application.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2022-27 Schools Expansions capital programme revised budget includes £2,893k for continuing investment in mainstream school places provision. Future delivery of increased secondary schools’ places is largely being managed externally by the Department for Education, including the 1.5FE expansion of Harlington School, towards which the Council contributed £6,034k in 2021/22, and a potential 6FE free school in the north of the borough pending confirmation of school places demand. The capital programme budget includes £2,800k for additional temporary classrooms to manage shorter term demand, financed by Council resources.

The Schools SEND/SRP capital programme amounts to £25,331k funding from 2018/19 to 2026/27, financed by confirmed Special Provision Capital Fund and High Needs Provision Capital grants, of which £3,132k has been spent on various projects in prior years. Total funding is inclusive of recent confirmation from the Department for Education (DfE) that the Council’s bid was successful for £6,962k additional High Needs capital funding linked to the DSG deficit recovery safety valve agreement.

Table 2 outlines the various projects the SEND/SRP programme will deliver, creating 416 additional SEND places which will reduce future out-of-borough special placements and transport costs, supporting reduction of the DSG deficit.

The 2022/23-2026/27 revised budget for the Schools Condition Building Programme is £19,229k funded from a combination of Schools Conditions grant and schools’ contributions. The funding is being utilised to deliver various schemes with some works completed and other projects continuing into next financial year.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

Completion of the school expansion projects will result in the provision of additional school places needed for local children, which the Council has a statutory duty to provide. In addition, the completion of the other school capital projects will result in the provision of quality, fit for purpose school facilities.

Progressing the School Condition Programme allows the necessary repair or replacement works to be progressed in the school’s, avoiding the potential impact on their daily operations due to parts of the building fabric being beyond economic repair, or equipment which is at the end of its

life. Ensuring these works are undertaken will minimise the risk of health and safety related issues or the possibility of a school closure occurring.

Consultation carried out or required

A statutory process is required for expansion of local authority maintained school premises if this will increase the capacity of the school by more than 30 pupils and by 25% or 200, whichever is the lesser. The statutory process includes publication of proposals and a statutory consultation period.

Under the School Admissions Code, the local authority as admissions authority for community schools must consult at least the school governing body on the admission number. Foundation schools and academies are their own admissions authority and set their own admission number, subject to them carrying out their own consultation.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and associated financial implications, noting that budgeted investment in this programme is to be financed through a combination of Department for Education Grant and local resources, for primary and secondary places.

Specific investment in additional SEND capacity through expanding the borough's SRP capacity will contribute towards the Council's broader efforts to manage the significant pressure in High Needs expenditure within the Dedicated Schools Grant arising from the introduction of the 2014 Children's and Families Act. This forms part of the Deficit Recovery Plan jointly agreed by the Council and Schools Forum. The Council has secured a Safety Valve agreement with the DfE which secures Government support for the delivery of the Council's DSG Recovery Programme and financial support towards the elimination of the cumulative deficit. On Thursday 24 March the council's Cabinet ratified the safety valve agreement, following discussions with DfE, which will clear the cumulative deficit by 2025/26.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Legal advice is provided whenever necessary, in particular cases, to ensure that the Council's Interests are protected.

Infrastructure / Asset Management

Asset Management authored this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Previous updates to Cabinet](#)