

SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING: SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN - UPDATE - MARCH 2026

Committee name	Children, Families & Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Abi Preston – Director of Education & SEND Gary Binstead – Head of Education & SEND Commissioning
Papers with report	School Organisation Plan 2025/26
Ward	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 be included in the Cabinet Member report**

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within their borough which was a requirement of the School Standards and Frameworks Act 1998 but has since been repealed by the Children and Families Act 2004.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 9.2% on National Offer Day 2025 and 'exports' of resident pupils to schools in other LAs have increased to 12.2% of residents. Therefore, Hillingdon is currently a net exporter. There has been a 0.3% reduction of imports since National Offer Day 2024 (from 9.5%) and further 2.8% reduction (from 15.0%) of exports.

- **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. According to the Office of National Statistics Mid-Year Population Estimates June 2024, the current population of Hillingdon is 329,185 of which 21,132 (6.4%) are aged 0-4 years, 21,244 (6.5%) are aged 5-9 years, 24,764 (7.5) are aged 10-15 years and 16,279 (4.9%) are aged 16-19 years; in total 25.3% of the Borough population is aged 0-19.

- **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 2025/26, rising from 49,384 to 51,364, an increase of 4%. A reduction of 2.3% from presented in the School Organisation Plan 2025 (which was 6.5%).

However, the increase has not been across all ages, and there has been 28.7% reduction in Nursery aged children (23.8% last year)

Significant growth in pupils attending a special school, where we have seen growth of 119% since 2014. This is an increase of 9.0% from the School Organisation Plan 2025.

Oct 2014 = 569

Oct 2024 = 1194 (+625 or +110% since 2014)

Oct 2025 = 1246 (+677 or +119% since 2014 // +52 or +9% since 2024)

- **Pupil Forecasting**

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

Since September 2021, we have had 1081 applications from asylum-seeking families residing in temporary Home Office accommodation – a further 122 applications since the 959 that was presented in the School Organisation Plan 2025.

- **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 the following:

- By the 2031/32 academic year, the number of primary pupils (Reception to Year 6) is projected to be 24,838, a 2.7% decrease compared with the October 2025 census. (For comparison, the 2025 School Organisation Plan reported a larger projected reduction of 5.8%).
- By the 20231/32 academic year, the number of secondary pupils (Year 7 to Year 11) is projected to be 17,346, a 3.3% decrease compared with the October 2025 census. (For comparison, the 2025 School Organisation Plan reported a smaller reduction of 2.5%).
- By the 2031/32 academic year, the number of sixth form pupils (Year 12 to Year 13) is projected to be 4,358, a 0.1% increase compared with the October 2025 Census. (For comparison, the 2025 School Organisation Plan reported a reduction of 0.9%).

For the academic year 2027/28, the LA has approved a reduction in the PAN of 1 community infant school. Additionally, 3 non-community school admissions authorities have proposed a similar reduction of 30 places each (1 Form of Entry) in their PAN.

A proposal to amalgamate an additional infant and Junior School is being presented to Cabinet in April 2026, and other Infant and Junior schools will be recommended for amalgamation in line with the Council Amalgamation policy, where appropriate.

- **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:

- 174 registered childminders – 6 less than presented in the School Organisation Plan 2025 - (181)
- 58 school-based nurseries – 1 more than presented in the School Organisation Plan 2025 - (57)
- 151 Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings 7 more than presented in the School Organisation Plan 2025 (144)

- 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 (2 from September 2024, 3 from September 2025). 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.

Wraparound childcare

Currently 21 providers have accessed funding to set up Wraparound provision for school aged children across the LA, creating 521 additional places across Hillingdon.

- **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 2025.

PPA Headlines

PPA 1, 11 and 12 in the next 7 years is projected to show the most growth, at 20.5%, 15.8% and 42.0% respectively of their current Reception Roll (+8, +89 and +108 places respectively)

Primary Pupil Planning Area	24/25 - Reception Roll	31/32 - Projected Reception Roll	% change in Roll	Actual change in Roll
1	39	47	20.51%	8
2	166	175	5.42%	9
3	206	200	-2.91%	-6
4	144	148	2.78%	4
5	486	461	-5.14%	-25
6	325	336	3.38%	11
7	316	291	-7.91%	-25
8	265	264	-0.38%	-1
9	223	209	-6.28%	-14
10	209	203	-2.87%	-6
11	562	651	15.84%	89
12	257	365	42.02%	108
13	82	79	-3.66%	-3
14	255	235	-7.84%	-20
Total	3535	3664	3.65%	129

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 11 – This PPA is central to the largest concentration of population in the borough and the largest developments and is adjacent to PPAs 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12. It is also close to

Heathrow so parents are affected by the changes due to the pandemic in permanent and more casual employment, and borders with Ealing where there may be future housing development affective cross border flows. Even with this projected increase over the next 7 years, there is sufficient capacity within the PPA.

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. PPA 12 borders PPAs 11, 13, and 14, as well as the London Borough of Hounslow. These neighbouring PPAs currently have sufficient capacity to absorb any surplus demand from PPA 12. This situation will continue to be monitored, but no further action is planned at this time.

PPA 7 and 14 show a projected decrease in pupil numbers of 7.9% and 7.8% of their current Reception Roll (-25 and - 20 places respectively).

PPA 7 - The recent pattern of household moves, and of pupils travelling to schools outside their planning area across PPA 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 is being carefully monitored

PPA 14 - This PPA borders with PPA 10, 12 and 13 as well as South Bucks.

- **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 2025.

The October 2025 census shows a year-on-year fall in secondary numbers to 17,934 (not including 6th form) for the second consecutive year (190 less than October 2024). Year 7 roll in the October 2025 Census stabilising at 3,479 (1 more than October 2024).

PPA Headlines

Secondary PPA	24/25 - Year 7 Roll	31/32 - Projected Year 7 Roll	% change in Roll	Actual change in Roll
North	1492	1465	-1.81%	-27
South	1983	1808	-8.83%	-175
Total	3475	3273	-5.81%	-202

The North of the borough in the next 7 years is projected to show a decrease of 1.8%, (5.94% previously reported in 2024) compared to the current total Year 7 Roll (- 27 places).

The South of the borough in the next 7 years is projected to show a decrease of 8.8%, (10.1% previously reported in 2024) compared to the current total Year 7 Roll (-175 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 September 2026.

There is significant movement of pupils living to the south of the A40 travelling to schools north of the A40. 23% (2025) of pupils offered a place in a school in the north are resident in the south of the borough (5% less than in 2024), compared to only 1% (2025) in the opposite direction (1% less than in 2024). 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.

- **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 2024, 12.2% of children are on SEND Support and 2.8% with EHCPs. In Autumn 2025, 12.7% of children are on SEN Support and 3.1% with EHCPs showing additional growth.

There is also a change from last year's projections, for residents with EHCPs now expected to be 3947 in 2031 / 32 compared to 4055 presented in the School Organisation Plan 2025 (a drop of 108). Given the release of the recent SEND reforms, it should be noted that this could change substantially given the proposed legislative changes the government is consulting on.

There are currently 29 AP providers (2 more than presented in the School Organisation Plan 2025) 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 Council's General Fund arising from the updated School Organisation Plan. The Plan provides a strategic overview of current and projected pupil numbers but does not commit the Local Authority to any financial expenditure.

Any future decisions relating to changes in school capacity—such as adjustments to Published Admission Numbers (PAN), temporary measures, or organisational changes—will be considered individually and funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), primarily via the Schools Block Growth Fund, as determined through the Schools Forum.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.

APPENDICES

School Organisation Plan 2025/26