

PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE WHITEHALL INFANT SCHOOL AND WHITEHALL JUNIOR SCHOOL

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| Cabinet Member & Portfolio | Cllr Susan O'Brien – Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education |
| Responsible Officer | Julie Kelly – Corporate Director of Children Services |
| Report Author & Directorate | Abi Preston – Director of Education & SEND |
| Papers with report | <p>Appendix 1 – Equalities Impact Assessment for the proposed amalgamation of Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Proposal for pre-publication – Whitehall Infant School & Whitehall Junior School Proposal</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Pre-publication Information Session presentation</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Whitehall Schools consultation Public Notice</p> <p>Appendix 5 – Whitehall Schools – Statutory Proposal for Amalgamation</p> <p>Appendix 6 – Whitehall Schools Amalgamation – Frequently Asked Questions</p> <p>Appendix 7 – Financial Benchmarking for Whitehall Infant School</p> <p>Appendix 8 – Financial Benchmarking for Whitehall Junior School</p> <p>Appendix 9 – Information Sessions presentation</p> <p>Appendix 10 – School Place Planning Consultation – Proposal to Amalgamate Whitehall Schools (1-19)</p> <p>Appendix 11 – Academic Research of the benefits of Amalgamation</p> |

HEADLINES

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| Summary | <p>The London Borough of Hillingdon have consulted on a proposal for Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to amalgamate to form a single three-form entry maintained primary school for children aged 3 to 11 years. This change would take effect from 1st September 2026, if approved, with a total published pupil number (PAN) of 630. In order to amalgamate the two schools and create a primary school, the Council are proposing to (technically) close Whitehall Infant School and extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School to form a primary school. No land or buildings will be affected by the proposal, and all assets would transfer to the Primary School if the amalgamation is approved.</p> <p>Following the DfE statutory process, it is being recommended to amalgamate the two schools.</p> |
| <p>Putting our Residents First</p> <p>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</p> | <p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: An efficient, well-run, digital-enabled council working with partners to deliver services to improve the lives of all our residents</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: Thriving, Healthy Households</p> <p>This proposal is in line with the Council's Amalgamation Policy (Background paper 1).</p> |

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| Financial Cost | If approved, there will be an eventual loss of the lump sum income phased over 2 years, usually available per school. However, in the long-term the two schools will benefit from economies of scale efficiency savings and will receive the same level of lump sum funding as all other Primary schools in the Borough. No other funding will be directly affected as a result of this proposal. |
| Select Committee | Children, Families and Education Select Committee |
| Ward(s) | Uxbridge, All |

RECOMMENDATIONS

That :

1. the responses from the consultation based on the proposals set out, along with the Equalities Impact Assessment, be duly considered;
2. the (technical) closure of the Whitehall Infant School on Monday 31st August 2026 and the extension of the age range of the Whitehall Junior School, to amalgamate both schools to create an all-through primary school from Tuesday 1st September 2026, be approved.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

The Council and schools are expected to consider the long-term vision of each school, ensure the best outcomes for our children and young people, and the sustainability of schools. Part of this responsibility is to continue to:

- improve and provide the best possible education and care for every child;
- provide an excellent working environment and experience for staff; and
- support and work with their local community

There are a range of benefits in combining the existing schools into a new primary school through the statutory amalgamation process, which include:

- A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught and supported, recognising the current strengths of both schools.
- Increased opportunities for children in all key stages to come together for pastoral, social and creative activities.
- Consistency of parental involvement throughout the primary phase of education by having the ability to foster longer-term relationships with families within one school.
- Communication between school and parents will be simplified, especially for parents with children in both schools. It would remove any duplication and ensure a joined-up approach for events, training and other matters.
- Removes the need for parents to apply for a place at the Junior School as children would automatically continue their education as part of one Whitehall school.

- Increased career development opportunities for staff through the sharing of a wider range of expertise and the possibility to gain experience and an understanding of all Primary Key Stages.
- Greater opportunity for cost effectiveness through economies of scale e.g. in purchasing, ensuring the best provision possible for the children;

Both Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School are community maintained schools located in the Uxbridge ward and were both graded 'Good' at their last Ofsted Inspection. Whitehall Infant School was inspected in November 2024 and maintained its grade from the full inspection in March 2015, and Whitehall Junior School was inspected in June 2023 and maintained its grade from the full inspection in September 2014.

Both schools are located adjacent to each other and effectively share one site. As they are community maintained schools, this means they are both maintained by Hillingdon Council and the Council owns the buildings and the land. The Local Authority is also responsible for determining the school admission arrangements for both schools.

The Hillingdon Infant and Junior Amalgamation Policy, September 2022, (see Background paper 1) states that "The London Borough of Hillingdon will require Governing Bodies of all separate infant and junior schools to consider amalgamating their two linked schools when one or more of the following 'trigger circumstances' occur, unless there are compelling and overriding reasons":

- A. A headteacher vacancy arises in either or both schools.**
- B. Total pupil numbers in either school are 25% or more below the Published Admission Number.
- C. Ofsted inspection in one of the schools identifies a 'Requires Improvement' judgement.
- D. One or both of the schools cannot set a balanced budget or has financial problems.
- E. One or both of the schools involved is judged to be a 'School causing concern' by the London Borough of Hillingdon.
- F. One or both schools have PANs or are recruiting at below two forms of entry – making the individual schools relatively small and at risk of becoming unviable within the Hillingdon funding context.
- G. Other pressures whereby the educational provision would be improved through amalgamation such as provision of SEN support, staff recruitment and retention or issues linked to the buildings.

Following the announcement that the Headteacher of Whitehall Infant School would be retiring in August 2026, the schools met trigger A as listed above. Initial discussions were then held with both governing bodies to outline and explore the potential for amalgamation.

The potential of amalgamating Infant and Junior schools, in line with the amalgamation policy, has been discussed with schools over the last few years at various collective and individual meetings, and schools have been made aware that the Council would propose this solution under the appropriate circumstances.

Both schools have been affected by the ongoing decline in the birth rate across Hillingdon, which has resulted in Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School reducing their Published Admissions Numbers from 120 (4FE) to 90 (3FE) from September 2025.

Whitehall Infant School

| Whitehall Infant School | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|------|------|---------------|-------------|
| Census | Whole School PAN | Pupils on Roll | | | | % Vacancies |
| | | R | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Total on Roll | |
| Oct-20 | 360 | 93 | 115 | 86 | 294 | 18% |
| Oct-21 | 360 | 100 | 96 | 114 | 310 | 14% |
| Oct-22 | 360 | 100 | 107 | 95 | 302 | 16% |
| Oct-23 | 360 | 90 | 99 | 102 | 291 | 19% |
| Oct-24 | 360 | 87 | 102 | 98 | 287 | 20% |
| Oct-25 | 330 | 86 | 88 | 105 | 279 | 15% |

*The October 25 figure shows a reduction of 30 in the PAN, as PAN changes only take effect in the year of entry, which in this case, is Reception.

Whitehall Junior School

| Whitehall Junior School | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|------|------|------|---------------|-------------|
| Census | Whole School PAN | Pupils on Roll | | | | Total on Roll | % Vacancies |
| | | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 | | |
| Oct-20 | 480 | 103 | 87 | 104 | 88 | 382 | 20% |
| Oct-21 | 480 | 86 | 99 | 87 | 106 | 378 | 21% |
| Oct-22 | 480 | 116 | 88 | 93 | 88 | 385 | 20% |
| Oct-23 | 480 | 90 | 115 | 89 | 90 | 384 | 20% |
| Oct-24 | 480 | 109 | 87 | 118 | 85 | 399 | 17% |
| Oct-25 | 450 | 96 | 110 | 91 | 122 | 419 | 7% |

*The October 25 figure shows a reduction of 30 in the PAN, as PAN changes only take effect in the year of entry, which in this case, is Year 3.

Alternative options considered / risk management

- **Option 1:** Propose to amalgamate Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior School
 - This was considered the best option and is recommended by Officers as it would provide a range of benefits outlined above, and lead to a more sustainable and viable school in the long term.
- **Option 2:** Do not propose to amalgamate the two schools
 - This would not support the schools to be more financially secure, especially in light of the reduction in demand for primary school places and would not be in line with the amalgamation policy.

- **Option 3:** Consider federating the schools under a single governing body
 - This was considered instead of amalgamation. However, in this model, each school would retain its over leadership team but operate under a single executive headteacher, and governing body. This would not provide the required security for the schools or benefits to families outlined in the proposals.

Democratic compliance / previous authority

Cabinet is the body to consider school organisational changes where there are representations/objections received.

Select Committee comments

The Children, Families and Education Select Committee considered this matter at its meeting on Thursday 12th March 2026 and formal comments from the Committee are below, with the broader minutes of the meeting available as a background paper:

“The Committee recognises that the proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Schools will result in a consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught and supported, recognising the current strengths of both schools. It will also provide greater opportunity for cost effectiveness through economies of scale. Although this report has been submitted to the Select Committee while the formal consultation remains open, the Committee notes that Cabinet will receive the full consultation results to ensure an informed decision is made.”

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Equality Impact Assessment for both schools

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carefully considered in relation to the proposed amalgamation of Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools (Appendix 1). It is not expected that this proposal will have any significant impact on pupils, staff, or the wider community, as the newly formed primary school will continue to operate in much the same way as it currently does.

Since all children currently enrolled at both schools will remain on the same site, within the same school community, and continue to be supported by the same staff, and curriculum, no adverse effects are anticipated for pupils with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Key points include:

- No change to the school’s Net Capacity;
- No change to the Published Admissions Number (PAN) for either school;
- No change to the curriculum being delivered.
- The assessment identifies that boys, pupils from ‘other’ ethnic backgrounds, pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), and pupils receiving Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support are overrepresented in the affected cohort when compared to boroughwide averages. These groups may therefore be more susceptible to any unintended negative impacts arising from the proposed changes. However, the EIA confirms that funding streams allocated to support children with

SEND (including SEN Support and Education, Health and Care Plans) and pupils who are disadvantaged (through pupil premium funding) are both calculated on a per pupil basis. As a result, the amalgamation will not directly affect the funding streams available to these groups.

The amalgamation process will be managed with care and sensitivity, ensuring that the needs of all pupils, particularly those with SEND or additional needs, are fully considered and supported throughout.

The impact of the proposed amalgamation will be closely monitored in collaboration with both schools and their governing bodies, and appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented if necessary.

Financial Implications

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block Funding represents the majority of funding for schools within Hillingdon and is based on the number of pupils attending the school, although each school may receive additional DSG funding or Grants.

If the schools amalgamate, the combined school will only be eligible for one lump sum (an allocation from the Dedicated Schools Grant provided to individual schools to support fixed costs that is currently £165,436 a year – based on the budget for 2025/26) in the future.

As detailed in the [Schools operational guide: 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#), “where schools amalgamate after 1 April 2026, the new school will receive funding equivalent to the formula funding of the closing schools added together for the appropriate proportion of the year. This means that they receive the combined lump sums for the remainder of the year and 70% of the second lump sum in the following year. Local authorities can apply to provide a second year of protection. This needs to be discussed and agreed with Schools Forum.”

Amalgamating the two schools will ultimately result in the loss of one of the lump sum funding allocations that each school currently receives. However, the combined school may achieve improved economies of scale, including savings from needing only one headteacher, which could help offset the impact of this funding reduction. If the proposal was approved, the new primary school would receive the same lump sum payment as all other primary schools in the Borough. Funding for pupils with SEND would not be affected by the proposed amalgamation.

Both schools’ combined funding is approximately £4,624k funding per year. If the proposal is approved, this would mean that following financial year (2027/28) after amalgamation the amount received would be £4,575k and the following financial year (2028/29) funding would be £4,459k. The figures above and detailed in the table below are based on the assumption that the number of pupils remain constant.

| DSG Schools Block Funding | 2026/27 Financial Year (2 lump sums) | 2027/28 Financial Year (1 lump sum + 70% of second lump sum) | 2028/29 Financial Year (1 lump sum) |
|---|---|---|--|
| Whitehall Infant School funding | £1,912k | £1,863k | £1,747k |
| Whitehall Junior School funding | £2,712k | £2,712k | £2,712k |
| Combined Whitehall Schools funding | £4,624k | £4,575k | £4,459k |

* Early Years Funding is not included in the figures above

It is important to note that other DSG funding e.g. Early Years funding (EYSFF), Pupil Premium and other grants paid to the school may be affected in future years, however, these are based on pupil numbers and would not be affected by amalgamation (these would be depending upon the grant conditions, guidance and specific calculations).

Once the school receive their budget, they decide how this is allocated across the school, and what the funding is spent on including staff and resources.

The amalgamation will have no impact on the Council's General Fund, as all financial implications are contained within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The proposal does not require additional Council funding or create any new pressure on the General Fund.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

As both schools are maintained schools, Hillingdon Council can propose to (technically) close Whitehall Infant School under Section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, with notice given in accordance with The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 and propose to extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School from 7-11-year-olds to 3-11-year-olds, with notice given in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

The two proposals follow two separate guidance processes: [Opening and closing maintained schools](#) and [Making significant changes \('prescribed alterations'\) to maintained schools](#). This sets out an expectation that interested parties are consulted informally prior to publication of a statutory proposal and formal consultation.

While there is no longer a statutory 'pre-publication' consultation period for proposed prescribed alteration changes to increase the age range of a school, there is a statutory requirement to consult any parties the proposer thinks appropriate before publishing proposals under section 15 proposals to close a maintained school. Consultation was carried out in Spring 2026 with the two Whitehall schools related to this proposal, however, the following engagement with all 10 sets of Infant and Junior Schools in Hillingdon by Council Officers should also be noted:

- 11th June 2024 – a letter was sent to all Infant and Junior Headteachers in keeping with the Council's Infant and Junior Schools Amalgamation policy (Successful, Sustainable, Viable Schools). As part of this policy, on the retirement or resignation of the Headteacher from

either of the linked Infant and Junior Schools, the two schools will amalgamate and form an all through primary school.

- 18th June 2024 – Head Teachers Termly – Presentation by Head of Education and Lifelong Learning to go through benefits of infant and junior amalgamations and recognising the different contexts.
- 1st July 2024 - Amalgamation Information Session 1 for Head Teachers and Governors of Infant and Junior Schools
- 2nd July 2024 - Amalgamation Information Session 2 for Head Teachers and Governors of Infant and Junior Schools

During the Autumn term of 2025, the local authority was informed that the headteacher of Whitehall Infant School would be retiring at the end of the 2025/26 academic year, with Officers meeting with both headteachers and Chair of Governors in late November 2025. In early January 2026, meetings were held with each Governing Body to outline the proposed amalgamation process and address any questions they had.

A period of pre-publication consultation was carried out between Tuesday 20th January 2026 and Friday 13th February 2026.

An informal consultation document (see **Appendix 2**) was made available in hard copy and electronic form, that outlined the proposals and relevant background information. Hard copies were made available on request from the Local Authority. This information was sent to both Headteachers and Chair of Governors to share with parents of all children attending both schools on Monday 19th January 2026 on how to access the consultation document and submit a response.

Information about the informal consultation and a survey about the proposals was included on the Hillingdon ‘Have Your Say’ webpage.

Three online consultation meetings were hosted by Local Authority officers that provided parents/carers, staff, governors and members of the public the opportunity to comment on and ask questions about the proposals. One of these events was reserved for school staff only. A summary of dates and attendees is set out in the table below:

| Information Session Date | Information Session Time | Attendees | Number of Attendees |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Monday 26 th January 2026 | 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm | Virtual Staff Meeting | 47 |
| Wednesday 28 th January 2026 | 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm | Virtual Public Meeting | 7 |
| Wednesday 28 th January 2026 | 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm | Virtual Public Meeting | 9 |

Please see **Appendix 3** – Information Session Presentation for a copy of the presentation used at the events.

Parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the public were also invited to share their views by responding to the consultation by any of the following ways;

- completing the online consultation form
- writing directly to the Council
- attending an online event

Following the end of the pre-publication consultation period, a Chief Officer Report was submitted which details the key themes raised in the responses (**Background paper 3**). The report was approved on Thursday 19th February 2026 and recommended proceeding to a formal consultation process through the publication of a statutory notice for the expansion of the age range at Whitehall Junior School, and the (technical) closure of Whitehall Infant School, to become one primary school.

Publication

As part of the formal consultation, the Council issued a Public Notice (**Appendix 4**) which was sent to the West London Gazette for publication on Wednesday 25th February 2026, with 6 copies put up around the school site on entrance/ exits in line with the statutory process.

As the proposal for one change is linked to another, this was made clear in any notices that were published. Where a proposal by a local authority is 'related' to a proposal by other proposers such as this, the 2 notices could be published together and cross-refer to the other.

The full proposal was published on the schools' websites and the Council website, and included information setting out (in line with the statutory process):

- how copies of the proposal may be obtained;
- that anybody can object to, or comment on, the proposal;
- the date that the representation period ends; and
- the local authority's address to which objections or comments should be submitted.

Representation

The statutory proposal (**Appendix 5**) was available from Wednesday 25th February 2026 at 9:00am to Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 5:00pm on the consultation page of the Hillingdon Council website. This included a brief outline of the proposed change, the full proposal, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document (**Appendix 6**), a copy of the Public Notice, a questionnaire to obtain feedback, financial benchmarking for Whitehall Infant School (**Appendix 7**) and Whitehall Junior School (**Appendix 8**).

Information regarding the consultation was publicised to all schools within the Borough via email. Both Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School shared the information on their school webpages by including the PDFs of the above documents as well as including a link to the Hillingdon Council consultation webpage.

As Hillingdon Council also receives school admissions applications from residents who live outside of the Borough, the consultation was designed to be inclusive. Therefore, officers contacted the following surrounding Councils to share details of the consultation:

- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Hounslow
- London Borough of Brent
- London Borough of Harrow
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- Slough Borough Council

There were two drop-in sessions at the school site, where Officers were on hand to answer any questions in person and to explain the proposal as necessary. This was scheduled for Tuesday 3rd March 2026 between 1:45pm – 2:45pm, for stakeholders including parents/guardians, school staff and residents and a further session was held for school staff separately, from 3:30pm to 4:30pm. A short presentation was delivered to stakeholders during the information sessions (**Appendix 9**), after which attendees were able to ask Officers or members of the senior leadership teams from both schools any additional questions they had about the proposal. The presentation was later uploaded to the Council’s website so that stakeholders who could not attend the sessions could view it.

| Information Session Date | Information Session Time | Attendees | Number of Attendees |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Tuesday 3 rd March 2026 | 1:45 pm to 2:45 pm | Public Meeting at Whitehall Junior School | 7 |
| Tuesday 3 rd March 2026 | 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm | Staff Meeting at Whitehall Infant School | 12 |
| Monday 9 th March 2026 | 12:30 pm to 13:30 pm | Virtual Public Meeting | 0 |
| Monday 9 th March 2026 | 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm | Virtual Public Meeting | 0 |

The virtual lunchtime session held on Monday 9th March 2026, from 12:30pm to 1:30pm, had no attendees, however, Officers and the Headteacher of Whitehall Junior School remained available for the entire drop-in session.

The evening session on Monday 9th March 2026, from 5pm to 6pm, was also not attended by any stakeholders, through Officers were present and available throughout the drop-in period.

The consultation closed on Wednesday 25th March 2026. All responses have been thoroughly considered and reflected in the report presented to Cabinet, ensuring that every voice is heard.

Consultation Responses

19 responses were submitted via the online questionnaire (which can be read in full detail in **Appendix 10**). The responses are summarised below.

Online Questionnaire responses are summarised below:

- 15** respondents agreed with the proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to form a single three-form entry school
 - Yes – 15
 - No – 4
 - Don’t know - 0
- Of the **4** respondents that answered ‘No’, reasons have been summarised below in the paper.

3. **2** respondents agreed that the proposed changes would disadvantage any Hillingdon residents
 - Yes – 2
 - No – 17
 - Don't know – 0
4. Of the **2** respondents that agreed or answered 'Don't know' that the changes will disadvantage Hillingdon residents, reasons have been summarised below in the paper.
5. **19** respondents have confirmed their interest in the proposal as:
 - A parent/ Carer/guardian – 4
 - A staff member – 11
 - A local resident – 0
 - Prefer not to say – 0
 - Other – 4
6. **19** respondents confirmed whether they have children under the age of 18 living in their household.
 - None – 6
 - 1 child – 6
 - 2 children – 5
 - 3 children – 1
 - 4 children - 1
 - 5+ children – 0
 - Didn't answer - 0
7. Respondents were invited to state which school(s) their child(ren) currently attend which are set out below:
 - Whitehall Infant School - 3
 - Whitehall Junior School – 3
 - Other Primary school in Hillingdon - 2
 - Other Secondary school in Hillingdon – 4
 - Out of borough Primary school - 1
 - Out of borough Secondary school – 1
 - N/A - 8

(please note that some respondents have more than 1 child)

Online Questionnaire responses and themes raised at information sessions are summarised below:

The information below seeks to set out the themes from the consultation to the Council's proposal to (technically) close Whitehall Infant School and to extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School from 7-11-year-olds to 3-11-year-olds.

Consultation Themes

1. Educational benefits and consistency

- A large proportion of respondents (79%) were supportive of the proposed amalgamation to bring the two schools together and felt that it will have a positive impact promoting consistent teaching practices and supporting both schools to improve outcomes and strengthen their reputation within the local community.

2. Schools operating well as separate Infant and Junior schools creating expertise in each setting

- Some respondents expressed worry that merging the Infant School with the Junior School may diminish the strong family-centred ethos and specialist early-years knowledge that currently characterise the Infant School. They felt this could negatively affect the outcomes for younger children and their families.

The local authority recognises the high-quality early-years practice and strong pastoral ethos that the Infant School has developed including the Early Years provision. Preserving and embedding this expertise within the new primary school would be a priority for the school if the amalgamation was approved.

To support this, leaders and staff from the Infant and Junior schools are fully involved in shaping the new school structure, culture, and curriculum. The aim is to ensure that existing strengths are not only retained but would be shared more widely across the new school. Senior leaders across the new school including those from the Infant school would continue to champion early-years, maintain family-focused values, and support colleagues to deliver continuity of practice.

Through this collaborative planning, shared professional development, and a leadership model that values the Infant and Junior School's existing expertise, the new primary school will be well placed to sustain and build upon the positive outcomes currently achieved for children and families across both schools.

3. Loss of Funding and Resources

- Some attendees are concerned that the amalgamation will lead to a significant reduction in the school's budget, which could negatively impact the quality of education, staffing levels, and extracurricular activities.

The local authority recognises the concerns regarding funding. Based on the financial benchmarking information, and the retirement of the Infant school Headteacher, if the proposed amalgamation goes ahead, council officers feel confident that the school will not be negatively impacted and will work closely with the school to identify opportunities for additional efficiencies and savings. In order to facilitate the loss of the lump sum funding, there is a transition period over 2 years as set out earlier in the paper to enable the proposed school to organise appropriately. The funding for the school would be in line with other Primary schools across Hillingdon.

4. Changes to staff contracts

- Some attendees to the engagement sessions wanted to confirm whether there would be any changes to staff members contracts.

Teachers' contracts would remain unchanged, apart from updating the school name to reflect the new primary school if the amalgamation was approved. TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings: Protection of Employment) would not apply, as the London Borough of Hillingdon is already the employer for staff at both schools.

5. Greater Efficiencies achieved through amalgamation

- Some respondents believe that amalgamating the schools will lead to more efficient use of resources and cost savings. They argue that a single, larger school can benefit from more shared resources and staff, reducing duplication and lowering operational costs.

The Council agree that these is the opportunity for efficiencies and details can be found in **Appendix 11** and in the supporting documents, including financial, communication and learning efficiencies.

Next steps

As detailed in the relevant guidance, *Making significant changes to maintained schools (Background paper 4)* and *Opening and closing maintained schools (Background paper 5)*, the next steps are set out for decision makers below following the consultation process.

When issuing a decision, the decision maker can:

- reject the proposal;
 - approve the proposal without modification;
- or
- approve the proposal, with or without modification, subject to certain conditions (such as the granting of planning permission) being met.

If approval is granted by Cabinet, the Council's Education Service will notify the Department for Education and implement the proposal following the requirements set within the [School organisation: local-authority-maintained schools - GOV.UK](#) guidance [Opening and closing maintained schools](#) and [Making significant changes \('prescribed alterations'\) to maintained schools](#).

The school will open as a Primary school on 1st September 2026 if amalgamation is approved. In order to amalgamate the two schools and create a primary school, the Council are proposing to (technically) close Whitehall Infant School on 31st August 2026 and extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School. No land or buildings will be affected by the proposal, and all assets would transfer to the Primary school if the amalgamation is approved.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and concurs with the Financial Implications set out above, noting the recommendations to consider the responses from the consultations and to approve the technical closure of Whitehall Infant School, to extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School, to amalgamate both schools to create a Primary School from September 2026.

Furthermore, it is noted the amalgamation will result in a reduction in Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), Schools Block Funding. While the combined school will continue to receive a single lump sum in line with other primary schools across Hillingdon, the overall funding will decrease for the new Whitehall Primary School over time. Based on current pupil numbers and non-inflation adjusted projections the funding will reduce from £4,624k in 2026/27, £4,575k in 2027/28 and further to £4,459k in 2028/29. Budgetary control will remain with the school's leadership and Governing Body, who will be responsible for the allocation of available funds.

It is also noted that the other DSG funding streams and targeted grants will remain unaffected by the amalgamation as these are determined by pupil demographics and needs.

Legal

The local authority must have regard to the statutory guidance on opening and closing maintained school. There are no legal impediments to the recommendations within the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Background paper 1](#) – Hillingdon Infant and Junior Amalgamation Policy – September 2022

[Background paper 2](#) – Proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools – Select Committee minutes – Thursday 12th March 2026

[Background paper 3](#) – Chief Officer Decision Notice – Whitehall Infant and Junior Schools

[Background paper 4](#) – Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools

[Background paper 5](#) – Opening and Closing maintained schools

[Background paper 6](#) – Schools operational guide: 2026 to 2027

Select Committee minutes - [London Borough of Hillingdon - Agenda for Children, Families and Education Select Committee on Thursday, 12th March, 2026, 7.00 pm](#)