

FAQ sheet: 2017/18 Primary Schools Expansion

The Pre- Statutory Consultation

1. Why are you consulting us?

Havering, in common with the many other London Boroughs and urban areas is currently experiencing an increase in demand for school places. This increase in demand is due to rising birth rates in Havering and families moving into the borough from other parts of London, the UK and abroad.

Following the Cabinet's approval of the phase 4 of the schools expansion programme, the additional capacity needed in our primary schools will focus on the planning areas that are experiencing rapid growth in pupil numbers and long term pressure of demand on school places due to in year mobility and new housing growth. These planning areas are **Harold Hill, Rainham & South Hornchurch and Romford**.

2. How will you gather views during the pre- statutory consultation phase from pupils, parents and Carers, staff and local residents?

A copy of the consultation booklet which includes the survey questionnaire has been made available to parents, carers, and members of staff and governors of the schools being proposed for expansion. The document can also be accessed via the Havering website. A survey link has also been provided for those wishing to complete the questionnaire online. Meetings/Drop-in sessions have been arranged in these schools at the times shown in the consultation document.

3. What are the stages for a school expansion?

The Department of Education (DFE) provides guidance on how to expand maintained schools. The guidance relates to the 2013 School Organisation Regulations, which sets out the four statutory stages for any expansion. These are;

1. Publication of statutory notices setting out the local authority's intention to expand a school
2. Representation (formal statutory consultation)
3. Decision on whether or not expand
4. Implementation of the expansion

4. Why does the local authority want to expand schools and why our school?

A combination of a sharp rise in birth rate, increase in migration and new housing developments has created the need to provide additional school places in Havering. The data we have shows that we will not have enough local school places in the future to meet demand, if we do not take steps to increase the capacity in our schools now. We have already created additional places by expanding existing primary schools in the borough.

The schools in this consultation have been selected for the proposal to expand, as they are in the area of demand for places and it is feasible to create the additional places needed. All schools identified have strong leadership and sufficient site to allow for expansion. If the proposals go ahead it will provide the right number of places in the right area, promote high educational standards and will meet parental demand.

5. If a significant number of stakeholders are opposed to expansion, how will the Council take their views into account?

If the local authority is the decision maker in the expansion proposals for maintained schools, it will seek views from all interested parties and will balance this against its statutory duty to plan and secure sufficient school places to meet the needs of its children and families in the borough. Before making any final decision the local authority will consider a number of factors including views gathered from this consultation, area of demand, any effect on school standards and school improvement, the school's popularity, funding and value for money.

6. [Is the decision already made, and is the council just going through with the pre-consultation as a tick box exercise?](#)

No decision has been made in relation to the expansion of these schools. At the moment these are proposals which can be progressed, amended or withdrawn. This consultation allows all opinions and views to be carefully considered before a decision is taken whether to progress to the statutory stage for school expansions.

Why is the Council expanding schools?

7. [How are schools assessed for suitability for permanent expansion?](#)

We use our school organisation proposals against our planning guidelines as set out in our [Commissioning plan for Education provision 2015/16-2019/20](#). The principles and guidelines have been approved by the Council's Cabinet.

8. [What if the proposals are not supported and so do not go ahead?](#)

If the proposals are not supported then there is unlikely to be a sufficient number of school places for reception age children to meet the demand for places in certain areas. Therefore it would be necessary for the local authority to consider alternative proposals in order to ensure it meets its statutory duty to ensure there are enough school places for all Havering children who require one.

The impact of any expansion on my child(ren)

9. [How will the quality of education at these schools be maintained?](#)

Through careful planning, strong leadership which these schools have and the support of the local authority any issues arising from these expansions will be addressed to ensure that it does not affect the quality of education:

- [The delivery of the curriculum](#)- There is greater scope in a larger school to offer more out of school activities and broaden specialism that will enhance the education of the children. It will also be an opportunity to enjoy facilities and resources that they do not currently have; an added benefit of an expanded school
- [Leadership of the school](#)- The expansion of these schools will allow the head teachers and the governing bodies of the school to continue to maintain the strong ethos, values, standards and quality of education currently in the schools
- [Ancillary facilities \(Hall, Library, ICT, Toilets\)](#) - There will be sufficient number of rooms and spaces to accommodate the needs of the expanded school. The number of toilets for pupils and staff is laid down in specific requirements. The expanded school will provide the number of toilets required for the size of the new school.
- [The small school ethos](#) – There is no evidence to suggest that smaller schools perform better than larger schools. One of the most important aspects of any school is its leadership and the quality of teaching and we are confident that these schools are well led and that the quality of teaching delivered is high. A larger school will give more possibilities to attract and retain high quality teaching staff.
- [What additional learning resources will the school receive?](#) - Every pupil brings additional funding to the school that will cover learning resources and make a contribution to other schools costs. The funding of schools is largely based on the number of pupils on roll.
- [Who will provide the funding for extra teaching staff?](#)

Schools receive funding for each pupil on roll at the school, and so funding will increase in line with the numbers of children attending the school. There will be an increase in the number of staff employed by the school to provide appropriate specialist knowledge, expertise and support to cover the expected increase in numbers.



10. Will there be enough playground/playing fields for the number of children at the expanded school?

Yes, the guidelines for outside play and learning space on constrained sites will be met and the new arrangements would be at least as good as the existing arrangements.

11. Does a bigger school mean bigger class sizes? How will the classes be arranged, and will class sizes exceed 30?

Primary schools are organised around classes of 30 children per teacher. Current Infant Class Size Regulations state that infant classes (reception, year 1 and year 2) must have no more than 30 pupils in a class with one qualified teacher. Therefore, extra accommodation would have to be provided and more staff would be recruited to manage the additional pupils.

Delivery of any expansion

Building Works

12. Why have plans for the new buildings not been developed and presented as part of the pre-consultation?

There are separate strands to the consultation process. This pre-consultation deal specifically with the principle of expanding the school premises. There will be a separate formal consultation stage with the school and local residents, around the development of the planned building works as part of the usual planning application procedures.

13. How will the council manage the disruption to the children's education, whilst building works are on-going?

The Local Authority is experienced in managing the delivery of projects on schools sites, working closely with the schools to minimise disruption for the children and staff; planning the stages of delivery carefully, and using school holidays where possible to carry out works that may otherwise cause disruption. Part of the feasibility study will concentrate on this important aspect and will include consultation with the school and parents to ensure that disruption is kept to an absolute minimum.

Transport and Traffic

14. What impact will there be on traffic and how will this be managed?

Traffic issues will be discussed with transport colleagues and explored as part of the planning process, with a view to finding solutions. We encourage parents to use local schools where they can walk their children to school. We will have discussions with the schools and the Transport and Travel teams to determine how raised issues can be dealt with.

A review of the travel plan will be undertaken and this will cover a range of different options which will be properly considered.

15. How will you ensure the safety of children?

As the pupil numbers will only grow by 30 children per academic year, this growth will be manageable and will allow us time to learn from any travel plans we put in place before the full expansion is felt in 7 years.

We are well aware of the current travel issues at the start and the end of the school day and we know increasing the school numbers will further compound this. The school travel plan will be crucial and is something the governing body will review in the coming months. All suggestions from parents and residents will be welcomed.

Projection and pupil numbers

16. How do I know that there is demand for primary places?

The changes in Havering's population, influenced by significant increase in births, economic migration and migration from nearby boroughs, new housing developments mean that demand

for school places has also increased in Havering. The number of Primary age pupils is expected to continue rising significantly with more than 4,000 extra pupils projected over the next five years. Our [Pupil number report](#) contains additional information on this.

17. What happens if the school is expanded but in future we find that the places are not needed?

Our school roll projections as highlighted in our school planning data pack are based on actual and projected birth rates in Havering. We expect demand for places to increase year on year for the foreseeable future and therefore any additional school places created by expanding schools are likely to fill.

19. Will the number of primary school expansions have an effect on the number of secondary school places required in the future? What steps are being taken to plan for this?

The increase in demand for primary school places that we are experiencing is likely to follow through into the secondary phase in a number of areas. The number of Secondary age pupils (Years 7-11) in Havering schools is expected to rise significantly, this will mean that additional secondary places will be required. Currently we are looking at options as to how the demand for secondary school places will be best met.

Addressing future Demand

Rainham and Beam Park Housing Development

The Rainham and Beam Park Housing bid has now been approved with over 3500 units to be delivered over the period 2015/16 to 2021/22. The projected child yield over this period has now been factored in the school roll projections. In the long term, this is likely to result in a continuation and probable escalation of the projected increase in pupil numbers. The proposals expand Rainham Village and Whybridge Infant and Junior Schools will help meet the increase in demand for school places from expected population growth and demand generated by the new housing. Further expansion proposals to meet the school place demand from 2018/19 onwards are being developed and will be consulted at a later date. The need for additional places from 2020/21 will be delivered through a new 3 FE Free School proposal. The Vine Schools Trust has already submitted an application to sponsor the new school in this area.

Romford Housing Zone Development

The Romford housing zone bid has been approved with an expected delivery of 3304 units over the period 2017/18 to 2025/26. The projected child yield over this period has now been factored in the school roll projections. In the long term, this is likely to result in a continuation and probable escalation of the projected increase in pupil numbers. The proposal to expand Hylands Primary School will help meet the increase in demand for school places from expected population growth and demand generated by the new housing. Beyond 2019/20 it is being proposed that the additional places needed will be delivered through a new free school.

New School

20. Why is the Council not building a new school?

Recent changes in the legislation (Education Act 2011) means that where a local authority thinks there is a need for a new school in its area it must seek proposals to establish an academy (free school). The LA is responsible for providing the site for the new school and meeting all associated capital and pre-/post-opening costs. The decision on all new free school proposals lies with the Secretary of State.

21. What are Free Schools?

Free Schools are publicly funded schools independent from the local authority, and report directly to the Secretary of State.



What happens next?

The consultation period starts on **Monday 31 October 2016** and will close on **Monday 28 November 2016**. Following the closing date, all responses received during the consultation period will be considered.

If the Council then decides to proceed with the proposal for expansion it will publish a statutory notice in **February 2017**, followed by a four week 'representation period' during which there will be a final chance to express views. Subject to the outcome of the representation period, the Council will seek to make a final decision on all expansion proposals as set out in the consultation document, by **end of March 2017** for implementation from **September 2017**.