



CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 July 2023

SECOND DESPATCH

Please find enclosed the following items:

Item 2 School Reorganisation

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School Organisation

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A strategic approach to school organisation in Islington that will enable all children and young people to do their best in strong, financially viable schools.

Agenda Item B2

Putting Children First

- A strategic approach to school organisation in Islington that will enable all children and young people to do their best in strong, financially viable schools.
- Three big plans, one ambition: ‘driving educational excellence through inclusive, financially viable schools’ linking in phases to the Asset Management Strategy
- This presentation aims to update on the approach to school organisation within the context of significantly falling pupil numbers

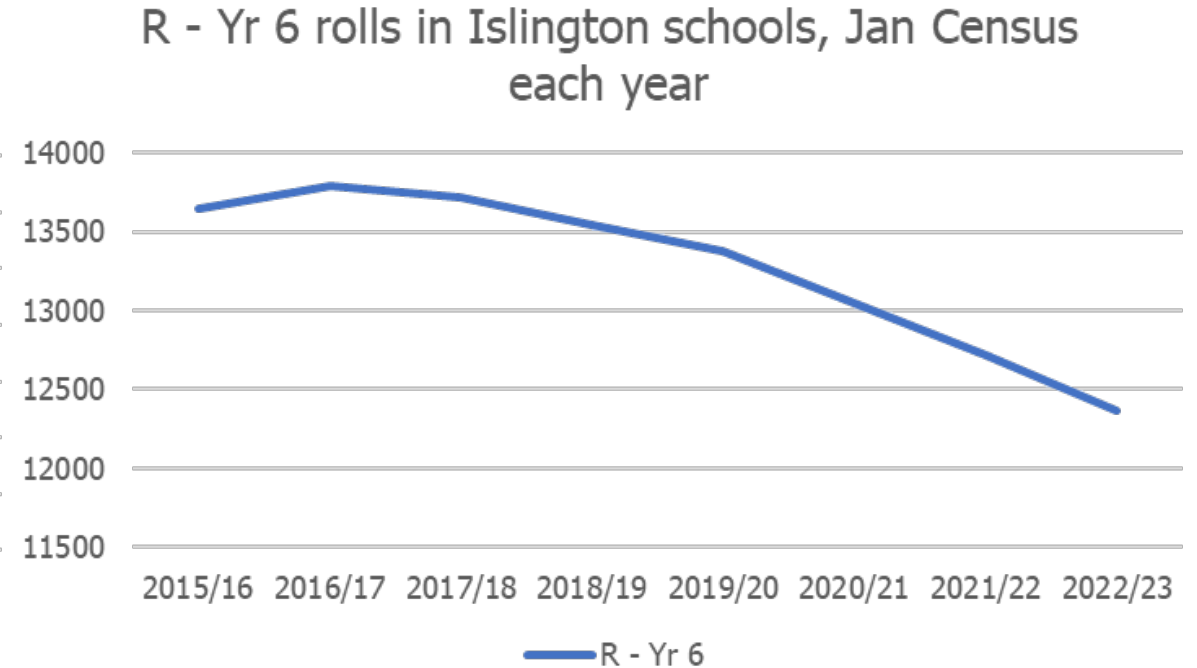
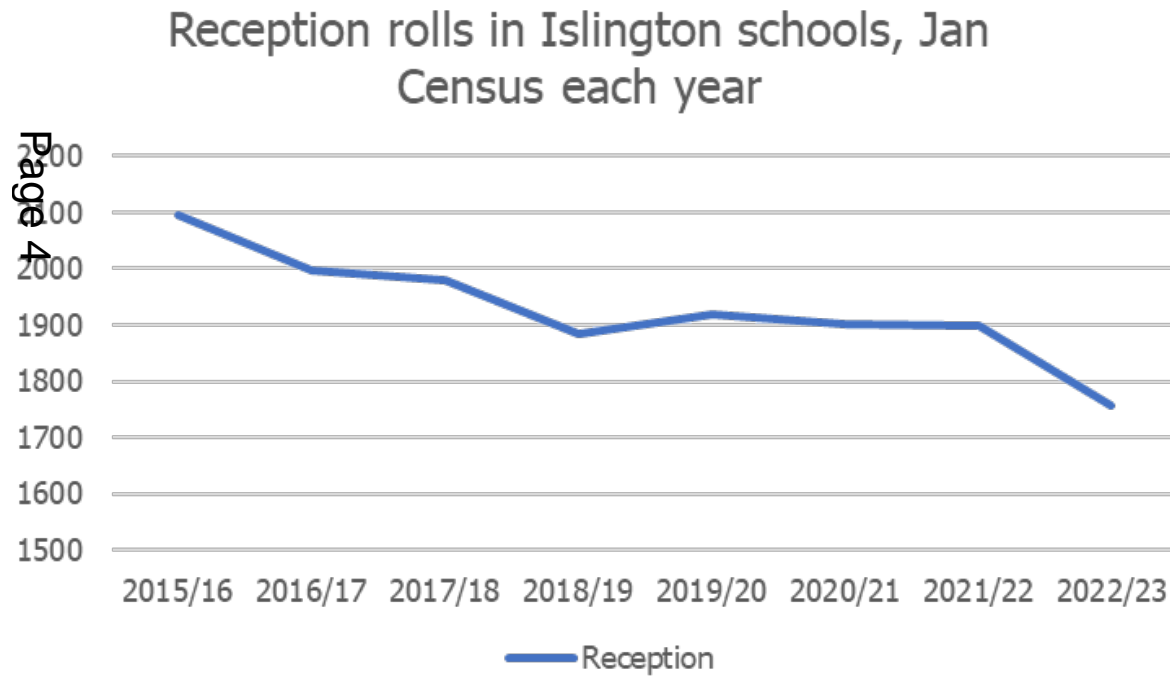


Two Challenges: Pupil Numbers and Financial Sustainability

- Too few children in our schools is threatening their financial viability.
- This is because each pupil in primary school draws ~£5,700, and ~£8,100 in secondary school.
- **46% of schools projecting deficit budgets** by the end of 2024-25 with a net **deficit balance of £5.5m**
- The objective of this presentation is to demonstrate how our phased approach to the implementation of our school organisation plan will reconfigure the school estate so that we reduce surplus places and support schools to be financially viable.
- There are a number of things we can control within this process, and some of them that are outside of our sphere of influence, including academies, faith schools, closure of schools by neighbouring Local Authorities
- This is a work in progress with a number of interdependencies.

Islington School Rolls - primary

- The number of pupils in Islington schools' Reception classes has fallen in recent years, from around 2,100 to 1,750.
- Big change in Reception roll in the last year – a 7.4% fall between January 2022 and 2023.
- The overall primary school roll has been falling steadily since 2016/17.



Context

- The scenario we are operating within is not static.
- This year, we currently have 430 spare places in reception across the borough.
- Phases 1 and 2 of the School Organisation Plan will reduce this by 195 places by September 2024, which would bring us in line with the usual margin of 10% in inner London if numbers were not reducing further.
- At the same time, the latest projections tell us that reception numbers will continue to reduce.
- This means that we need to do further work on our school estate to address the acute ongoing decline.
- This is not a situation that is unique to Islington.

School Place Planning

We plan for primary school places by dividing Islington into 6 planning areas

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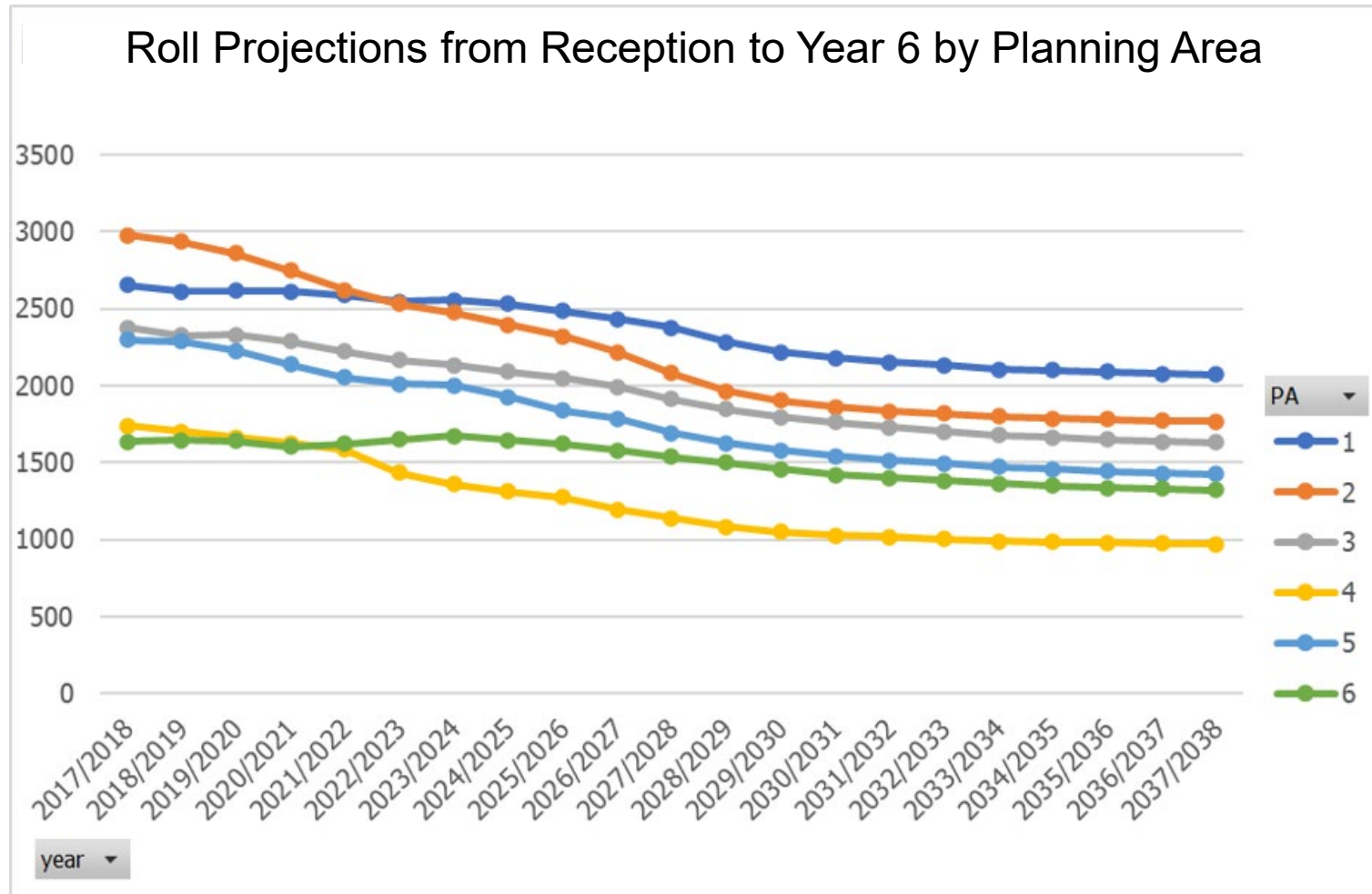
Current Pupil Numbers: Too Few Children, Too Many Schools

Planning Area	Reception Number on Roll (Oct 22)	Reception Capacity	Surplus Reception Capacity
1 Holloway	370	465	20%
2 Hornsey	358	465	23%
3 Highbury	316	360	12%
4 Barnsbury	184	260	29%
5 Canonbury	287	340	16%
6 Finsbury	245	300	18%
Total	1760	2190	20%

Year 7 Number on Roll (Oct 22)	Year 7 Capacity	Surplus Year 7 Capacity
1480	1705	13%

Future Pupils Numbers: the latest draft roll projections

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- 1 Holloway
- 2 Hornsey
- 3 Highbury
- 4 Barnsbury
- 5 Canonbury
- 6 Finsbury

Applying the Methodology

Step 1:
Understand demand and
capacity - data and evidence

Step 2:
Analyse the data to inform
priorities for action

Step 3:
Review the priorities

Step 4:
Test the priorities against
contextual factors and
agreed principles and criteria
(e.g. community need,
distances, equalities)

Primary Plans based on Current Projections

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Phase	Actions
Phase 1 of School Organisation	Amalgamation of Copenhagen and Vittoria by September 2023
	PAN Reduction of Highbury Quadrant, Montem, New North and Pooles Park agreed for September 24
Phase 2 of School Organisation	Options including further PAN reduction and possible school amalgamation/closure are being developed
Phase 3 of School Organisation	Options are being developed, which will also include reducing capacity at secondary where pupil numbers are also starting to decline

School Organisation - Who Makes the Decisions and the variables we cannot control

School Type	Description	Proposer	Decision making body
Community	The local authority owns the buildings and determines admission arrangements	LA	LA
Voluntary Aided	A trust or diocesan body owns the building, employs the staff and determine their own admission arrangements	LA or Governing Body	LA
Academy	The trust owns or has a long lease on their site, they operate under a Funding Agreement with the government and can follow a different curriculum	Academy Trust	Secretary of State advised by RSC
Free school	Schools that have opened as new academies, rather than being converted to an academy from a maintained school. A free school is still an academy and is funded and controlled in the same way as other academies	Academy Trust	Secretary of State advised by RSC

School Closure Process

Stage	Description	Timeline
Proposal to go to 1st Stage Informal Consultation	Confidential exempt report to Council Executive	Internal governance from CSMT through to Executive = typically 8 weeks
1st Stage informal consultation	Public consultation with published documentation and meetings not during school holidays	Good practice = up to 6 weeks
Outcomes of consultation reported and proposal to go to 2 nd Stage of Statutory Notice	Formal report with recommendations to Council Executive	Internal governance from CSMT through to Executive = typically 8 weeks
2 nd Stage statutory notice issued and formal representation period	Formal period prescribed at exactly 4 weeks from date of local paper publication date not during school holiday	4 weeks
Outcome of 2nd Stage consultation reported and final decision made	Formal report with final recommendation to Council Executive	Internal governance from CSMT through to Executive = typically 8 weeks
Implementation	Implementation of the process includes staff consultation and school allocations for pupils	1 school term