

## SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING - UPDATE - March 2025

<b>Committee name</b>	Children, Families & Education Select Committee
<b>Officer reporting</b>	Abi Preston – Director of Education & SEND Gary Binstead – Head of Education & SEND Commissioning
<b>Papers with report</b>	School Organisation Plan
<b>Ward</b>	All

### HEADLINES

School place planning is a statutory function of the Council as a local authority (LA) and involves liaison with all schools and Trusts in the borough, and with neighbouring LAs. The duty is to have a sufficiency of school places to meet parent demand across the borough. School place planning sets a strategic framework in which the LA and every school can operate, requiring an annual review and decisions to be agreed with individual schools and Trusts to adjust supply, and to inform timely capital investment and building decisions and negotiations with the DfE.

The School Organisation Plan was approved for publication by Cabinet, 18th April 2024 and it was agreed that it would be updated and presented to the Cabinet Portfolio Member, relevant Select Committee and schools annually with the latest data and forecasts.

This report presents to Committee the updated School Organisation Plan for Hillingdon which will provide the following:

- An overview of the education landscape in Hillingdon
- A summary of current pupil numbers and projected demand in primary and secondary phases, including specialist provision
- Options for the Local Authority (LA) to consider when determining the need to increase or reduce school places.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**That the Children, Families & Education Select Committee:**

- 1. Consider the updated School Organisation Plan with the latest data and forecasts; and**
- 2. Provide comments to the Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education for consideration**

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Council is responsible for planning, organising, and commissioning places for all state-funded schools in Hillingdon. This ensures that high standards are maintained and that fluctuating pupil numbers are managed efficiently, leading to the best outcomes for our children and young people, as well as the sustainability of schools.

Local Authorities were previously required to publish a plan setting out how they would provide sufficient school places for the children within their borough which was a requirement of the School Standards and Frameworks Act 1998 but has since been repealed by the Children and Families Act 2004. The Education Act 1996, Education and Inspections Act 2006 and School Standards and Framework Act 1998 no longer require local authorities to provide this. However, strategic planning remains an invaluable tool. It assists Local Authorities in fulfilling their statutory obligations and ensures that schools are kept informed of data projections, facilitating effective long-term planning.

The Plan is presented in 3 Sections; **Introduction, Context and Strategy** with the following 13 sub sections. The data provided in these sections will be updated annually, with changes highlighted in this report:

- **Purpose and scope**

- **Government Regulations, Guidance and Policies**

Highlights the statutory duty of the council to provide sufficient school places for its residents.

Until 2018, the number of children admitted into Hillingdon schools from other Councils ('imports') was equal to the number of Hillingdon children attending schools outside of the Borough ('exports'). Since then, 'imports' have decreased to 10.5% on National Offer Day 2024 and 'exports' of resident pupils to schools in other LAs have increased to 15.0% of residents. Therefore, Hillingdon is currently a net exporter. There has been a 0.5% reduction of imports since National Offer Day 2023\_(from 11%) and further 0.2% reduction (from 14.8%) of exports.

- **Funding and Delivery**

Acknowledges the funding sources available to support additional school places and introduces the role of the Schools Forum.

- **Hillingdon Demographics**

Provides an understanding of the resident population of Hillingdon and housing development which must be taken into consideration and incorporated into school place planning projections.

- **Hillingdon Schools**

Provides a review of the types of schools within Hillingdon, an inspection summary and a breakdown of pupils on roll since 2014/2015 in Nursery, Primary, Secondary, Sixth Form and Special Schools

There has been a gradual increase in pupil numbers between 2014/15 and 2024/25, rising from 49,384 to 52,574, an increase of 6.5%. A reduction of 0.5% from presented in the School Organisation Plan 2024 (which was 7%).

However, the increase has not been across all ages, and there has been 23.8% reduction in Nursery aged children (25% last year)

Significant growth in pupils attending a special school, where we have seen growth of 110% since 2014. This is an increase of 14.3% from the School Organisation Plan 2024.

Oct 2014 = 569

Oct 2023 = 1045 (+476 or +84% since 2014)

Oct 2024 = 1194 (+625 or +110% since 2014 // +149 or +14% since 2023)

- **Pupil Forecasting**

Shares factors taken into consideration when creating projections, such as development, birth rates and migration.

Since September 2021, we have had 959 applications from asylum-seeking families residing in temporary Home Office accommodation – a further 179 applications since the 780 that was presented in the School Organisation Plan 2024

- **Place Planning**

Outlines options available to the Local Authority to ensure the sufficiency of high quality school places at the right time to meet future need.

The forecasts used in this Plan suggest that the total number of:

- Primary school pupils (R-Y6) on roll by 2030 / 31 will be 24,905, down 5.8% from October 24 Census. (A reduction of 11.4% was presented in the School Organisation Plan 2024).
- Secondary school pupils (Y7-Y11), on roll by 2030 / 31 will be 17,675, down 2.5% from October 24 Census. (A reduction of 4.9% was presented in the School Organisation Plan 2024).
- Sixth form pupils (Y12-Y13) on roll by 2030 / 31 will be 4,286, down 0.9% from October 24 Census, (A reduction of 1.9% was presented in the School Organisation Plan 2024)

For the academic year 2026/27, The admissions authority for 1 non community school has formally agreed on a PAN reduction. This will reduce the PAN by 30 places for the school – a total of 30 places.

A proposal to amalgamate an additional infant and Junior School is being presented to Cabinet in April 2025, and other Infant and Junior schools will be recommended for amalgamation in line with the Council Amalgamation policy.

- **Childcare and Early Education**

The current provision of early learning and childcare places in Hillingdon and the planned growth, taking into consideration the change in parents' entitlement to funded childcare that took effect from April 2024 and was rolled out further in September 2024. This entitlement will broaden further in September 2025, with eligible parents being able to receive up to 30 hours of funded childcare, from the term after their child is nine months old.

There are currently:

- 181 registered childminders – 5 less than presented in the School Organisation Plan 2024-(186)
- 57 school-based nurseries – no change
- 144 Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings 2 less than presented in the School Organisation Plan 2024 (146)
- 1 Council-maintained nursery school - no change

Since September 2024, five schools have changed their age range to be able to offer funded places to eligible children from the term after their second birthday. A further primary school has completed a consultation recently to lower their age range and another school is also considering making this change.

The priority for place planning is ensuring that there are sufficient places for children aged under two who will be eligible for up to 30 hours of funded childcare.

- **Primary Place Planning**

A breakdown of all settings in the 14 primary Pupil Planning Areas (PPAs) of Hillingdon as well as the school place forecasts by planning area from the School Capacity Survey (SCAP) submission 2023.

PPA Headlines

PPA 1 and 12 in the next 7 years are projected to show the most growth, both at 16.67% of their current Reception PAN (10 and 50 places respectively)

PPA 1 - This area is predominantly rural and very isolated from the rest of the borough, it is surrounded by Hertfordshire with one lone village served by an infant and junior school which must have sufficient capacity to meet local demand. The year groups fluctuate, and this has caused challenges for both schools in relation to budget and class management.

PPA 12 - This area has experienced volatility in rolls due to changes of housing tenure linked to Covid and Heathrow uncertainty, leading to housing previously leased by the airport being used by families and increasingly by government agencies for temporary rehousing of vulnerable families. This PPA borders with PPAs 11, 13 and 14 as well as Hounslow.

PPA 9 and 13 show a projected decrease in pupil numbers of 11.85% and 11.11% of their current Reception PAN (-32 and -10 places respectively).

PPA 9 - This area is adjacent to PPA 11 and to the borough of Ealing and therefore can be affected by demand for places from outside the PPA/Borough.

PPA 13 - The two schools in this PPA serve distinct villages and communities, though there has been a change in the pupil population as more housing has been vacated and taken over by agencies for temporary housing. The Heathrow Airport Expansion plan could affect the area in the long term if the project proceeds.

- **Secondary Place Planning**

A breakdown of all settings in the 2 secondary Pupil Planning Areas (PPAs) of Hillingdon as well as the school place forecasts by planning area from the School Capacity Survey (SCAP) submission 2024.

The October 2024 census shows a year-on-year fall in secondary numbers (not including 6th form) for the first time since 2014 (225 less than October 2023).

PPA Headlines

The North of the borough in the next 7 years is projected to show a decrease of 5.63% compared to the current total Year 7 PAN (-95 places)

The South of the borough in the next 7 years is projected to show a decrease of 13.7% compared to the current total Year 7 PAN (-279 places).

Rolls have stabilised at a high level, and revised projections show Year 7 intake have passed their peak, while the total secondary roll is expected to peak in Sept 2026.

There is significant movement of pupils living to the south of the A40 travelling to schools north of the A40. 28% of pupils offered a place in a school in the north are resident in the south of the borough, compared to only 2% in the opposite direction. The operation of the different admission criteria and parental preferences creates unpredictable outcomes and changing sibling links sometimes. This fluctuates and requires a margin of spaces both north and south of the Borough to absorb any movement.

- **Post 16 Planning**

The number of young people accessing post 16 provision in Hillingdon and the partnerships in place.

- **Special Education Needs (SEN) - Special Schools & Alternative Provision (AP)**

A breakdown of the specialist provision in the borough as well as the projected demand for additional places and the current projects in place to meet demand.

Within mainstream schools - In Autumn 2023, SEND Support was 11.8% and 2.5% EHCPs. In Autumn 2024, 12.2% of children are on SEND Support and 2.8% with EHCPs showing additional growth.

There is also a change from last year's projections, for residents with EHCPs now expected to be 4055 in 2029 / 30 compared to 4493 presented in the School Organisation Plan 2024 (a drop of 438)

There are currently 27 AP providers signed up to the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), providing officers with a broad range of provisions to consider when seeking alternative provision for a Hillingdon child.

- **Next Steps**

Acknowledges that we must continue to monitor the data and update the relevant committee as well as stakeholders via strategic groups such as Schools Strategic Partnership Board (SSPB) and Head Teachers Termly to help manage demand.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications to the general fund of the LA from this policy.

Decisions on expansions are carefully considered, and funding for additional provision is sourced from DfE/ ESFA grants and/ or other capital funding sources such as CIL funding.

Expansion for school PAN is funded from the growth fund as directed by the schools' block distribution via the schools forum.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL.

## **APPENDICES**

School Organisation Plan