

Scrutiny Panel

All Members of the Scrutiny Panel are requested to attend the meeting of the Panel to be held as follows

Tuesday 9 January 2024

7.30 pm

Council Chamber, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA

The press and public are welcome to join this meeting remotely via this link:

Main - <https://youtube.com/live/3kpGd5eDRec>

Back up live stream link:

Backup - <https://youtube.com/live/CVE2efj2V24>

If you wish to attend please give notice and note the guidance below.

Contact:

Tracey Anderson

☎ 0208 3563312

✉ tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk

Dawn Carter-McDonald

Interim Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr Margaret Gordon (Chair), Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Polly Billington, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Sharon Patrick and Cllr Clare Potter

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 Call-In of Executive Decision** (Pages 9 - 1264)
- 5 Exclusion of the Press and Public** (Pages 1265 - 1266)

Item 6 allows for the consideration of exempt information.

6 Exempt Appendix

(Pages 1267 -
1278)

7 Any Other Business

Access and Information

Public Involvement and Recording

Public Attendance at the Town Hall for Meetings

Scrutiny meetings are held in public, rather than being public meetings. This means that whilst residents and press are welcome to attend, they can only ask questions at the discretion of the Chair. For further information relating to public access to information, please see Part 4 of the council's constitution, available at <https://hackney.gov.uk/council-business> or by contacting Governance Services (020 8356 3503)

Following the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions by the Government and the Council updating its assessment of access to its buildings, the Town Hall is now open to the public and members of the public may attend meetings of the Council.

We recognise, however, that you may find it more convenient to observe the meeting via the live-stream facility, the link for which appears on the agenda front sheet.

We would ask that if you have either tested positive for Covid-19 or have any symptoms that you do not attend the meeting, but rather use the livestream facility. If this applies and you are attending the meeting to ask a question, make a deputation or present a petition then you may contact the Officer named at the beginning of the agenda and they will be able to make arrangements for the Chair of the meeting to ask the question, make the deputation or present the petition on your behalf.

The Council will continue to ensure that access to our meetings is in line with any Covid-19 restrictions that may be in force from time to time and also in line with public health advice. The latest general advice can be found here - <https://hackney.gov.uk/coronavirus-support>

Rights of Press and Public to Report on Meetings

Where a meeting of the Council and its committees are open to the public, the press and public are welcome to report on meetings of the Council and its committees, through any audio, visual or written methods and may use digital and social media providing they do not disturb the conduct of the meeting and providing that the person reporting or providing the commentary is present at the meeting.

Those wishing to film, photograph or audio record a meeting are asked to notify the Council's Monitoring Officer by noon on the day of the meeting, if possible, or any time prior to the start of the meeting or notify the Chair at the start of the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer, or the Chair of the meeting, may designate a set area from which all recording must take place at a meeting.

The Council will endeavour to provide reasonable space and seating to view, hear and record the meeting. If those intending to record a meeting require any other reasonable facilities, notice should be given to the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting and will only be provided if practicable to do so.

The Chair shall have discretion to regulate the behaviour of all those present recording a meeting in the interests of the efficient conduct of the meeting. Anyone acting in a disruptive manner may be required by the Chair to cease recording or

may be excluded from the meeting.

Disruptive behaviour may include moving from any designated recording area; causing excessive noise; intrusive lighting; interrupting the meeting; or filming members of the public who have asked not to be filmed.

All those visually recording a meeting are requested to only focus on recording Councillors, officers and the public who are directly involved in the conduct of the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will ask any members of the public present if they have objections to being visually recorded. Those visually recording a meeting are asked to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed or photographed. Failure by someone recording a meeting to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed and photographed may result in the Chair instructing them to cease recording or in their exclusion from the meeting.

If a meeting passes a motion to exclude the press and public then in order to consider confidential or exempt information, all recording must cease, and all recording equipment must be removed from the meeting. The press and public are not permitted to use any means which might enable them to see or hear the proceedings whilst they are excluded from a meeting and confidential or exempt information is under consideration.

Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

Hackney Council's Code of Conduct applies to all Members of the Council, the Mayor and co-opted Members.

This note is intended to provide general guidance for Members on declaring interests. However, you may need to obtain specific advice on whether you have an interest in a particular matter. If you need advice, you can contact:

- Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services
- the Legal Adviser to the Committee; or
- Governance Services.

If at all possible, you should try to identify any potential interest you may have before the meeting so that you and the person you ask for advice can fully consider all the circumstances before reaching a conclusion on what action you should take.

You will have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter if it:

- i. relates to an interest that you have already registered in Parts A and C of the Register of Pecuniary Interests of you or your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner;
- ii. relates to an interest that should be registered in Parts A and C of the Register of Pecuniary Interests of your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner, but you have not yet done so; or
- iii. affects your well-being or financial position or that of your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda you must:

- i. Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you (subject to the rules regarding sensitive interests).
- ii. You must leave the meeting when the item in which you have an interest is being discussed. You cannot stay in the meeting whilst discussion of the item takes place, and you cannot vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence the decision.
- iii. If you have, however, obtained dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee you may remain in the meeting and participate in the meeting. If dispensation has been granted it will stipulate the extent of your involvement, such as whether you can only be present to make representations, provide evidence or whether you are able to fully participate and vote on the matter in which you have a pecuniary interest.

Do you have any other non-pecuniary interest on any matter on the agenda which is being considered at the meeting?

You will have 'other non-pecuniary interest' in a matter if:

- i. It relates to an external body that you have been appointed to as a Member or in

another capacity; or

ii. It relates to an organisation or individual which you have actively engaged in supporting.

If you have other non-pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda you must:

i. Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

ii. You may remain in the meeting, participate in any discussion or vote provided that contractual, financial, consent, permission or licence matters are not under consideration relating to the item in which you have an interest.

iii. If you have an interest in a contractual, financial, consent, permission, or licence matter under consideration, you must leave the meeting unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee. You cannot stay in the meeting whilst discussion of the item takes place, and you cannot vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence the decision. Where members of the public are allowed to make representations, or to give evidence or answer questions about the matter you may, with the permission of the meeting, speak on a matter then leave the meeting. Once you have finished making your representation, you must leave the meeting whilst the matter is being discussed.

iv. If you have been granted dispensation, in accordance with the Council's dispensation procedure you may remain in the meeting. If dispensation has been granted it will stipulate the extent of your involvement, such as whether you can only be present to make representations, provide evidence or whether you are able to fully participate and vote on the matter in which you have a non-pecuniary interest.

Further Information

Advice can be obtained from Louise Humphreys, Interim Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services via email louise.humphreys@hackney.gov.uk

Getting to the Town Hall

For a map of how to find the Town Hall, please visit the council's website <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/contact-us.htm> or contact the Overview and Scrutiny Officer using the details provided on the front cover of this agenda.

Accessibility

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall.

Induction loop facilities are available in the Assembly Halls and the Council Chamber. Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

Further Information about the Commission

If you would like any more information about the Scrutiny Panel, including the membership details, meeting dates and previous reviews, please visit the website or use this QR Code (accessible via phone or tablet 'app')

[Scrutiny Panel](#)



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<p>Scrutiny Panel</p> <p>9th January 2024</p> <p>Item 4 – Call-in of Executive Key Decision</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>4</p>
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OUTLINE

A key element of the scrutiny function is to consider the call-in of a decision of the Executive. A call-in was requested on 18th December 2023, by Councillor Zoë Garbett and supported by four other Councillors. Councillor Alastair Binnie-Lubbock, Councillor Simche Steinberger, Councillor Hershy Lisser and Councillor Grace Adebayo.

The call-in relates to the Executive Key Decision taken by Cabinet 11th December 2023 on Key Decision CE S283 - Schools Sufficiency and Estate Strategy.

The basis of the call-in is that:

- The decision maker did not make the decision in accordance with the principles of decision making, namely **(as set out in Council’s constitution under [Part 4 Section E 1.2 \(a\)](#))**.
 - proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome).
 - due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers.
 - respect for human rights.
 - a presumption in favour of openness.
 - clarity of aims and desired outcomes.
 - relevant matters have been ignored.
 - consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions.
 - due regard to the statutory framework, guidance and Codes of Conduct.
- in making its decision Cabinet failed to consider relevant evidence **(as set out in [Part 4 Section E 1.2 \(d\)](#))**.
- that the decision taken was not in the interests of the Borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted **(as set out in [Part 4 Section E 1.2 \(e\)](#))**.

Reports attached for this item

- **Monitoring Officer's Report** in respect of the Call-in of Cabinet 11th December 2023 Key Decision on CE S283 - Schools Sufficiency and Estate Strategy.
- **Executive Decision Call In Request Form**
- **Cabinet Decision Document**
- **Appendix 1** – Cabinet Report Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy - falling rolls
 - Appendix A – Letter to Secretary of State DfE
 - Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment
 - Appendix C – Demand for Reception Place
 - Appendix D – Community Queries and Feedback March – May
 - Appendix E – May 2023 Cabinet Paper
 - Appendix F – September 2023 Cabinet Report
 - Appendix G – Kwest Report Consultation Findings Sept Cab Decision
 - Appendix H – Proposal to Discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School
 - Appendix I – Proposal to Discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School
 - Appendix J – Proposal to Discontinue Baden Powell Primary School
 - Appendix K – Proposal to Discontinue Colvestone Primary School
 - Appendix L - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School
 - Appendix M – Kwest Report Statutory Notice Consultation Findings
 - Appendix N – Nearby School and Vacancies SES November 2023
 - Appendix O – Year R Map
 - Appendix P – Year 1 Map
 - Appendix Q – Year 2 Map
 - Appendix R – Year 3 Map
 - Appendix S – Year 4 Map
 - Appendix T – Year 5 Map
 - Appendix U – Financial Considerations
 - Appendix V – Colvestone JR PAP of 11.9.2023
 - Appendix W – Response to PAP of 25.09.23
 - Appendix X – School Organisation Plan (SOP)
 - Appendix Y – Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy
- **Appendix 2** - Supplement to the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy Falling Rolls
 - Appendix A – Anonymised Response
 - Appendix B – Save Colvestone Submission
- **Appendix 3** – Call-In Procedure Rules from the Constitution

London Borough of Hackney

Invited for attendance for this item:

- **Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble**, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care
- **Cllr Zoë Garbett**, Dalston Ward Councillor
- **Helen Woodland**, Group Director Adults, Health and Integration
- **Paul Senior**, Interim Director for Education and Inclusion
- **David Court**, Interim Assistant Director, School Estate Strategy.

Also invited for this item:

- **Mayor Caroline Woodley**
- **Cllr Chris Kennedy**, Cabinet member for health, adult social care, voluntary sector and culture
- **Cllr Nicholson**, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for delivery, inclusive economy & regeneration
- **Cllr Rob Chapman**, Cabinet member for finance, insourcing and customer service
- **Cllr Mete Coban**, Cabinet member for climate change, environment and transport
- **Calle Carole Williams**, Cabinet member for employment, human Resources and equalities
- **Cllr Clayeon McKenzie**, Cabinet member for housing services and resident participation
- **Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas**, Cabinet member for community safety and regulatory services
- **Cllr Sade Etti**, Deputy cabinet member for housing needs and homelessness
- **Cllr Sem Moema**, Deputy cabinet member for private rented sector and housing affordability
- **Cllr Grace Adebayo**
- **Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock**
- **Cllr Simche Steinberger**
- **Cllr Hershy Lisser**.

ACTION

In terms of options for Scrutiny Panel when they consider the call-in, they can:

- a) uphold the decision of Cabinet, in which case those elements of the decision could be implemented the following day;
- b) uphold the call in any refer the matter back to Cabinet for reconsideration in which case the implementation of those elements of the decision remains suspended until Cabinet reconsider the matter; or
- c) uphold the call in and refer the matter to Full Council if the Panel concludes that the decision was contrary to the Council's Policy and Budget Framework in which case the implementation of those elements of the decision would again remain suspended.

The fourth available option under the Procedure Rules would not apply as the 'called-in' decision was not an officer delegated decision.

Title of Report	Call-in of Executive Key Decision CE S283 - School Sufficiency and Estate Strategy
For Consideration By	Scrutiny Panel
Meeting Date	9 January 2024
Classification	Open
<u>Ward(s) Affected</u>	Dalston and Hackney Downs
Report of	Monitoring Officer

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1. This report concerns a call-in received in respect of an executive key decision - CE S283 Schools Sufficiency and Estates Strategy - taken by Cabinet on 11 December 2023.
- 1.2. The purpose of this report is to advise the Scrutiny Panel of the original decision and the reasons for the call-in such that the Panel can determine the call-in. The report refers to the relevant provisions of the Council's Constitution as regards call-ins where relevant.

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1. **To consider the call-in request received from Councillors Garbett, Binnie-Lubbock, Steinberger, Lisser and Adebayo and determine the outcome.**

3. **Background**

- 3.1. On 11 December 2023, Cabinet considered a report in respect of Key Decision CE S283 - School Sufficiency and Estate Strategy. Cabinet resolved.
 - 3.1.1. To close (discontinue) De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024
 - 3.1.2. To close (discontinue) Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.

- 3.1.3. To close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.
- 3.1.4. To close (discontinue) Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.
- 3.1.5. To increase the published admission number of Nightingale Primary School by adding an additional form of entry to all year groups. This proposal was related to resolution 3.1.4 referred to above

A copy of the report presented to Cabinet, with its associated appendices, appears at **Appendix 1** to this report. A copy of the supplementary report presented to Cabinet, with its associated appendices appears at **Appendix 2** to this report.

3.2. On 18 December 2023, a request for a call-in was received from Councillors Garbett, Binnie-Lubbock, Steinberger, Lisser and Adebayo. The call-in concerns part of the decision made by Cabinet, namely:

- 3.2.1. Close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.
- 3.2.2. Close (discontinue) Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.

3.3. The grounds for the call in are as follows:

- 3.3.1. The decision-maker did not make the decision in accordance with the following principles of decision-making:
 - (a) Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
 - (b) Clarity of aims and desired outcomes; and
 - (c) Consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decision.
- 3.3.2. The decision-maker failed to consider relevant evidence when making the decision.
- 3.3.3. The decision would not be in the interests of the borough's residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted.

Details of the reasons can be found in the call-in request form completed by the Councillors which appears at **Appendix 3** to this report.

- 3.4. The call-in has been considered against the Call-In Procedure Rules as set out in Part Four, Section E of the Council's Constitution and the Monitoring Officer has determined that the call-in is valid.
- 3.5. In accordance with Rule 5.1, the Elected Mayor and Cabinet were notified of the valid call-in on 19 December 2023.
- 3.6. The Call-In Procedure Rules (rule 5.2) prescribe that once a valid call-in request has been received, then the item is placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Scrutiny Panel unless there is no meeting scheduled within 10 working days of the date of the valid call-in. In the latter case, a special meeting of the Panel must be convened "*as soon as reasonably practicable, taking into account the existing calendar of Council meetings*". As the next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Panel is outside the 10 working day period from the date of the valid call-in (19 December 2023), a special meeting has been convened.
- 3.7. Rule 5.4 of the Call-In Procedure Rules provides that the Scrutiny Panel will hear from the lead requestor and Councillor Garbett has indicated that she would wish to appear before the Scrutiny Panel as the lead requestor in this call-in. The Panel must also hear from the relevant Cabinet Councillor, who in this case is Deputy Mayor Bramble. The Rule also provides that other persons may be heard at the meeting at the discretion of the Chair of the Panel.
- 3.8. Having considered the call-in, the Scrutiny Panel has the following options:
 - 3.8.1. Uphold the original decision: in this case the decision stands and can be implemented.
 - 3.8.2. Uphold the call in and refer the matter to Cabinet, as the original decision-maker, for reconsideration.
 - 3.8.3. Uphold the call in and refer the matter to Full Council.

A fourth option is not relevant to this call-in because that deals with referring the matter to Cabinet where the original decision was an officer delegated decision. As the original decision was not taken by an officer under delegation, this is not an option.

- 3.9. In the case of option 3.8.3, the Scrutiny Panel may only refer the matter to Full Council if the Panel concludes that the decision was contrary to the Council's adopted policy framework or contrary to the Council's approved budget. Such a referral to Full Council would be accompanied by a report from the Monitoring Officer and the s151 Officer with their findings as to whether the decision was contrary to the adopted policy framework and Council's approved budget respectively. In this instance, it is important to note that the Councillors calling-in the decision have not asserted that the

decision is contrary either to the Council's adopted policy framework or the Council's approved budget.

- 3.10. In coming to any conclusion, the Scrutiny Panel should ensure that the reasons for its determination are appropriately recorded.
- 3.11. Pending the outcome of the call-in, the decisions in relation to Colvestone Primary School and Baden Powell Primary School are suspended. In the event that the call-in is upheld and referred to either Cabinet or Full Council, the decision will remain suspended until those bodies have met to consider the matter.
- 3.12. A decision may not be the subject of a call-in for a second time following consideration of a referral by the Panel either to Cabinet or Full Council.

4. Comments of the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources

- 4.1. The financial implications of the decision of Cabinet are as set out in the report of 11th December 2023 included as Appendix 1.

5. Comments of the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services

- 5.1. Save as detailed in the report, there are no direct legal implications arising from the call-in.
- 5.2. The legal implications of the decision of Cabinet are as set out in the Cabinet Report of 11 December 2023 included as Appendix 1.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Report presented to Cabinet Meeting on 11 December 2023, including all the appendices to that report

Appendix 2 - Supplemental report presented to Cabinet Meeting on 11 December 2023, including all the appendices to that report

Appendix 3 - Executive decision Call-in request form in relation to Key Decision CE S283 School Sufficiency and Estate Strategy

Exempt Appendix

Appendix C to the Supplementary Cabinet Report for 11 December 2023 is an exempt appendix on by virtue of Paragraphs 1 and 2, Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to any individual and information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the

exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Background documents

None

Report Author	Louise Humphreys Acting Director of Legal, Democratic & Electoral Services & Monitoring Officer louise.humphreys@hackney.gov.uk
Comments for the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources prepared by	Jackie Moylan Group Director Finance jackie.moylan@hackney.gov.uk
Comments for the Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services prepared by	Louise Humphreys Acting Director of Legal, Democratic & Electoral Services louise.humphreys@hackney.gov.uk

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EXECUTIVE DECISION CALL-IN REQUEST

Part Four, Section E Council's Constitution

Key decision reference number	CE S283
Decision title	Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy
Date of decision	11 December 2023
Decision maker	Cabinet
Date of publication of decision	11 December 2023

<p>Are you requesting a call-in of the entire decision, or part of the decision.</p> <p>If you are requesting a call-in of part of the decision only, please explain which part.</p>	<p>Cabinet agree to:</p> <p>3.1 close (discontinue) De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024</p> <p>3.2 close (discontinue) Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.</p> <p>3.3 close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.</p> <p>3.4 close (discontinue) Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.</p> <p>3.5 increase the published admission number of Nightingale Primary School by adding an additional form of entry to all year groups. This proposal is related to the recommendation at 3.4.</p> <p>We are calling in decision 3.3 and 3.4 regarding Colvestone Primary School and Baden Powell Primary School.</p>
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In accordance with [Part Four, Section E](#) of the Council's Constitution, the power to call-in an executive decision should only be used in exceptional circumstances in a number of circumstances specified in paragraph 1.2 of that Section.

A request for a call-in must be made within **5 working days** of the decision being published.

Upon receipt of the completed call-in request form, the Monitoring Officer will assess whether the request meets the requirements for call-in. The Monitoring Officer's decision is final, although there is a presumption in favour of the request being valid.

Pending consideration by the Monitoring Officer, the decision is suspended and no action may be taken upon it. If the Monitoring Officer determines that the call-in is valid, the decision will remain suspended until consideration of the call-in has taken place.

The completed request form will be published as part of the report to the Scrutiny Panel, alongside a copy of the report relating to the called-in decision.

Which of the following circumstances for call-in, specified in the Council's Constitution, do you believe applies to the decision in question (please mark with an 'X' in the relevant box):

The decision-maker did not make the decision in accordance with the principles of decision-making, namely:

1. Proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome).
2. Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers.
3. Respect for human rights.
4. A presumption in favour of openness.
5. Clarity of aims and desired outcomes.
6. Relevant matters have been ignored.
7. Consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions.
8. Due regard to the statutory framework, guidance and Codes of Conduct.

Please list those which apply:

2. Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers.
 5. Clarity of aims and desired outcomes.
 7. Consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions.

The decision maker did not act in accordance with the Council's policy framework.

Article 4.7 of the Council's Constitution provides that the following documents comprise the Council's policy framework:

- Local Transport Plan
- Local Development Framework documents
- Local Area Action Plans
- Licensing Statement
- Gambling Statement
- Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy
- Youth Justice Plan
- Strategic Plan

- Housing Strategy
- Equalities Statement

The decision maker did not act in accordance with the Council’s budget.

The decision maker failed to consider relevant evidence when making the decision.

The decision would not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted.

If you believe that the decision-maker did not make the decision in accordance with the principles of decision-making, please provide details of why you consider this to be the case.

2. Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers.

The approach taken has undermined the consultation as the early announcement of the schools “at risk” made schools vulnerable, as high numbers of families transfer their children to alternative schools. For instance, De Beauvoir had 118 pupils in Jan 2023 but this has dropped to just 48 pupils by November 2023.

There has also been no information about the decision for some children to have guaranteed places (together as a school) and others did not.

There have been three engagement/consultation periods as part of this process and the responses have been overwhelmingly against the proposals. Most recently these were analysed and presented to the council by a commissioned organisation, Kwest.

However, none of the feedback has impacted the proposal or the decision.

No information has been provided about how the consultation was going to be used and how stakeholders could provide information which might influence the decision.

Therefore, due consultation has not been undertaken.

5. Clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

The stated aim of these proposals is to bring surplus vacancies towards a target level of 5-10% based on initial data of 600 surplus Reception places (21%) in January 2023. The May Cabinet report states that it will remove 135 Reception places. However it fails to acknowledge a number of key issues;

- Schools are reducing surplus places by unofficially capped their Published Admissions Numbers (PAN) to respond to falling rolls and to avoid financial deficits. November vacancy data shows that surplus Reception places has already reduced to 439 places but the report still focuses on the formal PAN figures.
- 134 of the vacant Reception places (31% of the whole amount) are in just eight faith schools but no faith schools were in scope - the target cannot be achieved without addressing this and the Council does have the power to close these schools if it wants to.
- The proposed closures have limited impact on surplus spaces as schools in scope have already capped their PANs - the closure of these four schools actually means a further reduction of just 60 places.

A cost-benefit analysis has been requested and not provided.

Different criteria have been used to make and justify the decision for each setting and this has not been consistent or in line with the stated aim e.g. historic debt, falling role, rationalising school estate.

The stated desired outcome of two school mergers has subsequently been revealed as an impossibility and in fact this framing of a merger confused the process and the consultation and gave false hope to staff and parents that staff would be carried over into the absorbing schools.

The PAN is 30 for Baden Powell and 30 for Nightingale. The May Cabinet report states that the amalgamation of these two schools would reduce overall PAN by 30 places. However, if two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then there is no reduction in overall places. This is acknowledged in the September Cabinet report as the PAN for Nightingale increases from 30 - 60 so no overall reduction.

7. Consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions.

We understand that a long-list of schools was under consideration but only the short-list was published and put to consultation. Bringing parents and the community in earlier, to discuss the long-list would have included all stakeholders in the decision making process and helped the council to protect the things important to residents. We appreciate that this approach is not available now given where we are in this process but we'd like to see this considered for any future decisions regarding school closures.

The consideration and evaluation of alternatives has been limited throughout this process. The decision regarding the four schools was initially presented as one decision with very limited information about why these schools had been chosen, particularly why the particular 'mergers' were being proposed.

There was no analysis or alternatives considered on a school by school basis during the consultation, and there has been no account of any context-specific issues.

The September Cabinet report highlights a small number of alternatives that were considered for each school in scope and the reasons for their dismissal. However, it acknowledges that pupil numbers have changed and that options that were dismissed are now viable but this is then rejected on financial grounds (even though financial projections are based on pupil numbers). The report additionally adds that 'Amalgamating into a one form entry school is not financially preferable.' No financial grounds for this new claim are offered, nor is a rationale for the prejudicing of single form schools in the Council system supported by the Estate Strategy.

During the consultation periods, a number of alternative options were suggested but not considered, explored or adequate responses provided for their dismissal:

- To close and guarantee places at different schools
- Use spare space to develop a SEN unit to expand the school
- Enact substantial efficiency savings identified in the independent School resource

	management advisers (SRMA) commissioned by Colvestone.
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<p>If you believe that the decision-maker did not act in accordance with the Council's policy framework, please list which of the documents from within the framework you consider to be relevant and why you consider that the decision-maker has not acted in accordance with it / them (providing page / paragraph references where possible).</p>	N/A
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<p>If you believe that the decision-maker did not act in accordance with the Council's budget, please provide details of why you consider this to be the case.</p>	N/A
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<p>If you believe that the decision-maker failed to consider relevant evidence, please explain what evidence you believe has not been considered.</p>	<p>PAN versus capped data</p> <p>The December Cabinet report concludes that there are sufficient vacancies across the borough to accommodate pupils from the four schools to close. However, the analysis is based on the official PAN not the capped PAN which is the vacancy information that parents looking for alternative places actually receive.</p> <p>The four proposed school closures are concentrated in central/south west Hackney, with pupils competing for the same places in an area where two larger schools (Holy Trinity and Princess May) have both unofficially capped their PAN from 60 to 30. A detailed analysis of the vacancies for each of the proposed school closures shows that these proposals are forcing parents in this area to make very difficult decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some schools in the area have very few vacancies so families with children in different year groups cannot get in. - Many of the vacancies are at faith schools which many families are not choosing
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(evidenced by falling demand and a Council survey).

- Some of the closest schools with vacancies are out of borough in Islington or Tower Hamlets.

The current proposal to close Colvestone and guarantee pupils a place at Princess May is flawed. The aim is to reduce PAN from 90 to 60 (PM is 60 and Colvestone is 30) by closing Colvestone. However, Princess May has unofficially capped their PAN at 30 already so the closure of Colvestone will not reduce overall PAN any further. This proposal will force Princess May to accept an unknown number of pupils, which will destabilise their new one-form financial model. Even if all Colvestone pupils transferred, it would not be a full two-form school so would have to introduce vertical groups and mixed classes. Under the current criteria for school closures, it would be under-subscribed creating a similar environment to the ones the council is directly trying to avoid with these proposals and may be at risk again in the future (potentially affecting families for a second time).

Further, Hackney Education is the authority that can set PANs for Local Authority schools (with limited consultation: the raising of Nightingale Primary School's PAN from 30 to 60 was added to this consultation at the 'Formal Consultation' stage without pre-announcement).

Deeds

Hackney Council has not released the historic deeds for the Colvestone buildings (despite FOI requests) that it is believed contain covenants that would greatly restrict the re-purposing (and potentially, ownership) of the buildings were the school to be closed. This due diligence is required before the decision proceeds.

Dalston plan - homes being built in the area

As stated on the council's website (<https://hackney.gov.uk/dalston-spd>) "This draft Plan...sets out how, over 600 new homes, 700sqm of community space and 14,000 sqm of commercial and workspace (including retail and office space) can be delivered across 10 sites in Dalston."

When asked what impact this will have on the number of children in Dalston, the council has stated it will have 'no impact' on medium to long term demand without providing any analysis or workings for this assumption.

Using figures from the Council's published housing volume and mix data for the Dalston Plan sites and the GLA's population yield calculator / data sets: the development is projected to bring 100 children of primary school age (and 150 aged 0-4 downstream) to the centre of Dalston in the short to mid-term.

For all of these major sites, Colvestone is the nearest primary school provision. This far exceeds the claimed 'no impact' on medium to long term demand claimed in the Council's consultation documents, and is clear evidence of the 'future demand for places' that is the Statutory consideration for closing or maintaining Local Authority schools.

Note: Any housing market assessment using solely GLA housing projections will not reflect any impact of the Dalston plan as the developments have not passed planning (the criteria for inclusion) even though the plan (LP33) has been adopted by Hackney Council.

The Colvestone Story

After a period of instability, Hackney Education supported Colvestone to enter into partnership with Blossom Federation in August 2022. The successful arrangement saw a rapid improvement in all areas: leadership; new website; quality of education; financial management and more attractive interior. Hackney Council have also invested nearly £1m in the school building with complete transformation of the grade II listed railings in front of the school and roof repairs. Colvestone now looks amazing but for many months the building was surrounded in scaffold, with temporary fencing at the front and the beautiful School Hall was not in use for nearly two years.

Unfortunately these changes all occurred in Winter 2022/23, whilst parents were viewing and choosing primary schools so the Reception preferences for Colvestone for September 2023 were low.

	Council data also appears to show that Reception numbers in 2023 were further suppressed by the misallocation of non-preference places.
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<p>If you believe that the decision is not in the interests of the borough’s residents, please explain why you consider this to be the case.</p>	<p>The December Cabinet report concludes that there are sufficient vacancies across the borough to accommodate pupils from the four schools to close. However it acknowledges that they make a number of assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They keep using ‘statutory walking distance’ which is 2 miles for children aged 5 - 8 and 3 miles for children aged 8+. However this is guidance on when to provide free school transport - not the basis on which to decide what is an appropriately ‘local’ school. This is clearly not within the best interest of residents as it will make the journey to / from school and therefore the school day more difficult for families. - There is no obligation to provide a range of schools so it does not matter what type of school has vacancies. This does not take into consideration what is important to families (such as one-form entry, secular schools).
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<p>If you believe that a preferable alternative decision could be adopted, please explain what you consider that preferable alternative to be.</p>	<p>Retain Colvestone Primary School so that the school is able to take in children from other schools and is given the opportunity to exhaust all options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efficiencies identified from SRMA - Time for the improvements (the hall being open, new technology, £1m investment into exterior) to attract families - Continue the transformational and committed partnership with Blossom Federation <p>It would maintain a school in a historic Grade ii listed building, which is a cornerstone of St Marks Conservation Area and identified as key infrastructure in the Dalston Plan and a core element of the 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent.</p> <p>Pause and review the closure of Baden Powell and Colvestone Schools, looking at the wider picture and involving parents and staff of other schools that may come into scope at an earlier stage.</p>
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<p>Please provide any other additional information you</p>	
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would like to submit in support of the call-in (please note that this additional information must relate to the reasons under which a call-in can be made).

Details of Councillors making the call-in request (unless otherwise indicated, the first Councillor listed will be taken to be the 'lead requester')

Councillor Zoë Garbett
Councillor Alastair Binnie-Lubbock
Councillor Grace Adebayo
Councillor Simche Steinberger
Councillor Hershy Lisser

In the event that the request is determined to be valid by the Monitoring Officer, does the lead requester wish to make a statement or representation at the meeting when the call-in is considered by the Scrutiny Panel? [please select an option from the drop down list]

Yes

Date: 18 December 2023

Once completed, this form should be returned to the Council's Monitoring Officer - monitoringofficer@hackney.gov.uk

This document outlines the decisions taken by Cabinet on Monday, 11 December 2023.

Decisions listed below that are Key Decisions will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 5 clear working days, unless called-in by at least 5 non-executive members in writing and submitted to the Monitoring Officer using the attached form;

[Executive Decision Call-in Request](#)

Date of Publication: 11 December 2023

Last Date for Call-In: 18 December 2023

Contact: Mark Agnew, Governance Officer, governance@hackney.gov.uk, 020 8356 2398

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Part A – Items considered in public

8	F S209 2023/24 Overall Financial Position Report - October 2023	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the savings summarised at paragraph 2.9 of this report and set out in detail at Appendix. 2. Approve the acceptance of the grant of £2,938,093 from the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero’s Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF) managed by Triple Point to support decarbonisation of the Colville and Britannia Heat Network and agree to enter into a grant agreement and associated documents with the applicable parties in respect of such funding. 3. To note the overall financial position of the Council as at October 2023 as set out
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Page 30		<p align="center">in this report.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>To facilitate financial management and control of the Council's finances and to approve the 5 savings schemes and the acceptance of the GHNF grant allocation</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>This budget monitoring report is primarily an update on the Council's financial position. On the proposal to accept £2,938,093 of funding from the Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF), the alternative is not to accept this grant. This would mean missing out on this opportunity, and the Colville and Britannia Heat Network would either not go ahead as planned or we would need to reprioritise and displace existing projects on the capital programme. The savings listed at 2.9 are necessary to achieve a balanced budget in 2024-25</p>
	9	F S208 Capital Update and Property Disposals And Acquisitions Report

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		<p>Shoreditch Park New Play Hut: Resource and spend approval of £223k in 2024/25 is requested to enable the Council’s Officers to appoint a contractor to carry out the construction works of a new play hut at Shoreditch Adventure Playground and the demolition of the existing play hut.</p> <p>2. That the scheme for Finance and Corporate Resources Directorate as set out in section 11 be given approval as follows:</p> <p>40-43 Andrews Road (Rerouting of Existing Electrical Intake Supply): Resource and spend approval of £72k (£58k in 2023/24 and £13k in 2024/25) is requested to enable Council Officers to progress the urgent health and safety works of re-routing of existing electrical intake supply at this site.</p> <p>3. That the scheme for Climate, Homes & Economy Directorate as set out in section 11 be given approval as follows:</p> <p>Millfields Depot (Electrification Feasibility and Replacing Obsolete Charging Infrastructure): Resource and spend approval of £120k in 2023/24 is requested to enable Council Officers to replace the obsolete charging infrastructure and to engage UK Power Network Services to conduct a feasibility study which will identify potential strategies to successfully deliver the long term ambition to electrify Hackney’s fleet of vehicles.</p> <p>4. That the s106 Capital scheme summarised below and set out in section 11 be approved:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td align="center">S106</td> <td align="center">2024/25 £'000</td> </tr> </table>	S106	2024/25 £'000
S106	2024/25 £'000			

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Capital	126
Total S106 Capital for Approval	126

5. That the schemes outlined in section 12 to be noted.
6. Authorise (1) the surrender of the head lease to Shoreditch Town Hall Trust of the land under title number EGL446822 shown for identification purposes edged red on the plan at Appendix 1; (2) the simultaneous regrant of a superior lease of the Annexe for 150 years to Shoreditch Town Hall Trust; (3) the simultaneous regrant of a superior lease of the Car Park Site for further 78 years to Shoreditch Town Hall Trust and (4) approval of a new sublease to be granted by Shoreditch Town Hall Trust to The Office Group for 150 years.
7. To authorise the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services and the Director of Strategic Property Services to agree all commercial terms of the transactions.
8. To delegate authority to the Interim Group Director of Finance and the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services to agree to all other terms and documentation.
9. Reason(s) for the recommendations:
 - 9.1 Proposed Disposal of Shoreditch Town Hall Annexe and Car Park Site, Rivington Place, London, EC2A 3BA: The proposed set of transactions will be subject to the receipt of a premium paid by The Office Group. This amount will be subject to a fair and reasonable split between the Council and Shoreditch Town Hall Trust.
 - 9.2 The capital receipt by Shoreditch Town Hall Trust will assist the organisation in

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		<p>funding essential works that it is required to carry out to the building under the terms of its long leasehold interest from the Council.</p> <p>9.3 This proposed transaction, which exceeds the Council's current freehold value, has the potential to unlock a significantly higher marriage value and provide a substantial capital receipt for the Council, as well as Shoreditch Town Hall Trust.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>The decisions required are necessary in order that the schemes within the Council’s approved Capital programme can be delivered and to approve the property proposals as set out in this report.</p> <p>In most cases, resources have already been allocated to the schemes as part of the budget setting exercise but spending approval is required in order for the scheme to proceed. Where, however, resources have not previously been allocated, resource approval is requested in this report.</p> <p>To facilitate financial management and control of the Council's finances.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>Proposed Disposal of Shoreditch Town Hall Annexe and Car Park Site, Rivington Place, London, EC2A 3BA: The alternative option for the Council is to reject the proposal. This would mean that the existing lease arrangements remain in place with expiries in 2101.</p> <p>This option has been considered but rejected because both the Council and Shoreditch Town Hall Trust stand to benefit from the transaction by way of a capital receipt. The Office Group is a special purchaser that may not be willing to pay such a sum or proceed with the transaction</p>

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		<p>at all at a later date. If the Council does not take the opportunity now, it may not be available again in the future.</p> <p>Shoreditch Town Hall Trust will use its share of the receipt to invest in essential works to the building. The business plan attached to this report sets out the necessity and benefits of these works. Shoreditch Town Hall Trust has made clear the difficulties it has had in obtaining alternative funding sources and it could potentially rely heavily on the receipt from this proposed transaction. The fair and reasonable allocation to Shoreditch Town Hall Trust will not cover all of the proposed works but it will allow Shoreditch Town Hall Trust to at least consider and undertake works that it considers to be a priority.</p>
10	CE S283 Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>Cabinet agree to:</p> <p>3.1 close (discontinue) De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024</p> <p>3.2 close (discontinue) Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.</p> <p>3.3 close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.</p> <p>3.4 close (discontinue) Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.</p> <p>3.5 increase the published admission number of Nightingale Primary School by adding an additional form of entry to all year groups. This proposal is related to the recommendation at 3.4.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p>

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		<p>Background</p> <p>Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the medium to long-term, for the time we have forecasts for (up to 2031/2032 see Appendix C). School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough.</p> <p>The School Organisation Plan (SOP) and Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy (ESES) form the policy basis for the proposals which relate to priority 2 of the ESES: to address falling primary school rolls, by working with schools with budget pressures and falling pupil rolls to seek viable long-term solutions. (see section 10 for further detail)</p> <p>If the proposals in this report are taken forward, the Council will consider whether any vacated site could reasonably be utilised in addressing priority 1, the significant increase in demand for SEND education provision.</p> <p>At the time of writing schools in Hackney are 98% good or outstanding and the proposals in this paper are no reflection of the quality of the leadership or teaching, only the falling rolls issue which is faced across London. The schools in these proposals have gone above and beyond to ensure that the falling rolls have impacted as little as possible. However it is not sustainable to continue running half empty schools. The council acknowledges the outstanding support these schools have provided to children with SEND, across Hackney.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges the outstanding support offered to Colvestone Primary School by</p>

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		<p>the Blossom Federation, who have expertly stabilised the school’s financial position, having inherited an historical deficit from the previous leadership of the school. This temporary soft partnership (recently extended until July 2024) allows Colvestone to receive leadership and business support to improve standards and children’s outcomes, all of which has been achieved with the support of The Blossom Federation, who led the school to being assessed as ‘Good’ by OFSTED in October 2023.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.</p> <p>Despite removing 375 reception places through formal reductions in published admission numbers (PANs) (as distinct from unofficially ‘capping’ admission numbers) across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32. Analysis of past, current and projected demand and summary of reception places removed to date is provided in Appendix C. There will still be unutilised capacity in schools and over 200 additional places that could be reinstated should they be required in future years (table 7, appendix C).</p> <p>Financial reserves are reducing at an alarming and unsustainable rate across Hackney’s maintained primary schools, or the federations they form part of, and are projected to fall by £6.48m or 70% in the two years to March 2024. The combined surplus totalled £9.08m in 2021/22, fell significantly to £5.8m in 2022/23, and is forecast to drop further to £2.6m at the close of 2023/24 financial year.</p> <p>Over two thirds of Hackney’s maintained schools, or the federations they form part of, are predicting they will over-spend during the 2023/24 financial year.</p>

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		<p>For schools to remain financially viable, school governors and leaders are forced to make difficult decisions about whether to reduce the number of teachers or teaching assistants and support staff. School leaders tend to delay investment or maintenance of school buildings and equipment or find other savings, all of which impacts negatively on the quality of education and school experience for Hackney children and staff.</p> <p>The recently undertaken Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2023 indicates that household growth in Hackney between 2022 and 2039 will be predominantly single people (+45.1%) and cohabiting, i.e. shared living, households (+44.2%). In comparison, there is little change in the projection for families with children over the same period. With the exception of Stamford Hill, the majority of Borough-wide housing need is for smaller homes. This is important in considering the likely effect of such housing on pupil numbers.</p> <p>While there are variances across the different housing tenures, across the Council’s programme as a whole, just over 70% of the homes delivered have been 1 and 2 bed homes; with just under 30% comprising a mix of 3 and 4 bed family sized homes. This is broadly consistent with policy LP14 as outlined in LP33, which, depending on the tenure of housing, requires all new developments to comprise a mix of family sized homes, ranging from 15 to 36%. Despite Hackney building new homes the numbers will be insufficient to have any significant impact on the proposals in this report for schools in scope for closure and/or merger.</p> <p>Hackney Education’s senior leadership team took the decision to propose closure and amalgamation/merger of the student body of six schools in September 2022 following analysis of a range of objective measures evidencing the impact of falling rolls on school’s viability. Following early engagement with head teachers and chairs of governors from January 2023 the proposals were publicly launched on 28 March 2023 and school community engagement activity was undertaken with staff and parents in April 2023. Community queries and feedback from March to May period can be seen in Appendix D by theme (as it was detailed in May 2023</p>

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		<p>Cabinet report - Appendix E).</p> <p>Throughout the process, officers followed the process set out in the Department for Education (DfE) publication, Opening and closing maintained schools Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, January 2023, (the Guidance). The Council must have regard to this Guidance which sets out the considerations that should be made by the decision maker when deciding proposals to discontinue (close) a school. It requires that those making the decisions on the proposals should be satisfied that the proposer has carried out the requirements of the statutory process satisfactorily and should have due regard to all responses received during the representation period. Cabinet members should review all responses before the meeting. These are substantial.</p> <p>Cabinet decisions in May 2023 and September 2023</p> <p>On 22 May 2023 Cabinet decided to proceed to consultation on all five proposals (The May cabinet paper is included as Appendix E). As part of this decision, the Cabinet considered comment and feedback received during a period of early engagement and this is provided with this report in Appendix D for the consideration of decision makers. Following the May Cabinet decision a consultation ran for 6 weeks, from 5 June to 16 July 2023, gathering feedback on the proposals from parents and staff of the schools in scope and other stakeholders that may be impacted by the decisions. The key themes raised in the early engagement period were raised again during the consultation and are addressed in the response and commentary in the September 2023 report.</p> <p>On September 25 2023 cabinet members considered the consultation feedback and agreed to publish statutory notices for the proposals. The September cabinet report (Appendix F) included a paper detailing the analysis of comments and objections received during the consultation. Comprehensive summaries of this information have also been provided for this and the previous engagement.</p>

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		<p>The local authority’s detailed responses to the previous stages of engagement and consultation feedback are provided as above. Details can be seen in the September 2023 Cabinet paper (Appendix F), which summarised the Kwest report from the consultation phase (Appendix G) and reviewed by cabinet in September.</p> <p>Statutory notice summary</p> <p>Following the Cabinet decision on 25 September 2023, statutory notices in respect of the five proposals as outlined in section 3 above were issued for a period of 28 days. The evidence for and rationale for the decision to move to statutory notice is set out in the September cabinet report (Appendix F).</p> <p>The statutory representation period ran from 6 October to 3 November 2023. Statutory notices which were posted for 28 days for objection or comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Appendix H) • Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Appendix I) • Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School (Appendix J) • Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School (Appendix K) • Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) (Appendix L) <p>The Guidance states that “The proposer must publish the full proposal on a website along with a statement setting out: • 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 (4 weeks</p>

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Page 40		<p>from publication); and • the address to which objections or comments should be submitted. A brief notice containing the website address of the full proposal must be published in a local newspaper.</p> <p>In accordance with these requirements, notices (Appendix H to L) were published in a local paper, Hackney Citizen newspaper on 6 October 2023. The Statutory notices were also published on Citizen Space (the Council’s engagement platform) in English, Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish, and on Hackney Education’s website. The notices were posted publicly outside the school premises and all parents/carers, staff and school governors received copies of the notice pertaining to their school with signposting to the council’s website for further information.</p> <p>Other stakeholders, internal and external audiences, local residents and partner organisations were informed about the statutory notices and invited to comment. Copies of all statutory notices were also sent to neighbouring Local Authorities, Hackney MPs and Councillors and Trade Unions representing school staff in accordance with statutory guidance. Copies were sent to all those required under the Guidance.</p> <p>The Council utilised a variety of methods to publicise the notices such as website updates, newsletters, social media posts, a press release, an article in Love Hackney (distributed to 120,000 homes and businesses in Hackney), email and digital screens across council sites. Publicity exceeded that required by the Guidance, because of the significance of the proposals to residents and the desire to engage as many residents as possible.</p> <p>Responses to the statutory notices</p> <p>There were 164 responses during the representation period received via Citizen Space (Hackney’s online platform), 10 emails and 1 letter. The responses included one from Save Colvestone, consisting of 284 pages. Five responses were received past the deadline of 5pm</p>

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		<p>on 3 November 2023. These late submissions have not been included for analysis.</p> <p>The representation period provided a further opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the proposals, the first being pre-engagement events in March through to April 2023, followed by the consultation period which ran from 5 June to 16 July 2023.</p> <p>Analysis of statutory notice submissions</p> <p>The representation period response has been analysed and reviewed by an independent third party, Kwest (Appendix M). Of the 175 responses received (164 citizen space, 10 emails and 1 letter), each respondent could comment on one, several or all of the statutory proposals and therefore the number of responses per proposal is greater than 175. Kwest have analysed 172 of the responses together, excluding 3 emails submitted with large PDF attachments, which have been analysed separately in their report. These large PDF submissions are included, in full, in appendix 3 of the Kwest report (Appendix M).</p> <p>Across all 5 proposals, there were 219 responses that were clearly supportive or not supportive. Of these, 207 responses (95%) did not support the proposals and 12 responses (5%) were supportive. With the exception of the proposal to close Colvestone and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School, only a small number of comments were received in response to each of the other statutory proposals.</p> <p>Over 60% of all responses that appeared relevant related to the proposal to close Colvestone and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School (143 responses). The number of responses to the other four proposals ranged from 20 to 30. Many of these responses were short words or sentences comprising a broad statement of the respondents' views. For the proposals on the closure of De Beauvoir and expansion of Nightingale, these short comments made up half of the feedback that appeared relevant.</p>

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Proposal	Number of responses	Appeared relevant**	Number in favour	Number against
Closure of De Beauvoir	24	22	2	17
Closure of Randal Cremer	26	24	1	20

Proposal	Number of responses	Appeared relevant**	Number in favour	Number against
Amalgamation of Colvestone & Princess May	146	143	2	138
Amalgamation of Baden Powell & Nightingale	30	28	3	24
Expansion of Nightingale	20	15	4	8

*** 7 responses included no comments about any of the proposals.*

General themes arising from comments and objections received during the representation period

Note for decision makers: Responses to the proposals, made during the initial engagement, the consultation and representation period are appended to this report (appendix D , G , M). Cabinet members are asked to ensure that they have reviewed all these documents before the meeting. A hard copy of the comments and objections made during the statutory representation period will be available at the meeting. Decision makers are also asked to note that while the Kwest report refers to closure for two schools and amalgamation for the other two pairs of schools, this is a difference in nomenclature only.

Theme: Respondents do not want their school to close/merge

eg. brief responses, containing only a small number of words or a short statement, for example, “disagree” or “please don’t close this school”.

Response: The Council understands children, parents, staff and the wider community do not

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		<p>want to see their local schools close for all the reasons outlined in the feedback received, however the overriding need to reduce the number of primary schools in Hackney is clear.</p> <p>In recent years school leaders and the Council have worked to progress a number of approaches, with a focus on preventing the escalation of risk to those in scope for potential closure or amalgamation. The actions taken include restructuring school staffing levels, reducing the amount of available support staff, limiting extra curricular activity such as school trips, ‘vertical grouping’ by combining different year groups in some schools, formally reducing and capping reception places. Unfortunately, because the fall in pupil numbers is significant and sustained, these actions have not sufficiently addressed the challenge of falling rolls and the level of risk for some schools in terms of sustainability remains unacceptably high.</p> <p>The Council wants every single child to have access to an excellent education that allows them to fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions. This is why the very difficult options of closures or mergers outlined in this report must now be considered.</p> <p>Theme: Existing school provides good support for children with SEND Eg. “We have a high number of SEND children on roll and I know we provide an outstanding provision for them. I worry for their future as many schools do not show the inclusion and love and we do, families are heavily supported by us.”</p> <p>Response: The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and acknowledges in particular that provided in those schools proposed to close.</p> <p>Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools are unlikely to be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.</p>

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The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEND support in schools impacted by the proposals is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEND support	% of pupils with SEND Support
Baden Powell	8	4.8%	22	13.1%
Colvestone	10	7.7%	21	16.2%
De Beauvoir	10	9.1%	28	25.5%
Nightingale	24	11.9%	30	14.9%
Princess May	10	5.1%	17	8.7%
Randal Cremer	17	7.0%	42	17.4%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

Representations made to the Council state that Colvestone School has a higher proportion of children with SEND (17%) than the national average (13%), and that the numbers are such that 25% of children in that school have SEND. Cabinet will wish to be aware of this when taking into account the extent of impact of the proposals and its duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010. (See legal comments, section 13)

Theme: Larger schools have more problems / less support. Small class sizes / schools are better for children. eg. “Small class sizes are good for children.”

The National Education Union submitted a response at the request of parents and NEU members of Colvestone expressing the belief that “there are significant benefits in retaining

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		<p>small one form entry primary schools wherever possible. Whilst we understand the financial difficulties presented by years of government underfunding we believe that smaller schools and smaller class sizes are a desirable aim for our students.” As well as improved academic progress they argue that smaller schools and smaller class sizes have benefits including more tailored learning, more social confidence and inclusion, staff know their children better and that parents have a better relationship with schools.</p> <p>Response: Small and large schools each have strengths and challenges relating to their size. A school’s ethos and leadership are considered more significant factors than school size in determining successful outcomes. The council does not accept that larger schools generally have more problems and less support.</p> <p>While a review of evidence suggests there may be small benefits for student attainment in significantly smaller class sizes, unfortunately the Council cannot retain schools where small classes are bringing significant financial burden and threatening financial viability. Smaller schools e.g. one form entry schools, that are not full in all year groups are disproportionately affected by falling rolls, making them more financially vulnerable.</p> <p>Some schools have had their pupil numbers (PAN) reduced but still have larger buildings and sites to maintain. These schools will have higher premises costs while having a significantly smaller budget. Underinvestment will create longer term issues and increased need for future funding to deal with a lack of maintenance.</p> <p>Theme: The School has a good reputation and excellent staff. eg. “These schools, and the staff who work in them, have been pillars of education in our community for decades. Their closure would be a devastating loss for current and future generations. This is an opportunity to reduce class sizes and improve education in the borough, not make it worse.”</p>

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		<p>Response: The Council acknowledges the incredible support staff provide for children and families, despite many facing personal stress and uncertainty as a result of these proposals.</p> <p>All six schools included in the current proposals are rated ‘Good’. This is recognised by the Council.</p> <p>While schools’ performance and reputation is an important factor that influences parents’ decision on where to send their children, and can help protect those with the best results, this isn’t the case for Hackney, where over 98% of the primary schools are rated ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted.</p> <p>Theme: Move will negatively affect children eg. “Many pupils will be separated from their friends at a key time in their lives, with SEND pupils who have built relationships with staff particularly affected.”</p> <p>Response: The council understands that changing schools or the arrival of pupils from a closing school is likely to be a challenging transition for the majority of children. We acknowledge these concerns and are seeking to minimise disruption as much as possible. We acknowledge that change, such as of staff, can be particularly difficult for pupils with SEND.</p> <p>The decision to close or merge schools is not made lightly. Schools with low numbers become less financially viable over time, using surplus funds or going into deficit to ensure the quality of education is maintained. The Council is liable for any maintained school deficits, and must decide annually whether to continue to fund a school in deficit. If the Council allows schools with falling rolls to come under increasing financial pressure and go into deficit by allowing them to stay open when they are not financially viable, they are directly and knowingly taking on increased financial burden and responsibility, which can further negatively impact the quality of the education in the borough. School deficits are borne by the Council in the event of closure.</p>

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		<p>While the council recognises that children will be affected, primary schools are highly experienced in supporting children who transition to secondary schools, as well as those who are transferring from one school to another during the school year.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the year, the Council has been working closely with the six schools, and will continue to do so, offering them the information and assistance needed to help families and children during the process. If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposals, the Council will work together with schools and families to make sure that transition plans are in place to minimise the impact on the children’s wellbeing.</p> <p>Specialist SEND professionals including Educational Psychology and Speech and Language therapists will continue to work with settings and pupils to ensure that children with SEND receive robust and appropriate transitional support.</p> <p>The Council is also ready to help schools assist parents and carers when making a decision on moving their children to a different school.</p> <p>Theme: Impact on staff & potential loss of jobs eg. “These are not amalgamations, they are closures. Staff in these schools have worked throughout Covid, and are some of the most under-paid and overworked in the whole borough. They are being rewarded with forced redundancies and financial insecurity.</p> <p>Response: The council acknowledges the serious impact these proposals have on staff wellbeing prior to any final decision and the direct impact on the lives and livelihood of staff should the decision to close or merge schools go ahead. In view of this staff have access to an employee assistance programme, where they can access confidential advice and counselling.</p> <p>The number of teachers and support staff that would be affected if the proposals are taken</p>

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forward are summarised in the table below (data as at 31/08/2024).

School	Teachers	Support staff	Total
Baden Powell	13	22	35
Colvestone	10	8	18
De Beauvoir	9	11	20
Randal Cremer	23	33	54
Total	53	74	127

In the event of closures, the Council will do everything it can to help staff find alternative roles in schools across Hackney. However, as a last resort, some staff will be offered redundancy and/or retirements.

In the event of a merger, we will work with the leadership teams of the affected schools to assess the full impact on staff. Governors and school leaders in receiving schools will lead the significant changes brought by these proposals.

Staff and all other relevant parties including trade unions would be consulted about any potential changes.

Those affected will be supported through practical outplacement support such as application and CV writing, interview skills and potential job opportunities in other Hackney Schools. A particular emphasis will be given to supporting support staff, many of whom are Hackney residents.

Theme: Demographics of population can change / concerns about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places

Eg. Any decision to close a locally maintained school is likely to be irreversible, as the 2011 Education Act requires future demand to be met by the academy or free school sector.

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Response: The Council aims to hold between 5% and 10% surplus reception places to allow for unforecast growth in pupil numbers in the future. If the demand for places increases significantly in future there are currently between 240 and 330 unused places in Hackney primary schools that could be brought back into use, without capital investment, by increasing these school’s PANs. (Appendix C, table 7)

Theme: Capacity to accommodate potentially displaced pupils in other local schools
 Eg. “I still remain concerned about the ‘promise’ that children will be placed in a primary school near their home. Many parents are already unable to find places in the school they want and are on waiting lists. There are also a number of schools locally where PANs have been reduced so year groups are over roll with additional waiting lists.”

Response: Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to those proposed to close shows there is capacity to accommodate all displaced pupils within Hackney settings.

The reported number of pupils (at November 2023) in schools proposed to close is shown below by year group.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Baden Powell	19	19	18	27	22	26	27	158
Colvestone	12	16	25	26	12	13	16	120
De Beauvoir	6	4	7	3	5	6	17	48
Randal Cremer	10	12	19	11	19	14	34	119
Grand Total	47	51	69	67	58	59	94	445

Analysis of vacancies at nearby schools (Appendix N - Nearby schools and vacancies - SES - November 2023) demonstrates that there are sufficient places to accommodate all potentially displaced children.

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		<p>Mapping of potentially displaced children (Appendix O to T) demonstrates they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney and that families are very likely to have several options of alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. for children aged over 5 but under the age of 8 this is 2 miles from their home and for children aged over the age of 8 this is 3 miles from their home).</p> <p>It should be noted that the analysis provided is based on official school published admission numbers (PAN), which also form the basis of local school place planning. Schools that may be capping their intake in response to falling rolls would be expected to accommodate children impacted by any future decision to close up to their PAN, exceeding any capping that may be in place.</p> <p>If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children.</p> <p>There will be one-to-one support for families to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including increased priority for places at nearby schools.</p> <p>Theme: Use existing schools to address borough-wide shortage of SEND places Eg. "Hackney council spends vast amounts of money sending SEND pupils to be educated outside the borough, due to a lack of SEND resource bases. These schools should remain open and form part of a wider investment in SEND pupils, by turning them into specialist resources bases, and educating children within their borough."</p> <p>Response: Strategic priority 1 of the the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy (Appendix Y) seeks to create sufficient in borough special school places through creation of Additional Resource Provision (ARP) in mainstream schools, extending existing special schools by size</p>

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		<p>and or designation, opening a new special school or the re-organisation of mainstream primary places, where feasible, due to falling rolls.</p> <p>Expressions of interest were sought in 2021 from existing Hackney schools with capacity to open ARPs and a programme of work has since been initiated that, upon completion, will increase provision by 300 places.</p> <p>School sites made vacant following any future decision to close them will be reviewed to assess, amongst other options, the feasibility of being repurposed as SEND provision.</p> <p>Theme: Future use of school buildings/site Eg. “The decision to close a school without any plan for the future of the site is bizarre.”</p> <p>Response: We know that our communities have tight connections to their local schools, and we will seek to preserve the buildings that have a rich history and heritage where possible.</p> <p>The Council has been reviewing options for alternative uses. This is very challenging work in the current economic climate, because it is very difficult to find financially sustainable uses. This means we need to work through the potential for each site in their local context and we will do our best to steer these sites into locally relevant and valuable uses mindful of the extreme financial pressure the Council is under and the need to minimise the impact on our finances.</p> <p>We will take into account the views of the community, the needs of the local neighbourhood, and the need for financial sustainability.</p> <p>Theme: School is at the heart of local community Eg. “Colvestone primary school is the beating heart of the area – it has engendered a unique sense of community among the local families and serves as an important counterpoint/softening influence to Ridley Road market.”</p>

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		<p>Response: We know schools have very close, sometimes multigenerational, ties to their local area and communities which is why proposing closing and amalgamating schools is one of the most difficult and challenging decisions the Council can make, and not one we would ever choose to do unless we had no other choice. But the quality of education for our children, and stability for our school staff, must remain a priority, requiring that options for closure and/or merger must be considered.</p> <p>Theme: Concern about the confusion for parents and staff regarding the terminology used to describe the proposals Eg. “The respondent was critical of the proposal objecting to the use of the word “amalgamate” because they believe this is confusing as children and parents think everyone, including the staff, will be going to Nightingale.”</p> <p>Response: The council acknowledges the potential for the terminology associated with school organisation changes to cause confusion amongst parents and staff. The council responded by making the impact of the proposals clear in the September Cabinet report and statutory notices, adopting plain language eg. “close Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guarantee all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.”</p> <p>In addition the September Cabinet (Appendix F) report set out clearly the meaning and impact of “merge” and “amalgamate” specifically for staff ie. “This process would mean that the staff who are currently working at the closing school would be at risk of being made redundant, as merging/amalgamating the children may not result in new jobs being created in the host school. Firstly as stated earlier the parents may not choose to move their children to the host school therefore opportunities for additional roles in the host school will only be known following completion of the schools admissions process. However, as part of the drive to avoid redundancies as much as possible, we are seeking to obtain agreement from the host school and the Hackney family of schools to support job opportunities for those staff at risk of</p>

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		<p>redundancy.” (quoted from September Cabinet report, 6.9, pg 21)</p> <p>Arguments raised against the proposal to close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School</p> <p>Note for decision makers: In addition to comments made by individuals, the Council received a document entitled “Save Colvestone Final Consultation Response” which can be seen in full in appendix 3 of the Kwest statutory consultation report (Appendix M), written by parents and carers (referred to in the section below as “the save Colvestone submission”). Cabinet members are asked to review the document before the meeting. Hard copies will be available at the meeting. The document, in its introduction, chapters and conclusion, makes many arguments against the proposal to close Colvestone Primary School. These include, but are not limited to, the following which Cabinet members should take into account when determining the proposal:</p> <p>Comment: The save Colvestone submission includes an “up-to-date analysis of place data that significantly challenges the underlying rationale of the proposals” and sets out the case that the proposals will not achieve the aim of reducing the number of surplus reception places. The key points from this analysis are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The May Cabinet report sets out that the proposals to close two schools and amalgamate four others into two will lead to a total reduction of 135 reception places. However, the save Colvestone submission observes that the Council has no control over free schools, academies and faith schools nor can it control the choices that parents might decide to make about their children’s education. Therefore, although the Council is trying to reduce vacancies across the borough, “it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system”. • The save Colvestone submission observes that many schools have requested a

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Page 54		<p>temporary reduction in their PAN number. The latest school vacancy data, provided by Hackney Education on 19th September, shows 391 surplus places in reception classes (14.5% vacancy rate) and across all year groups the overall vacancy rate is 12.7%. The vacancy rates are higher in faith schools (30% for reception classes) and it is argued that the Council target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing this. Excluding faith schools, the overall vacancy rate across all other school types is 11% and popular schools have very few vacancies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The save Colvestone submission claims the council fails to account for up to date pupil numbers in the September Cabinet Report and that this invalidates many of the suppositions in that report; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The proposed outcomes (to reduce PAN) will not be achieved ○ The vacancy rates are significantly higher in faith schools and the overall target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing vacancies in these schools ○ There are insufficient places at the nearby schools to accommodate all the pupils being forced out of closing schools. • The save Colvestone submission includes worked examples from each of the schools in question to argue that the proposals will reduce the surplus reception places by 60, rather than 135 places. It looks at whether there are enough vacancies in other local schools as well as whether parental choice is maintained. In addition, it discusses the risk of further closures because the authors understand that this is only the first consultation and others are planned, potentially affecting up to 16 schools. • Based on the analysis provided, the Save Colvestone submission demands an urgent review of the latest vacancy data for each proposed school rather than on a borough

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		<p>wide basis. It also insists that each of the proposed school closures should be considered and assessed on an individual basis. Furthermore, it recommends not closing one of the Dalston one-form community schools but rather exploring a potential merger between them.</p> <p>Response: The council acknowledges that “it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system”. The Council will continue to work within a collaborative process and take a graduated approach to managing surplus places in partnership with faith schools, free schools and academies, which form an important part of the Hackney family of schools.</p> <p>The detailed analysis provided in the save Colvestone submission does not correctly reflect the vacancy position of schools, nor the surplus places across the borough. This is because it is based on data that reflects the ‘capping’ of some year groups in some schools, in place at the request of the leaders of those schools, to assist in the management of their falling rolls.</p> <p>Cappings are unofficial reductions to school intakes and do not form the basis of school place planning nor the future projections of demand used by local authorities. A school’s published admission number (PAN) forms part of its admission arrangements which are formally determined by the admission authority for the school and published in accordance with the Admissions Code. An assessment of capacity in nearby schools to accommodate children potentially affected by the proposals is provided at section 4.37 of this report and is based on schools’ officially published PANs.</p> <p>For each of the schools proposed to close the assessment (at section 4.37) lists nearby schools within statutory walking distance and provides up to date vacancies by year group based on PANs. This assessment identifies, for each school under proposal to discontinue, that across nearby schools there are 100s of alternative school places available in every year group.</p>

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		<p>If the Cabinet decides to close Colvestone, the local authority will comply fully with its obligations under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 and ensure compulsory school aged children can access full time, efficient education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that a child may have.</p> <p>The offer of places at Princess May that will be made, should Cabinet decide to progress the proposal, satisfies these obligations, however parents have a right to express a preference for any alternative school if they wish.</p> <p>Parents have a right to express a preference for a particular type of school, for example a non-faith school, a one form entry school or an academy, and may seek a place at schools outside their local area in preference to local schools, if that is what they wish. The local authority is under no obligation to ensure parents have all of these options within walking distance of their home or their local area, but in Hackney many are.</p> <p>The primary motivation when proposing a merger of the student body of a school proposed to close into an existing school, is the impact on families and children and the benefits it could bring in terms of children being able to move together with some of their friends to a new setting. The proposal to discontinue Colvestone and offer a guaranteed place at Princess May for Colvestone pupils is not dependent on the assumption that a specific number of children will transition to Princess May.</p> <p>If the Cabinet decides to progress the proposal, the council will work closely with both schools to understand the number of and impact on children joining Princess May and to support them welcoming the families that do choose to take the offer of guaranteed places.</p> <p>Comment: The save Colvestone submission outlines perceived flaws in the consultation process. A summary of some of the issues raised are:</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The save Colvestone submission observes that “there are multiple instances where the consultation process has failed to follow or deliberately misrepresents” the Statutory Guidance for opening and closing maintained schools and the Council’s Estates Strategy. Several examples are detailed on pages 14-17 of the save Colvestone submission. • The September report to the Cabinet is considered to have been “ill informed and lacking detail”, whilst the design of the consultation is considered “ineffective” for the stated purpose of determining whether to close the schools. The rationale behind this viewpoint is set out in pages 18-21 of the save Colvestone submission. • The save Colvestone submission asserts that the consultation was “inaccessible to some of the groups that should have been included” and the process “damaged the financial viability of the schools in scope”. It states that the consultation documents were not sent to local residents, despite the Cabinet report listing them as a group to be included and criticises the lack of information provided in alternate languages and the lack of engagement with families or staff at local nurseries and other childcare settings. • The save Colvestone submission claims the council have not provided information as requested and that some of this has been acquired by other means and used to support the alternative analyses presented in the submission. It asserts that this information should have been presented by the Council to enable a more informed consultation. • The save Colvestone submission claims the Council should have consulted on each proposal individually, with information made available as a context for each including the circumstances and locality for each school. Because this was not done, informed scrutiny and consultation was not possible. • The save Colvestone submission objects to the fact that the Council has not consulted

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		<p>on alternative proposals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Save Colvestone submission states that part of the consultation was undertaken during school holidays. <p>Response: The council considers it has consulted lawfully. Officers followed the Guidance and took legal advice. The process is detailed in this report under Statutory Notice Summary, points 4.20 to 4.23. Paragraph 4.21 deals with the translation into other languages of the Statutory Notices. The Council held early engagement sessions before meeting to decide whether or not to consult. The Guidance states (at page 7) that “Both the consultation period and the representation period should be largely carried out in term time to allow the maximum numbers of people to see and respond to what is proposed.”</p> <p>Comment: The save Colvestone submission presents data that challenges the Council’s interpretation of child yield and related time frames from the Dalston plan developments. It submits that this information is specifically relevant to Colvestone as the nearest primary school to all of these developments. Some points raised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Dalston Plan forms parts of commitments made and adopted in 2020 as part of the Hackney Local Plan (LP33). These proposals would benefit Colvestone by delivering new children to the immediate locality in need of primary school provision in the short to mid-term, and long term place demand downstream from these projects. These committed projects would be harmed by the closure of Colvestone Primary School. Most of the development would be concentrated at the Kingsland Shopping Centre with around 30% of the proposed housing being 3 bedroom family sized units and the aim of 50% of the development to be affordable housing. This could bring 200+ new families into the immediate area.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Colvestone and De Beauvoir schools were closed, parents in that development would have to travel almost half a mile to get to a non-denominational school. And even the closest one, Princess May, sits next to the A10 • The Dalston Plan makes it clear that there is demand for Colvestone’s school places in the medium to long term, because of the large number of new housing which the SPD will encourage in the immediate vicinity, and for which Colvestone will be the nearest primary school. • An assessment of likely child yield is provided and it is claimed the figures demonstrate that the Dalston Plan developments (planned for delivery in the short to medium term) will deliver 76 and 100 children to the immediate vicinity of Colvestone primary school - between 2.5 and 3.5 entire year groups of school aged children within very short (most sites, less than 100m), fully pedestrianised access to primary school provision. This is anything but negligible, and the proportion of 0-4 year olds suggests an even healthier future demand for places downstream. This data draws a compelling picture of future demand for places in the short to medium term. • Closing Colvestone could impede the success of the development by making it hard for developers to sell those apartments to families, given the limited schooling options. The closure of so many local authority schools, and particularly one close to a new development, threatens to lock Hackney into a death spiral when it comes to families living in the area - a reduction in families leads to the closure of schools and reduction of choice, which makes the area unappealing to families, which leads to more closed. <p>Response: There are proposed areas for regeneration and new housing across the borough and in some of the areas close to the schools covered in this report. However, despite the extensive Council and family housing planned, the expected initial child yield is low and would not impact medium to long term demand. For the projected figures we have there would</p>

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Page 60		<p>remain enough school places to accommodate need. Projections obtained annually from the Greater London Authority take into account proposed new developments that have attained planning permission.</p> <p>The recently undertaken Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2023 indicates that household growth in Hackney between 2022 and 2039 will be predominantly single people (+45.1%) and cohabiting, i.e. shared living, households (+44.2%). In comparison, there is little change in the projection for families with children over the same period. With the exception of Stamford Hill, the majority of Borough-wide housing need is for smaller homes. This is important in considering the likely effect of such housing on pupil numbers.</p> <p>Adopted in July 2020, the Hackney Local Plan 2033 (LP33), requires that all new development in the borough have regard to existing social infrastructure, which includes the provision of education facilities. Within LP33, policy LP8 states that <i>‘where proposed development is expected to place pressure on existing social infrastructure by increasing demand, these developments will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional social infrastructure to meet needs, either through on-site provision or through contributions towards providing additional capacity off-site.’</i></p> <p>The Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which informed the policies within LP33, notes that while the borough’s population is expected to increase to 321,000 by 2033 (42,000 higher than in 2018), that the age mix of the borough is anticipated to shift towards the older community with the growth in over 65s being four times greater than the growth in the school age population, ages 0-15. Again, such long term forecasting suggests that changes which forecast increases to the overall general population, need to be balanced against demographic changes over this time.</p> <p>While there are variances across the different housing tenures, across the Council’s programme as a whole, just over 70% of the homes delivered have been 1 and 2 bed homes; with just under 30% comprising a mix of 3 and 4 bed family sized homes. This is broadly</p>

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		<p>consistent with policy LP14 as outlined in LP33, which, depending on the tenure of housing, requires all new developments to comprise a mix of family sized homes, ranging from 15 to 36%.</p> <p>The council considers that there will remain sufficient school places in the planning area, and within statutory walking distance, for the entire length of time for which it has information available to it. Places required to accommodate the yield of school aged children from proposed developments is not anticipated to exceed availability of places even with the discontinuance of Colvestone and progression of the proposed developments.</p> <p>Despite Hackney building new homes the numbers will be insufficient to have any significant impact on the proposals in this report for schools in scope for closure and/or merger.</p> <p>Comment: The save Colvestone submission points out that the Council has no recent experience of closing schools and should have done so in an “informed, holistic and consultative fashion”.</p> <p>Response: For many years school closures were not necessary. The Council’s consultation process included all steps required by the Guidance, as well as an additional engagement at the start and additional action to publicise the statutory representation period. The Council’s powers are limited in dealing with the challenges it faces over falling rolls; parental choice for example, and its very limited powers in relation to opening a new school under current legislation. It consulted on the option of closing some of its schools as a last resort having previously taken steps outlined in this and previous reports in order to avoid this.</p> <p>Comment: The save Colvestone submission points out that the consultation has had a “chilling” effect on transfers and enrolments into schools that are the subject of the proposals.</p> <p>Response: The Council acknowledges that the proposals, sadly, and perhaps inevitably, have</p>

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resulted in changes to choices parents have made, reducing numbers of children in affected schools further.

School	Total on Roll (Provisional October 23 census)	Change since Jan '23 census	% Change since Jan '23 census
Baden Powell Primary School	154	-8	-4.9%
De Beauvoir School	57	-58	-50.4%
Colvestone Primary School	116	-14	-10.8%
Randal Cremer	128	-114	-47.1%

The Council is monitoring pupil movement closely and supporting schools as required. The Council acknowledges the impact for staff and pupils to see their peers and friends leaving the school prior to any final decision.

The Council acknowledges the uncertainty parents have faced and has supported parental preference as to whether they acted in anticipation of a decision to close their school, or waited until after the decision.

Comment: The save Colvestone submission claims that “through the successful partnership with the Blossom Federation, in only 6 months the new Senior Leadership Team have demonstrated that they can return the school to financial health despite the reduced pupil numbers.”

Response: Colvestone School submitted an agreed 2023-24 budget to the local authority in May 2023 inclusive of the savings achieved in the previous 2022-23 financial year of £28,320.

The school forecasted an increase in the deficit for the following 3 years 2023-26 and were anticipating a significant growth in pupil numbers in academic year 2027-28 which would

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facilitate the process of recovering the deficit to a larger extent.

However, following a review of the actual income and expenditure for period 6 (September 2023) the forecast financial position was revised as stated below:

Financial Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Projected Deficit May 2023	-589,261	-682,951	- 793,491

Financial Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Projected Deficit Nov 2023	-601,964	-819,693	-1,041,600

The revised forecasts show the deficit exceeding £600,000 at the end of the current financial year and growing over the coming years.

The Council acknowledges the outstanding support offered to Colvestone by the Blossom Federation who have expertly stabilised the school’s education provision and their financial position having inherited an historical deficit from the previous leadership of the school.

After the executive headteacher and head of school left Colvestone in August 2022, the school’s governing body supported by the Council looked at proposals from Blossom Federation and Princess May. This temporary soft partnership (recently extended until July 2024) allows Colvestone to receive leadership and business support to improve standards and children’s outcomes, and stabilise the budget, all of which has been achieved with the support of The Blossom Federation.

This expert support was reflected in a recent Ofsted Inspection which found the school good overall.

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		<p>Comment: The save Colvestone submission claims that, despite persistent requests, there remains no cost-benefit analysis of each of the individual proposals. Closing a school is hugely costly, and the submission identifies multiple additional costs not budgeted for in any of the consultation documents prepared by the Council. It claims the likely costs declared by the Council for realising the proposals to be a substantial under-estimation.</p> <p>Response: The council acknowledges the points raised. The rationale for taking action is to ensure our primary schools can continue to offer the very best education for residents and this is directly linked to the financial viability of schools.</p> <p>Decision makers were presented with estimates of the costs of closing schools in the May Cabinet report and are included with this report in Appendix U. The council acknowledges the associated costs are significant and largely fall to the local authority and, most significantly, include any deficit a school is carrying at the point of closure. Without reducing the number of surplus places in our primary schools financial pressure will continue to grow and push a growing number of schools into or toward deficit.</p> <p>In the current climate where supply of school places has exceeded demand for 8 years, reserve funds across maintained schools are being exhausted at an alarming and unsustainable rate (ie. forecast to reduce by 70% in just two years, see section 5.4 to 5.10), and two thirds of maintained primary schools (or the federations they form part of) are forecasting they will be unable to operate within budget this financial year, the local authority will face even greater costs when closing schools in the future as school deficits build.</p> <p>Comment: The save Colvestone submission includes the 11 September 2023 Judicial Review pre-action letter (Appendix V), which states; the Council has wholly failed to factor air quality impact into the PSED analysis. Negative air quality impacts are known to harm those who are more vulnerable, in particular, children. Hackney’s own Air Quality Action Plan 2021- 2025 identifies school communities as amongst the most susceptible groups to the serious health</p>

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impacts of air pollution within its strategy to improve air quality throughout the borough.

Air pollution levels are significantly higher at Princess May than at Colvestone. Princess May is on a main road (the A10); Colvestone is on a quiet back street, part of a fully-funded re-greening project which will further improve air quality, meaning that closing Colvestone will inevitably expose children to poorer air quality.

Response: The Council acknowledges concern that children may be exposed to pollution when travelling to schools. The Council’s Air Quality Action Plan seeks to improve air quality in the community.

The Council has looked closely at the air quality at Princess May, as we know this is a concern for some parents.

Air quality as measured by average Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) at the six school sites in Hackney was reviewed. For 2022 all of the diffusion tubes located near these schools were well below the Hackney air quality objective of 40 (µg/m³), as seen in table below, with some improving since 2021.

Site name	2021 NO ₂ annual concentration (µg/m ³)	2022 NO ₂ annual concentration (µg/m ³)	Pollutants monitored
Randal Cremer	20	19	NO ₂
Nightingale	19	17	NO ₂
Baden-Powell	18	19	NO ₂
De Beauvoir	39	36	NO ₂
Colvestone	23	21	NO ₂
Princess May 1	23	20	NO ₂
Princess May 2	32	32	NO ₂

Source (Air quality Action plan 2021-2025 and ASR Hackney 2022)

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		<p>Air quality is measured near Princess May School in two places. While the latest air quality monitoring shows that one of them has higher nitrogen dioxide levels than Colvestone, both are within air quality objectives. We will be doing further work to bring this down, as part of the wider mission to improve air quality and reduce traffic around all schools in Hackney.</p> <p>Princess May already has greenery and screening between its playground and the A10, and has been shortlisted for further work as part of our green screen programme involving the installation of 2-3m high ivy plant screens on the perimeter of schools between playgrounds and busy roads.</p> <p>The school has also benefited from the 3.9% reduction of traffic on the A10 side as a result of the wider Stoke Newington Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN), which covers three sides of the school, and has a School Street on two sides, which has further reduced traffic</p> <p>We've rolled out School Streets to nearly all Hackney primaries to tackle air pollution, and we want 75% of the borough to be low traffic by 2026. To keep reducing pollution, we need people to ditch the log burners, and walk, cycle or take public transport, or, if they need to drive, switch to car clubs or EVs.</p> <p>Further information is added to EIA (Appendix B)</p> <p>Comment: The save Colvestone submission states that there will be “no going back” should the school be closed. Some points made include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under ‘free school presumption’ a local authority cannot open a local authority school – new schools will automatically be free schools run by the for-profit sector, with Hackney Council forced to give over the historic (or modern) school buildings to the private company, along with all oversight on how the school is managed and what they teach, on a long lease without generating any rental income (and yet incurring costs) for the Council

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claims the LA has consistently refused to release information related to the deeds of Colvestone school – denying both FOI requests and legal representations. • Due diligence has not been conducted on the status of school buildings as demanded by the Estate Strategy with regards to building deeds / titles, particularly with regards to restrictive covenants, and specifically with regards to restrictive covenants believed to be included in the transfer deeds (1906) of the Colvestone school buildings when they were acquired by the LCC in 1906 from an educational charity (still extant). <p>Response: The Council acknowledges that the free school presumption has limited its powers dramatically. This is discussed within this report at paragraph 10.6 to 10.8.</p> <p>The council’s legal team has confirmed that, having reviewed the title, no such restriction exists. There is no implied assumption that charities have a right of first refusal in respect of education land/buildings disposals.</p> <p>A FOI was received and has been responded to.</p> <p>Further information relating to Recommendations for proposals can be found within the report at paragraph 5.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>Option 1 - No action</p> <p>The Council has a duty to manage school places effectively, and to ensure that schools provide high quality education for children, and deliver Best Value, and continuous improvement through the efficient, effective and economic management of our school estate.</p>

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		<p>The Council is ambitious for Hackney children; our schools achieve excellent results and we want to ensure they remain among the very best in the country.</p> <p>If no action is taken it is inevitable that quality of education and outcomes for Hackney children are at risk and the Council will be liable for the costs of schools worst affected by falling rolls as they move into debt or increase their deficit and eventually close for financial reasons.</p> <p>As outlined in section 5.4 to 5.10, the operational and financial challenges affecting schools with falling rolls will continue to increase with a negative impact on pupils and the Council's financial position. Taking no action to the issues affecting schools with falling rolls is not an acceptable option available to the Council.</p> <p>Option 2 - Phased implementation of the current proposals over 2 or more years</p> <p>This option was rejected as there is an urgent need to take action and any delay is very likely to result in increased financial liability for the council as schools at risk move toward or increase their deficit position.</p> <p>Additionally, further measures to address falling rolls are likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand. If taken forward, the proposals outlined in this report would begin to address the issue of falling rolls by removing 105 reception places; however, in isolation, this is unlikely to resolve the problem and, based on current projections, further action to bring surplus reception places under 10% is likely.</p> <p>Option 3: Close/merge more schools than those currently proposed.</p> <p>Further measures to address falling rolls, over and above those proposed in this paper, are</p>

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		<p>likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand.</p> <p>Action to address falling rolls that involve more schools than the six that would potentially be affected by the current proposals was considered. This option might be considered by some to be favourable because it could provide greater reassurance that children, forced to move school as a result of their school closing, would be less likely to have to move primary school again if further action is required in the future.</p> <p>This option was not preferred due to limited resourcing and capacity to effectively manage and mitigate impact of a greater number of closures/mergers.</p> <p>Option 4: Alternative options for De Beauvoir primary</p> <p>Alternative pairings for the proposals were considered and detailed in the May Cabinet report, additional suggestions have been put forward in the consultation summarised below:</p> <p>Merging De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer on either site was suggested however it was not considered a feasible option for all families as the schools are 1.1 miles apart, walking distance which is a 25 minute walk, and the distance would be a barrier for those living for example, north of De Beauvoir or south of Randal Cremer.</p> <p>Merging De Beauvoir and Princess May on either site was suggested however it was not considered a viable option as it was considered unlikely to lead to sufficiently stabilising numbers of pupils at either school. Although a merger with Princess May was not proposed, at 16 minute walk (0.7 miles away) it is likely the school will have capacity to accommodate any families from De Beauvoir if that is what they want. Colvestone was considered a better school to merge being 0.4 miles and 8 minute walk away from Princess May.</p>

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		<p>Option 5: Alternative options for Colvestone primary</p> <p>Merging Colvestone and Princess May on the Colvestone site was suggested however this option was considered infeasible as the Colvestone site is unable to accommodate all the children from Princess May. The decision to propose a merger onto the Princess May site may positively impact that schools' falling roll and unused capacity.</p> <p>Merging Colvestone with other schools in the Blossom Federation was suggested however these options were considered unsuitable due to the distance between Colvestone and other schools in the federation.</p> <p>Merging De Beauvoir and Colvestone on the Colvestone site was suggested however, based on pupil numbers at the time, Colvestone appeared unable to accommodate all the children from De Beauvoir. The subsequent drop in pupil numbers at both schools makes this option feasible in terms of pupil numbers, however this is not favoured due to Colvestone's financial position. Amalgamating into a one form entry school is not financially preferable.</p> <p>It has also been proposed by those in support of Colvestone remaining open, that it could be a school for pupils with SEND. However in the short term this option is unfeasible because the school would need to be closed while building modifications and arrangements were made requiring all children to move to other schools. However all options regarding future use will be considered for medium to long term should the school close as a result of these proposals.</p> <p>Option 6: Alternative options for Randal Cremer Primary</p> <p>Options for merging the school were considered but there was no single school located near enough with the sufficient places to accommodate all of the pupils. However, there are sufficient schools nearby with surplus places that could accommodate the pupils from Randal Cremer. Hoxton Garden, Sebright, St Monica's and St John the Baptist are likely alternative</p>

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Page 71		<p>schools and all rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted.</p> <p>Option 7: Alternative options considered for Baden Powell Primary School</p> <p>Options to merge Nightingale and other schools with surplus places rather than Baden Powell, were considered. This option was not progressed primarily because Nightingale did not have capacity to guarantee all children at neighbouring schools with surplus capacity a place, based on pupil roll data at the time, and because the distance between these other schools was less optimal than between Baden Powell and Nightingale.</p> <p>The Councils powers in relation to falling rolls</p> <p>The limiting factors at play in our options; The Council has to make arrangements for enabling parents to express a preference for their child's school. The Council does all it can to accommodate parental preference for a school. It is of course limited in this when a school is oversubscribed. It can no longer open a new school, as mentioned elsewhere in this report. It has the power to close a school it maintained, but no such power in relation to an academy or free school. Options available to it in taking action to reduce the issues it faces with falling rolls are limited to closure and amalgamating maintained schools. Continuing with current and projected levels of deficit in the circumstances of significantly reduced pupil numbers would be irresponsible.</p>
	11	CHE S224 Hackney Central & Pembury Circus Green Corridor

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		<p>2. Approve implementation of the proposals described in section 8 of this report, subject to detailed design to be informed by further non-statutory consultation and for the Assistant Director, Streetscene (formerly titled Head of Streetscene) to use his delegated powers to decide on the detailed design.</p> <p>3. Authorise the Assistant Director, Streetscene to make and implement the necessary Traffic Orders, subject to the requirements of Local Authorities’ Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996; and following the relevant statutory consultation with all objections/responses received to be considered, recorded in writing, and signed by the Assistant Director, Streetscene in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>This report recommends taking forward major improvements to one of the most dangerous junctions on a Hackney borough road currently suffering from excessive traffic causing congestion to essential users and creating pollution. Despite testing many options It has been found impractical to improve this junction significantly without reducing traffic on at least one arm, and the Amhurst Road approach offers the most benefits to pedestrians and bus users.</p> <p>A bus gate is proposed because it will prioritise bus and rail users, pedestrians and cyclists. This will improve the environment and road safety. It will also enable a major improvement in the form of a Green Corridor, which will be a significant asset to the area. This will add to the visitor experience which can lead to increased dwell time to appreciate local green spaces and make use of local shops and facilities.</p> <p>Our experience with other modal filters is that they can produce an overall reduction in traffic.</p>

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		<p>This scheme therefore represents a continuing evolution of a Hackney road network in which non-essential traffic is discouraged. Longer journeys will be encouraged to stay out of the Borough altogether and many short trips will shift to walking, cycling or public transport.</p> <p>These proposals are consistent with the requirements of the Levelling Up Fund, as issued by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on behalf of HM Government, and are consistent with the Mayor of London’s Transport Strategy. They are also consistent with the Council’s Transport Strategy.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>A. Do Nothing: This option was rejected on the grounds that it would allow the continuation of poor road safety and high pollution levels in the area.</p> <p>B. Do minimum: Standard footpath repairs, parking controls and signal timing adjustments also represent an option but again would not produce the level of improvement required, nor meet the requirements set for Levelling Up Funding.</p> <p>C. Re-construction of Pembury Circus without a bus gate. The magnitude of the difficulties at Pembury Circus justify a major re-design of the junction. This option was studied in detail using computer simulation. This showed that because of the number of conflicting demands on the junction there is no option that can cater for all movements and that at least one junction approach needs to be constrained. The restriction at Amhurst is the one that appears to have the most complementary benefits, such as improving conditions for pedestrians and bus users.</p> <p>D. Alternatives to a Bus Gate. The use of strategic sections of one-way restrictions could, in part, reduce traffic on Amhurst Road. It would also, in theory, be possible to restrict turning movements at Pembury Circus in such a way that traffic is reduced. These would benefit a minority of motor vehicle users. The use of turn bans and one-way systems, however, does not</p>

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 74</p>		<p>allow for permit holders to be exempt. This would disadvantage Blue Badge holders. Overall levels of traffic reduction would still not be low enough to allow an optimal design of Pembury Circus.</p> <p>E. Alternative locations and timings for the Bus Gate. A total of 4 alternative bus gate locations were analysed including:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Option (a): Mare Street between the junction with Graham Road and the junction with Amhurst Road</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Option (b): Mare Street, between the junction with Amhurst Road and the loading bay outside Iceland</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Option (c): Amhurst Road between the junction with Brett Road and the junction with Mare Street</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Option (d): Amhurst Road and Mare Street between the junction with Brett Road and the junction with Graham Road</p> <p>One critical consideration was the need to allow for access to Bohemia Place, the bus garage and the Iceland loading bay. So option (d) was taken forward as the preferred option.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>AHI S280 Confirmation of Arrangements for the Operations of the Public Mortuary</p>	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To agree to the proposals for the temporary operations of the public mortuary to be relocated to St Pancras for the duration of the rebuild. 2. To agree to the frozen storage requirements of the deceased to be stored at Jacksons facility as agreed with the Human Tissues Authority. <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p>

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Page 75		<p>The current facilities at Hackney Mortuary are beyond their lifespan and need expansion and modernisation</p> <p>The extensive renovation work required would not be possible without closing and temporarily relocating the mortuary.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>To maintain the mortuary at another location in Hackney- no such facility exists.</p> <p>To undertake the improvement work whilst the mortuary continued to operate- the nature of the required work is very extensive and it would not be possible to maintain the mortuary within the building whilst renovation work was carried out.</p> <p>For the deceased who need to be frozen to be stored at St Pancras or another London facility- we were unable to identify another suitable alternative at a price that provided best value to the Council.</p>
	13	FCR S254 Proposed Changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

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		<p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>When the Council last agreed to amend the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in 2020, it also committed officers to undertake a review of the revised scheme and further reduce the maximum contribution to 10% by 2025/26 and move to a fully funded scheme by 2030.</p> <p>Whilst seeking to provide additional financial support to low income households the scope for amending the scheme is constrained by the need to manage ongoing reductions in Central Government funding. Over the period 2010-11 to 2023-24, the Council has suffered a £150m real terms reduction in its Spending Power which is equivalent to 33%. The Council therefore needs to strike a balance between the need to provide extra support to residents who we think need it, while maintaining a scheme that is financially sustainable for the Council’s wider budget and limits the impact on our ability to deliver essential front line services that residents depend on.</p> <p>The option of decreasing minimum contributions from 15% to 10% balances both the increasing financial pressures that our low income households face, against the ongoing cuts in government funding. The change will affect working age households only as the Council is legally prevented from making any changes to the scheme that will reduce the level of support payable to a pensioner household.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>As part of the review process, the Benefits & Housing Needs Service commissioned external consultants, Policy in Practice, to carry out the analytical assessment of the revised scheme and to model the financial impact on the Council and on residents.</p> <p>Do nothing - Policy in Practice modelling indicates that if we retain the current CTRS scheme</p>

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		<p>into 2024/25 there will still be a cost increase in delivering the scheme as a consequence of increased Council Tax charges and the uprating of applicable amounts. For modelling purposes only a maximum 4.99% increase in Council Tax liability has been assumed along with a benefit uprating of 5.4% (based on projected CPI inflation figures), recognising the Council has yet to make a decision on the actual Council Tax increase for 2024/25. If we make no changes to the scheme costs of the scheme are estimated to rise from £29.32m to £31.01m, an increase of £1.69m or 5.78%.</p> <p>Although the Council's previous commitment was to bring forward a reduction in the maximum contribution to 10% by 2025/26, it was considered appropriate to implement this change earlier, given the depth of the cost of living crisis and the impact on low income residents.</p> <p>Policy in Practice were also asked to model the impact of additional changes to the scheme administration intended to make the scheme more straightforward and reduce the administrative burden on the Council, through simplification of the application process and simplifying the rules related to both earnings disregards (i.e. the amount of earned income taken into account) and non-dependant deductions (i.e. the assumed contribution of other adults living in the household). These changes would increase the total scheme costs by an additional £1.00m in comparison to estimated costs set out in para 1.11.</p> <p>As these additional changes would potentially have significant additional cost increases to the scheme as well as the potential for unintended adverse impacts on groups of residents (e.g. reducing support for larger families), we propose to carry out further modelling and consultation and consider these as part of future changes for implementation at a later date.</p>
14	F S255 The Hackney Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 -26	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That Cabinet approves the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 - 26.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p>

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		<p>The Homeless Act 2002 places an overriding statutory duty on all housing authorities to review homelessness trends in their area on an at least 5 yearly basis, and produce an overriding strategic homeless strategy which reflects the results of that review.</p> <p>Statutory guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) requires Housing Authorities to ensure that strategies are compliant with and take into account the duties introduced by Homeless Reduction Act in 2018.</p> <p>Additionally in 2018 Central Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy, which requires Councils to update their Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategies to include a focus on Rough Sleeping.</p> <p>The Council’s current homeless strategy is now out of date. Given significant and fast moving changes in the local housing market and the introduction of new legislation and duties under the Homeless Reduction Act, it is necessary for the Council to produce a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.</p> <p>This strategy reflects the latest trends in homelessness, follows best practice and is compliant with current legislation.</p> <p>The Strategy deliberately covers a shorter period than before to reflect the fast paced changes we have recently seen in housing and the wider economy, and the uncertainty of Government policy beyond the general election due no later than January 2025.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>The publication of a homelessness strategy is a statutory requirement as set out by the Homeless Act 2002 which has been subsequently reinforced by Government guidance. All Housing authorities are required under Section 1(4) of the Homeless Act to publish a new</p>

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		<p>homelessness strategy, based on the results of a further homelessness review, within the period of 5 years beginning with the day on which their last homelessness strategy was published.</p> <p>Not having an up to date strategy will make the Council non-compliant with legislation and would place the authority at risk of Government action, which would potentially have an adverse impact on any future funding.</p> <p>Given the current pressures placed on Council services as a consequence of the level of homelessness in the borough, an up to date homelessness strategy that includes a strategic framework that reflects the current market conditions and operating climate is essential if the Council is to respond effectively.</p> <p>A basic refresh of the existing strategy was considered, but given the significant changes in the housing landscape and implications of delivering the Homeless Reduction Act a new strategy was considered to be more appropriate. It was also an opportunity to combine the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies into a single coordinated document.</p> <p>By not introducing a new Homeless Strategy the Council is in danger of being less effective in both tackling the current levels of homelessness and rough sleeping and in preventing homelessness in the future.</p>

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Title of Report	Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy - falling rolls
Key Decision No	CE S247
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Meeting Date	11 December 2023
Cabinet Member	Councillor Anntoinette Bramble, Statutory Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care
Classification	Open
Ward(s) Affected	All
Key Decision & Reason	Yes Significant effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Implementation Date if Not Called In	19 December 2023
Group Director	Paul Senior, Director of Education

1. Cabinet Member's introduction

- 1.1. As Deputy Mayor and as an administration, we are pleased with the improvement of Hackney's education. Over 20 years ago the borough's schools were some of the worst performing in the country. Now they are consistently among the very best; not just in terms of school performance, but also in the outcomes for our children and young people, as this year's pupil exam results has once again demonstrated, alongside the extra curricular activities schools provide. This transformation of education in Hackney is one of the greatest success stories in the country. We are proud of our children and young people who are among the top performing in the country for Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 1 and upper performing quartiles across all age categories. Their results are particularly impressive considering they were achieved after the difficulties of the pandemic and against a backdrop of 42% of local school children across all age groups accessing free school meals. This is a credit to our children, families, settings and schools, and community groups and we will continue to work in partnership with all our schools and settings.
- 1.2. As has been widely reported, in recent years many inner and greater London local authority (LA) areas, including Hackney, have been experiencing a significant decrease in pupil numbers. This has caused some schools to face

serious financial and sustainability pressures. The critical London-wide factors are: lower birth rates, the cap on housing benefits, and families leaving the capital as a result of the housing crisis, Brexit the Covid-19 pandemic and competition from Free Schools. While the Council remains committed to providing more affordable family housing across the borough, having delivered more than 1,000 new homes since 2011 and committed to starting 1,000 more by 2026, the housing crisis has also contributed to a reduction in demand for primary school places in the borough.

- 1.3. School leaders and the Council in recent years have been doing everything possible to manage the risk of falling rolls. Hackney officers have been working with schools locally to progress a number of approaches, with a focus on preventing the escalation of risk to those in scope for potential closure and/or merger. In using the word merger here we refer to offer places for children who will need to change schools by the proposed closure of one school such that pupils would have the possibility of remaining together, should that option be the parent's preference. The approaches we have had to use so far include measures such as restructuring school staffing levels, reducing the amount of available support staff, limiting extra curricular activity such as school trips, 'vertical grouping' by combining different year groups in some schools, formally reducing and capping reception places, and for some schools, the need to agree deficit recovery plans with Hackney Education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in Hackney education and family of schools for their often challenging work, as we have worked through these existing decisions and started to explore the even more difficult decisions outlined in this paper. I would like to extend a particular thanks to the schools in scope for their work, dedication and supporting their school communities through this process.
- 1.4. Most, if not all, of these 'graduated approaches' have been deployed by local schools to address the issue of falling rolls. However, this has not sufficiently solved the problem and the level of risk for some schools in terms of sustainability and enabling the schools to continue to provide their children with the very best possible teaching and learning experience on a daily basis that all schools would wish to provide. This high quality educational environment is what the people of Hackney expect and individual school communities deeply value and love, and which my colleagues and I see whenever we visit schools.
- 1.5. As previously referenced, we have been lobbying the national Government to look at how funding is allocated, as part of our wider commitments to working towards a stronger and fairer school system more generally. We have also repeatedly asked the Government for greater powers to manage places in free schools and academies, which are independent of the Council, in order to pool place-planning resources. I previously wrote to the Secretary of State for Education (Appendix A) to formally express our concerns with regards to the issue of falling rolls for the Borough and other LA areas, expressing concern that government policy in areas such as free schools has compounded the problem, by bringing more school places into the

borough in areas where there may already have been surplus places. This puts at risk locally maintained schools due to unnecessary competition at a time of pressure on schools for the aforementioned reasons.

- 1.6. We know schools are more than just places for children to receive education, and that they play an important part in their local community. This is why having to now consider potentially closing or merging schools is very difficult, and not something we would propose if we felt that there was a realistic option available for keeping all schools open. We do not underestimate the impact that such changes would have on the community, parents, carers, staff and pupils, if approved. However, the impact of falling rolls is being felt widely across many schools, and Council officers believe that over time it is becoming increasingly more difficult for them to continue doing all the fantastic things that families, children, staff and the community love them for.
- 1.7. I know some concerns have also been raised that, if the proposals are approved, the Council might sell off vacant school sites for private housing development, but please be assured that this is not our plan. The Council's political leadership and I continue to express this. We know how important that is, given the unique location of our schools, their wider role and close ties to our wider local communities. Throughout our time leading the Council and through now many years of austerity, while others across the country may have sold assets, we have taken other routes, stopping to think about what Hackney needed at the time and what it might need in the future - and this approach will guide our thinking when it comes to education land and the future needs of the borough for schools and specialist provision if a decision is made.
- 1.8. This means, if the proposals are approved, we would look to work through the potential for each site in its local context and we would seek to do our best to steer these sites into locally relevant and valuable uses mindful of the extreme financial pressure the Council is under and the need to minimise the impact on our finances. We also know from our visits to these schools, and our knowledge of Dalston, De Beauvoir, Haggerston and Hackney Downs, the depth of feeling in these places about their respective schools, how they sit in that wider community context and the need to work with communities to defend what makes these communities and places special, including Ridley Road. That's why the Council has invested so much in protecting and enhancing Dalston and has plans in De Beauvoir, Haggerston and Hackney Downs to build more Council housing and invest in community infrastructure.
- 1.9. Without knowing the outcome for each site, the Council's ability to define alternative uses for potentially vacant sites is necessarily limited at this stage. Officers have begun to contemplate possibilities in principle. The priority will always be to protect the future of the sites as far as is economically possible, identifying "reversible" options if at all possible with, as noted above, a natural preference for uses relevant to, and of value to the local community.

- 1.10. We know that during this process there will be concerns raised about the potential risk to our children with protected characteristics, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As referenced in a range of recent communications to the local schools that may be in scope for evaluation as part of the work of the school estates strategy, we will work with them and provide targeted support where appropriate. The associated equality impact assessment (Appendix B) provides further commentary on this. Mayor Woodley, who prior to her election as Mayor was Cabinet Member for SEND and has maintained this portfolio, has worked closely with myself and officers throughout this programme to support schools and parents/carers of children with SEND. We will continue to be advocates for children with SEND, and to ensure these children are supported, along with their families. That work sits within the wider context of delivering at least 300 new SEND places in the borough in new settings and existing schools.
- 1.11. We know that if the proposals are approved, the processes of closure or amalgamation will also be challenging for the whole school community including Governing Bodies, school leadership teams, teachers, support staff and others who work in our schools. We are committed to having a proactive approach with all those involved, including the trade unions, to ensure that staff are involved in these discussions and supported if or when changes are made to retain, upskill or find new employment. We also recognise that where we might merge schools, we will have to work with those schools to ensure they have the right facilities and investment on the site at the school that remains open to meet the aspirations of the respective schools and communities. During the engagement with the school communities, we also met with local members of parliament, ward councillors, and invited all elected members to briefing sessions to discuss the consequences of falling rolls and the impact on schools.
- 1.12. No one goes into public life, or a leadership position, to close or merge schools, but it is our responsibility as a local authority to create life-improving opportunities for all, alongside support for those in the borough who need it most - and this starts with access to first-class education. We must continue to ensure that every single child has access to an excellent education that allows them to fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions. This is why we must now consider the difficult options outlined in this report.
- 1.13. Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has engaged with this process, attended meetings to ask questions, submitted responses to the consultation, and advocated on behalf of their schools, their children and their wider communities. We know this has been a difficult and at times emotional process and are committed to continuing to engage with all communities and stakeholders to deliver on our ambitious vision for Hackney's schools.

2. Group Director's introduction

- 2.1. This report addresses the second priority of the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy (Appendix Y), adopted by Hackney Council in February

2022, to seek viable sustainable solutions and work with existing primary schools with falling rolls. This report follows previous reports to Cabinet in making recommendations that are grounded in the need for action due to local pupil numbers falling and the surplus places across primary schools increasing. As previously advised, the information we have and have also made available suggests there will continue to be falling rolls into the future, not just locally, but across London and most big city areas nationally. Falling rolls lead to a reduction in funding to deliver education across the borough, as the number of pupils on roll directly affects the amount of money received from central government. Surplus places impact disproportionately on schools across the borough; schools with unfilled places receive less income, while attempting to maintain the same physical space, staffing and education offer.

- 2.2. In January 2015, there were fewer than 1% unfilled reception places in Hackney. The January 2023 school census shows 616 surplus reception places (21%), the equivalent of over 20 empty reception classes. On the information we have, and without taking action, surplus reception places are forecast to rise above 23% by 2025. This would bring sustained and increasing financial strain on affected schools.
- 2.3. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient high quality school places for our children, and that places are planned effectively. In 2022/23 alone, Hackney primary schools are seeing £30m less funding compared to what they would be entitled to if their classrooms were full. This financial pressure, year on year, has a cumulative impact on our schools, and threatens the stability and quality of our education system.

3. Recommendations

Cabinet agree to:

- 3.1. **close (discontinue) De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024.**
- 3.2. **close (discontinue) Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.**
- 3.3. **close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.**
- 3.4. **close (discontinue) Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.**
- 3.5. **increase the published admission number of Nightingale Primary School by adding an additional form of entry to all**

year groups. This proposal is related to the recommendation at 3.4.

4. Reasons for decision

Background

- 4.1. Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the medium to long-term, for the time we have forecasts for (up to 2031/2032 see Appendix C). School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough.
- 4.2. The School Organisation Plan (SOP) and Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy (ESES) form the policy basis for the proposals which relate to priority 2 of the ESES: to address falling primary school rolls, by working with schools with budget pressures and falling pupil rolls to seek viable long-term solutions. (see section 10 for further detail)
- 4.3. If the proposals in this report are taken forward, the Council will consider whether any vacated site could reasonably be utilised in addressing priority 1, the significant increase in demand for SEND education provision.
- 4.4. At the time of writing schools in Hackney are 98% good or outstanding and the proposals in this paper are no reflection of the quality of the leadership or teaching, only the falling rolls issue which is faced across London. The schools in these proposals have gone above and beyond to ensure that the falling rolls have impacted as little as possible. However it is not sustainable to continue running half empty schools. The council acknowledges the outstanding support these schools have provided to children with SEND, across Hackney.
- 4.5. The Council acknowledges the outstanding support offered to Colvestone Primary School by the Blossom Federation, who have expertly stabilised the school's financial position, having inherited an historical deficit from the previous leadership of the school. This temporary soft partnership (recently extended until July 2024) allows Colvestone to receive leadership and business support to improve standards and children's outcomes, all of which has been achieved with the support of The Blossom Federation, who led the school to being assessed as 'Good' by OFSTED in October 2023.
- 4.6. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

- 4.7. Despite removing 375 reception places through formal reductions in published admission numbers (PANs) (as distinct from unofficially 'capping' admission numbers) across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32. Analysis of past, current and projected demand and summary of reception places removed to date is provided in Appendix C. There will still be unutilised capacity in schools and over 200 additional places that could be reinstated should they be required in future years (table 7, appendix C).
- 4.8. Financial reserves are reducing at an alarming and unsustainable rate across Hackney's maintained primary schools, or the federations they form part of, and are projected to fall by £6.48m or 70% in the two years to March 2024. The combined surplus totalled £9.08m in 2021/22, fell significantly to £5.8m in 2022/23, and is forecast to drop further to £2.6m at the close of 2023/24 financial year.
- 4.9. Over two thirds of Hackney's maintained schools, or the federations they form part of, are predicting they will over-spend during the 2023/24 financial year.
- 4.10. For schools to remain financially viable, school governors and leaders are forced to make difficult decisions about whether to reduce the number of teachers or teaching assistants and support staff. School leaders tend to delay investment or maintenance of school buildings and equipment or find other savings, all of which impacts negatively on the quality of education and school experience for Hackney children and staff.
- 4.11. The recently undertaken Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2023 indicates that household growth in Hackney between 2022 and 2039 will be predominantly single people (+45.1%) and cohabiting, i.e. shared living, households (+44.2%). In comparison, there is little change in the projection for families with children over the same period. With the exception of Stamford Hill, the majority of Borough-wide housing need is for smaller homes. This is important in considering the likely effect of such housing on pupil numbers.
- 4.12. While there are variances across the different housing tenures, across the Council's programme as a whole, just over 70% of the homes delivered have been 1 and 2 bed homes; with just under 30% comprising a mix of 3 and 4 bed family sized homes. This is broadly consistent with policy LP14 as outlined in LP33, which, depending on the tenure of housing, requires all new developments to comprise a mix of family sized homes, ranging from 15 to 36%. Despite Hackney building new homes the numbers will be insufficient to have any significant impact on the proposals in this report for schools in scope for closure and/or merger.

- 4.13. Hackney Education's senior leadership team took the decision to propose closure and amalgamation/merger of the student body of six schools in September 2022 following analysis of a range of objective measures evidencing the impact of falling rolls on school's viability. Following early engagement with head teachers and chairs of governors from January 2023 the proposals were publicly launched on 28 March 2023 and school community engagement activity was undertaken with staff and parents in April 2023. Community queries and feedback from March to May period can be seen in Appendix D by theme (as it was detailed in May 2023 Cabinet report - Appendix E).
- 4.14. Throughout the process, officers followed the process set out in the Department for Education (DfE) publication, Opening and closing maintained schools Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, January 2023, (the Guidance). The Council must have regard to this Guidance which sets out the considerations that should be made by the decision maker when deciding proposals to discontinue (close) a school. It requires that those making the decisions on the proposals should be satisfied that the proposer has carried out the requirements of the statutory process satisfactorily and should have due regard to all responses received during the representation period. Cabinet members should review all responses before the meeting. These are substantial.

Cabinet decisions in May 2023 and September 2023

- 4.15. On 22 May 2023 Cabinet decided to proceed to consultation on all five proposals (The May cabinet paper is included as Appendix E). As part of this decision, the Cabinet considered comment and feedback received during a period of early engagement and this is provided with this report in Appendix D for the consideration of decision makers. Following the May Cabinet decision a consultation ran for 6 weeks, from 5 June to 16 July 2023, gathering feedback on the proposals from parents and staff of the schools in scope and other stakeholders that may be impacted by the decisions. The key themes raised in the early engagement period were raised again during the consultation and are addressed in the response and commentary in the September 2023 report.
- 4.16. On September 25 2023 cabinet members considered the consultation feedback and agreed to publish statutory notices for the proposals. The September cabinet report (Appendix F) included a paper detailing the analysis of comments and objections received during the consultation. Comprehensive summaries of this information have also been provided for this and the previous engagement.
- 4.17. The local authority's detailed responses to the previous stages of engagement and consultation feedback are provided as above. Details can be seen in the September 2023 Cabinet paper (Appendix F), which summarised the Kwest report from the consultation phase (Appendix G) and reviewed by cabinet in September.

Statutory notice summary

- 4.18. Following the Cabinet decision on 25 September 2023, statutory notices in respect of the five proposals as outlined in section 3 above were issued for a period of 28 days. The evidence for and rationale for the decision to move to statutory notice is set out in the September cabinet report (Appendix F).
- 4.19. The statutory representation period ran from 6 October to 3 November 2023. Statutory notices which were posted for 28 days for objection or comment:
- Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Appendix H)
 - Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Appendix I)
 - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School (Appendix J)
 - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School (Appendix K)
 - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) (Appendix L)
- 4.20. The Guidance states that “The proposer must publish the full proposal on a website along with a statement setting out: • 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 (4 weeks from publication); and • the address to which objections or comments should be submitted. A brief notice containing the website address of the full proposal must be published in a local newspaper.
- 4.21. In accordance with these requirements, notices (Appendix H to L) were published in a local paper, Hackney Citizen newspaper on 6 October 2023. The Statutory notices were also published on Citizen Space (the Council’s engagement platform) in English, Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish, and on Hackney Education’s website. The notices were posted publicly outside the school premises and all parents/carers, staff and school governors received copies of the notice pertaining to their school with signposting to the council’s website for further information.
- 4.22. Other stakeholders, internal and external audiences, local residents and partner organisations were informed about the statutory notices and invited to comment. Copies of all statutory notices were also sent to neighbouring Local Authorities, Hackney MPs and Councillors and Trade Unions representing school staff in accordance with statutory guidance. Copies were sent to all those required under the Guidance.
- 4.23. The Council utilised a variety of methods to publicise the notices such as website updates, newsletters, social media posts, a press release, an article in Love Hackney (distributed to 120,000 homes and businesses in Hackney),

email and digital screens across council sites. Publicity exceeded that required by the Guidance, because of the significance of the proposals to residents and the desire to engage as many residents as possible.

Responses to the statutory notices

- 4.24. There were 164 responses during the representation period received via Citizen Space (Hackney’s online platform), 10 emails and 1 letter. The responses included one from Save Colvestone, consisting of 284 pages. Five responses were received past the deadline of 5pm on 3 November 2023. These late submissions have not been included for analysis.
- 4.25. The representation period provided a further opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the proposals, the first being pre-engagement events in March through to April 2023, followed by the consultation period which ran from 5 June to 16 July 2023.

Analysis of statutory notice submissions

- 4.26. The representation period response has been analysed and reviewed by an independent third party, Kwest (Appendix M). Of the 175 responses received (164 citizen space, 10 emails and 1 letter), each respondent could comment on one, several or all of the statutory proposals and therefore the number of responses per proposal is greater than 175. Kwest have analysed 172 of the responses together, excluding 3 emails submitted with large PDF attachments, which have been analysed separately in their report. These large PDF submissions are included, in full, in appendix 3 of the Kwest report (Appendix M).
- 4.27. Across all 5 proposals, there were 219 responses that were clearly supportive or not supportive. Of these, 207 responses (95%) did not support the proposals and 12 responses (5%) were supportive. With the exception of the proposal to close Colvestone and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School, only a small number of comments were received in response to each of the other statutory proposals.
- 4.28. Over 60% of all responses that appeared relevant related to the proposal to close Colvestone and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School (143 responses). The number of responses to the other four proposals ranged from 20 to 30. Many of these responses were short words or sentences comprising a broad statement of the respondents’ views. For the proposals on the closure of De Beauvoir and expansion of Nightingale, these short comments made up half of the feedback that appeared relevant.

Proposal	Number of responses	Appeared relevant**	Number in favour	Number against
Closure of De Beauvoir	24	22	2	17
Closure of Randal Cremer	26	24	1	20

Proposal	Number of responses	Appeared relevant**	Number in favour	Number against
Amalgamation of Colvestone & Princess May	146	143	2	138
Amalgamation of Baden Powell & Nightingale	30	28	3	24
Expansion of Nightingale	20	15	4	8

*** 7 responses included no comments about any of the proposals.*

General themes arising from comments and objections received during the representation period

4.29. **Note for decision makers:** Responses to the proposals, made during the initial engagement, the consultation and representation period are appended to this report (appendix D , G , M). Cabinet members are asked to ensure that they have reviewed all these documents before the meeting. A hard copy of the comments and objections made during the statutory representation period will be available at the meeting. Decision makers are also asked to note that while the Kwest report refers to closure for two schools and amalgamation for the other two pairs of schools, this is a difference in nomenclature only.

4.30. **Theme: Respondents do not want their school to close/merge**
eg. brief responses, containing only a small number of words or a short statement, for example, “disagree” or “please don’t close this school”.

Response: The Council understands children, parents, staff and the wider community do not want to see their local schools close for all the reasons outlined in the feedback received, however the overriding need to reduce the number of primary schools in Hackney is clear.

In recent years school leaders and the Council have worked to progress a number of approaches, with a focus on preventing the escalation of risk to those in scope for potential closure or amalgamation. The actions taken include restructuring school staffing levels, reducing the amount of available support staff, limiting extra curricular activity such as school trips, ‘vertical grouping’ by combining different year groups in some schools, formally reducing and capping reception places. Unfortunately, because the fall in pupil numbers is significant and sustained, these actions have not sufficiently addressed the challenge of falling rolls and the level of risk for some schools in terms of sustainability remains unacceptably high.

The Council wants every single child to have access to an excellent education that allows them to fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions. This is why the very difficult options of closures or mergers outlined in this report must now be considered.

4.31. **Theme: Existing school provides good support for children with SEND**
 Eg. “We have a high number of SEND children on roll and I know we provide an outstanding provision for them. I worry for their future as many schools do not show the inclusion and love and we do, families are heavily supported by us.”

Response: The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and acknowledges in particular that provided in those schools proposed to close.

Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools are unlikely to be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEND support in schools impacted by the proposals is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEND support	% of pupils with SEND Support
Baden Powell	8	4.8%	22	13.1%
Colvestone	10	7.7%	21	16.2%
De Beauvoir	10	9.1%	28	25.5%
Nightingale	24	11.9%	30	14.9%
Princess May	10	5.1%	17	8.7%
Randal Cremer	17	7.0%	42	17.4%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

Representations made to the Council state that Colvestone School has a higher proportion of children with SEND (17%) than the national average (13%), and that the numbers are such that 25% of children in that school have SEND. Cabinet will wish to be aware of this when taking into account the extent of impact of the proposals and its duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010. (See legal comments, section 13)

4.32. **Theme: Larger schools have more problems / less support. Small class sizes / schools are better for children.** eg. “Small class sizes are good for children.”

The National Education Union submitted a response at the request of parents and NEU members of Colvestone expressing the belief that “there are significant benefits in retaining small one form entry primary schools wherever possible. Whilst we understand the financial difficulties presented by years of government underfunding we believe that smaller schools and smaller class sizes are a desirable aim for our students.” As well as improved academic progress they argue that smaller schools and smaller class sizes have benefits including more tailored learning, more social confidence and inclusion, staff know their children better and that parents have a better relationship with schools.

Response: Small and large schools each have strengths and challenges relating to their size. A school’s ethos and leadership are considered more significant factors than school size in determining successful outcomes. The council does not accept that larger schools generally have more problems and less support.

While a review of evidence suggests there may be small benefits for student attainment in significantly smaller class sizes, unfortunately the Council cannot retain schools where small classes are bringing significant financial burden and threatening financial viability. Smaller schools e.g. one form entry schools, that are not full in all year groups are disproportionately affected by falling rolls, making them more financially vulnerable.

Some schools have had their pupil numbers (PAN) reduced but still have larger buildings and sites to maintain. These schools will have higher premises costs while having a significantly smaller budget. Underinvestment will create longer term issues and increased need for future funding to deal with a lack of maintenance.

4.33. **Theme: The School has a good reputation and excellent staff.**

eg. “These schools, and the staff who work in them, have been pillars of education in our community for decades. Their closure would be a devastating loss for current and future generations. This is an opportunity to reduce class sizes and improve education in the borough, not make it worse.”

Response: The Council acknowledges the incredible support staff provide for children and families, despite many facing personal stress and uncertainty as a result of these proposals.

All six schools included in the current proposals are rated ‘Good’. This is recognised by the Council.

While schools’ performance and reputation is an important factor that influences parents’ decision on where to send their children, and can help protect those with the best results, this isn’t the case for Hackney, where over 98% of the primary schools are rated ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted.

4.34. **Theme: Move will negatively affect children**

eg. “Many pupils will be separated from their friends at a key time in their lives, with SEND pupils who have built relationships with staff particularly affected.”

Response: The council understands that changing schools or the arrival of pupils from a closing school is likely to be a challenging transition for the majority of children. We acknowledge these concerns and are seeking to minimise disruption as much as possible. We acknowledge that change, such as of staff, can be particularly difficult for pupils with SEND.

The decision to close or merge schools is not made lightly. Schools with low numbers become less financially viable over time, using surplus funds or going into deficit to ensure the quality of education is maintained. The Council is liable for any maintained school deficits, and must decide annually whether to continue to fund a school in deficit. If the Council allows schools with falling rolls to come under increasing financial pressure and go into deficit by allowing them to stay open when they are not financially viable, they are directly and knowingly taking on increased financial burden and responsibility, which can further negatively impact the quality of the education in the borough. School deficits are borne by the Council in the event of closure.

While the council recognises that children will be affected, primary schools are highly experienced in supporting children who transition to secondary schools, as well as those who are transferring from one school to another during the school year.

Since the beginning of the year, the Council has been working closely with the six schools, and will continue to do so, offering them the information and assistance needed to help families and children during the process. If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposals, the Council will work together with schools and families to make sure that transition plans are in place to minimise the impact on the children’s wellbeing.

Specialist SEND professionals including Educational Psychology and Speech and Language therapists will continue to work with settings and pupils to ensure that children with SEND receive robust and appropriate transitional support.

The Council is also ready to help schools assist parents and carers when making a decision on moving their children to a different school.

4.35. **Theme: Impact on staff & potential loss of jobs**

eg. “These are not amalgamations, they are closures. Staff in these schools have worked throughout Covid, and are some of the most under-paid and overworked in the whole borough. They are being rewarded with forced redundancies and financial insecurity.

Response: The council acknowledges the serious impact these proposals have on staff wellbeing prior to any final decision and the direct impact on the lives and livelihood of staff should the decision to close or merge schools go ahead. In view of this staff have access to an employee assistance programme, where they can access confidential advice and counselling.

The number of teachers and support staff that would be affected if the proposals are taken forward are summarised in the table below (data as at 31/08/2024).

School	Teachers	Support staff	Total
Baden Powell	13	22	35
Colvestone	10	8	18
De Beauvoir	9	11	20
Randal Cremer	23	33	54
Total	53	74	127

In the event of closures, the Council will do everything it can to help staff find alternative roles in schools across Hackney. However, as a last resort, some staff will be offered redundancy and/or retirements.

In the event of a merger, we will work with the leadership teams of the affected schools to assess the full impact on staff. Governors and school leaders in receiving schools will lead the significant changes brought by these proposals.

Staff and all other relevant parties including trade unions would be consulted about any potential changes.

Those affected will be supported through practical outplacement support such as application and CV writing, interview skills and potential job opportunities in other Hackney Schools. A particular emphasis will be given to supporting support staff, many of whom are Hackney residents.

4.36. **Theme: Demographics of population can change / concerns about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places**

Eg. Any decision to close a locally maintained school is likely to be irreversible, as the 2011 Education Act requires future demand to be met by the academy or free school sector.

Response: The Council aims to hold between 5% and 10% surplus reception places to allow for unforecast growth in pupil numbers in the future. If the demand for places increases significantly in future there are currently between 240 and 330 unused places in Hackney primary schools

that could be brought back into use, without capital investment, by increasing these school's PANs. (Appendix C, table 7)

4.37. **Theme: Capacity to accommodate potentially displaced pupils in other local schools**

Eg. "I still remain concerned about the 'promise' that children will be placed in a primary school near their home. Many parents are already unable to find places in the school they want and are on waiting lists. There are also a number of schools locally where PANs have been reduced so year groups are over roll with additional waiting lists."

Response: Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to those proposed to close shows there is capacity to accommodate all displaced pupils within Hackney settings.

The reported number of pupils (at November 2023) in schools proposed to close is shown below by year group.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Baden Powell	19	19	18	27	22	26	27	158
Colvestone	12	16	25	26	12	13	16	120
De Beauvoir	6	4	7	3	5	6	17	48
Randal Cremer	10	12	19	11	19	14	34	119
Grand Total	47	51	69	67	58	59	94	445

Analysis of vacancies at nearby schools (Appendix N - Nearby schools and vacancies - SES - November 2023) demonstrates that there are sufficient places to accommodate all potentially displaced children.

Mapping of potentially displaced children (Appendix O to T) demonstrates they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney and that families are very likely to have several options of alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. for children aged over 5 but under the age of 8 this is 2 miles from their home and for children aged over the age of 8 this is 3 miles from their home).

It should be noted that the analysis provided is based on official school published admission numbers (PAN), which also form the basis of local school place planning. Schools that may be capping their intake in response to falling rolls would be expected to accommodate children impacted by any future decision to close up to their PAN, exceeding any capping that may be in place.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children.

There will be one-to-one support for families to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including increased priority for places at nearby schools.

4.38. **Theme: Use existing schools to address borough-wide shortage of SEND places**

Eg. "Hackney council spends vast amounts of money sending SEND pupils to be educated outside the borough, due to a lack of SEND resource bases. These schools should remain open and form part of a wider investment in SEND pupils, by turning them into specialist resources bases, and educating children within their borough."

Response: Strategic priority 1 of the the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy (Appendix Y) seeks to create sufficient in borough special school places through creation of Additional Resource Provision (ARP) in mainstream schools, extending existing special schools by size and or designation, opening a new special school or the re-organisation of mainstream primary places, where feasible, due to falling rolls.

Expressions of interest were sought in 2021 from existing Hackney schools with capacity to open ARPs and a programme of work has since been initiated that, upon completion, will increase provision by 300 places.

School sites made vacant following any future decision to close them will be reviewed to assess, amongst other options, the feasibility of being repurposed as SEND provision.

4.39. **Theme: Future use of school buildings/site**

Eg. "The decision to close a school without any plan for the future of the site is bizarre."

Response: We know that our communities have tight connections to their local schools, and we will seek to preserve the buildings that have a rich history and heritage where possible.

The Council has been reviewing options for alternative uses. This is very challenging work in the current economic climate, because it is very difficult to find financially sustainable uses. This means we need to work through the potential for each site in their local context and we will do our best to steer these sites into locally relevant and valuable uses mindful of the extreme financial pressure the Council is under and the need to minimise the impact on our finances.

We will take into account the views of the community, the needs of the local neighbourhood, and the need for financial sustainability.

4.40. **Theme: School is at the heart of local community**

Eg. "Colvestone primary school is the beating heart of the area – it has engendered a unique sense of community among the local families and serves as an important counterpoint/softening influence to Ridley Road market."

Response: We know schools have very close, sometimes multigenerational, ties to their local area and communities which is why proposing closing and amalgamating schools is one of the most difficult and challenging decisions the Council can make, and not one we would ever choose to do unless we had no other choice. But the quality of education for our children, and stability for our school staff, must remain a priority, requiring that options for closure and/or merger must be considered.

4.41. **Theme: Concern about the confusion for parents and staff regarding the terminology used to describe the proposals**

Eg. “The respondent was critical of the proposal objecting to the use of the word “amalgamate” because they believe this is confusing as children and parents think everyone, including the staff, will be going to Nightingale.”

Response: The council acknowledges the potential for the terminology associated with school organisation changes to cause confusion amongst parents and staff. The council responded by making the impact of the proposals clear in the September Cabinet report and statutory notices, adopting plain language eg. “close Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guarantee all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.”

In addition the September Cabinet (Appendix F) report set out clearly the meaning and impact of “merge” and “amalgamate” specifically for staff ie. “This process would mean that the staff who are currently working at the closing school would be at risk of being made redundant, as merging/amalgamating the children may not result in new jobs being created in the host school. Firstly as stated earlier the parents may not choose to move their children to the host school therefore opportunities for additional roles in the host school will only be known following completion of the schools admissions process. However, as part of the drive to avoid redundancies as much as possible, we are seeking to obtain agreement from the host school and the Hackney family of schools to support job opportunities for those staff at risk of redundancy.” (quoted from September Cabinet report, 6.9, pg 21)

Arguments raised against the proposal to close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School

- 4.42. **Note for decision makers:** In addition to comments made by individuals, the Council received a document entitled “Save Colvestone Final Consultation Response” which can be seen in full in appendix 3 of the Kwest statutory consultation report (Appendix M), written by parents and carers (referred to in the section below as “the save Colvestone submission”). Cabinet members are asked to review the document before the meeting. Hard copies will be available at the meeting. The document, in its introduction, chapters and conclusion, makes many arguments against the proposal to close Colvestone Primary School. These include, but are not

limited to, the following which Cabinet members should take into account when determining the proposal:

4.43. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission includes an “up-to-date analysis of place data that significantly challenges the underlying rationale of the proposals” and sets out the case that the proposals will not achieve the aim of reducing the number of surplus reception places. The key points from this analysis are:

- The May Cabinet report sets out that the proposals to close two schools and amalgamate four others into two will lead to a total reduction of 135 reception places. However, the save Colvestone submission observes that the Council has no control over free schools, academies and faith schools nor can it control the choices that parents might decide to make about their children’s education. Therefore, although the Council is trying to reduce vacancies across the borough, “it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system”.
- The save Colvestone submission observes that many schools have requested a temporary reduction in their PAN number. The latest school vacancy data, provided by Hackney Education on 19th September, shows 391 surplus places in reception classes (14.5% vacancy rate) and across all year groups the overall vacancy rate is 12.7%. The vacancy rates are higher in faith schools (30% for reception classes) and it is argued that the Council target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing this. Excluding faith schools, the overall vacancy rate across all other school types is 11% and popular schools have very few vacancies.
- The save Colvestone submission claims the council fails to account for up to date pupil numbers in the September Cabinet Report and that this invalidates many of the suppositions in that report;
 - The proposed outcomes (to reduce PAN) will not be achieved
 - The vacancy rates are significantly higher in faith schools and the overall target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing vacancies in these schools
 - There are insufficient places at the nearby schools to accommodate all the pupils being forced out of closing schools.
- The save Colvestone submission includes worked examples from each of the schools in question to argue that the proposals will reduce the surplus reception places by 60, rather than 135 places. It looks at whether there are enough vacancies in other local schools as well as whether parental choice is maintained. In addition, it discusses the risk of further closures because the

authors understand that this is only the first consultation and others are planned, potentially affecting up to 16 schools.

- Based on the analysis provided, the Save Colvestone submission demands an urgent review of the latest vacancy data for each proposed school rather than on a borough wide basis. It also insists that each of the proposed school closures should be considered and assessed on an individual basis. Furthermore, it recommends not closing one of the Dalston one-form community schools but rather exploring a potential merger between them.

Response: The council acknowledges that “it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system”. The Council will continue to work within a collaborative process and take a graduated approach to managing surplus places in partnership with faith schools, free schools and academies, which form an important part of the Hackney family of schools.

The detailed analysis provided in the save Colvestone submission does not correctly reflect the vacancy position of schools, nor the surplus places across the borough. This is because it is based on data that reflects the ‘capping’ of some year groups in some schools, in place at the request of the leaders of those schools, to assist in the management of their falling rolls.

Cappings are unofficial reductions to school intakes and do not form the basis of school place planning nor the future projections of demand used by local authorities. A school’s published admission number (PAN) forms part of its admission arrangements which are formally determined by the admission authority for the school and published in accordance with the Admissions Code. An assessment of capacity in nearby schools to accommodate children potentially affected by the proposals is provided at section 4.37 of this report and is based on schools’ officially published PANs.

For each of the schools proposed to close the assessment (at section 4.37) lists nearby schools within statutory walking distance and provides up to date vacancies by year group based on PANs. This assessment identifies, for each school under proposal to discontinue, that across nearby schools there are 100s of alternative school places available in every year group.

If the Cabinet decides to close Colvestone, the local authority will comply fully with its obligations under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 and ensure compulsory school aged children can access full time, efficient education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that a child may have.

The offer of places at Princess May that will be made, should Cabinet decide to progress the proposal, satisfies these obligations, however parents have a right to express a preference for any alternative school if they wish.

Parents have a right to express a preference for a particular type of school, for example a non-faith school, a one form entry school or an academy, and may seek a place at schools outside their local area in preference to local

schools, if that is what they wish. The local authority is under no obligation to ensure parents have all of these options within walking distance of their home or their local area, but in Hackney many are.

The primary motivation when proposing a merger of the student body of a school proposed to close into an existing school, is the impact on families and children and the benefits it could bring in terms of children being able to move together with some of their friends to a new setting. The proposal to discontinue Colvestone and offer a guaranteed place at Princess May for Colvestone pupils is not dependent on the assumption that a specific number of children will transition to Princess May.

If the Cabinet decides to progress the proposal, the council will work closely with both schools to understand the number of and impact on children joining Princess May and to support them welcoming the families that do choose to take the offer of guaranteed places.

4.44. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission outlines perceived flaws in the consultation process. A summary of some of the issues raised are:

- The save Colvestone submission observes that “there are multiple instances where the consultation process has failed to follow or deliberately misrepresents” the Statutory Guidance for opening and closing maintained schools and the Council’s Estates Strategy. Several examples are detailed on pages 14-17 of the save Colvestone submission.
- The September report to the Cabinet is considered to have been “ill informed and lacking detail”, whilst the design of the consultation is considered “ineffective” for the stated purpose of determining whether to close the schools. The rationale behind this viewpoint is set out in pages 18-21 of the save Colvestone submission.
- The save Colvestone submission asserts that the consultation was “inaccessible to some of the groups that should have been included” and the process “damaged the financial viability of the schools in scope”. It states that the consultation documents were not sent to local residents, despite the Cabinet report listing them as a group to be included and criticises the lack of information provided in alternate languages and the lack of engagement with families or staff at local nurseries and other childcare settings.
- The save Colvestone submission claims the council have not provided information as requested and that some of this has been acquired by other means and used to support the alternative analyses presented in the submission. It asserts that this information should have been presented by the Council to enable a more informed consultation.
- The save Colvestone submission claims the Council should have consulted on each proposal individually, with information made

available as a context for each including the circumstances and locality for each school. Because this was not done, informed scrutiny and consultation was not possible.

- The save Colvestone submission objects to the fact that the Council has not consulted on alternative proposals.
- The Save Colvestone submission states that part of the consultation was undertaken during school holidays.

Response: The council considers it has consulted lawfully. Officers followed the Guidance and took legal advice. The process is detailed in this report under Statutory Notice Summary, points 4.20 to 4.23. Paragraph 4.21 deals with the translation into other languages of the Statutory Notices. The Council held early engagement sessions before meeting to decide whether or not to consult. The Guidance states (at page 7) that “Both the consultation period and the representation period should be largely carried out in term time to allow the maximum numbers of people to see and respond to what is proposed.”

4.45. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission presents data that challenges the Council’s interpretation of child yield and related time frames from the Dalston plan developments. It submits that this information is specifically relevant to Colvestone as the nearest primary school to all of these developments. Some points raised are:

- The Dalston Plan forms parts of commitments made and adopted in 2020 as part of the Hackney Local Plan (LP33). These proposals would benefit Colvestone by delivering new children to the immediate locality in need of primary school provision in the short to mid-term, and long term place demand downstream from these projects. These committed projects would be harmed by the closure of Colvestone Primary School.
- Most of the development would be concentrated at the Kingsland Shopping Centre with around 30% of the proposed housing being 3 bedroom family sized units and the aim of 50% of the development to be affordable housing. This could bring 200+ new families into the immediate area.
- If Colvestone and De Beauvoir schools were closed, parents in that development would have to travel almost half a mile to get to a non-denominational school. And even the closest one, Princess May, sits next to the A10
- The Dalston Plan makes it clear that there is demand for Colvestone’s school places in the medium to long term, because of the large number of new housing which the SPD will encourage in the immediate vicinity, and for which Colvestone will be the nearest primary school.

- An assessment of likely child yield is provided and it is claimed the figures demonstrate that the Dalston Plan developments (planned for delivery in the short to medium term) will deliver 76 and 100 children to the immediate vicinity of Colvestone primary school - between 2.5 and 3.5 entire year groups of school aged children within very short (most sites, less than 100m), fully pedestrianised access to primary school provision. This is anything but negligible, and the proportion of 0-4 year olds suggests an even healthier future demand for places downstream. This data draws a compelling picture of future demand for places in the short to medium term.
- Closing Colvestone could impede the success of the development by making it hard for developers to sell those apartments to families, given the limited schooling options. The closure of so many local authority schools, and particularly one close to a new development, threatens to lock Hackney into a death spiral when it comes to families living in the area - a reduction in families leads to the closure of schools and reduction of choice, which makes the area unappealing to families, which leads to more closed.

Response: There are proposed areas for regeneration and new housing across the borough and in some of the areas close to the schools covered in this report. However, despite the extensive Council and family housing planned, the expected initial child yield is low and would not impact medium to long term demand. For the projected figures we have there would remain enough school places to accommodate need. Projections obtained annually from the Greater London Authority take into account proposed new developments that have attained planning permission.

The recently undertaken Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2023 indicates that household growth in Hackney between 2022 and 2039 will be predominantly single people (+45.1%) and cohabiting, i.e. shared living, households (+44.2%). In comparison, there is little change in the projection for families with children over the same period. With the exception of Stamford Hill, the majority of Borough-wide housing need is for smaller homes. This is important in considering the likely effect of such housing on pupil numbers.

Adopted in July 2020, the Hackney Local Plan 2033 (LP33), requires that all new development in the borough have regard to existing social infrastructure, which includes the provision of education facilities. Within LP33, policy LP8 states that *'where proposed development is expected to place pressure on existing social infrastructure by increasing demand, these developments will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional social infrastructure to meet needs, either through on-site provision or through contributions towards providing additional capacity off-site.'*

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which informed the policies within LP33, notes that while the borough's population is expected to increase to 321,000 by 2033 (42,000 higher than in 2018), that the age mix of the borough is anticipated to shift towards the older community with the growth in over 65s being four times greater than the growth in the school age population, ages 0-15. Again, such long term forecasting suggests that changes which forecast increases to the overall general population, need to be balanced against demographic changes over this time.

While there are variances across the different housing tenures, across the Council's programme as a whole, just over 70% of the homes delivered have been 1 and 2 bed homes; with just under 30% comprising a mix of 3 and 4 bed family sized homes. This is broadly consistent with policy LP14 as outlined in LP33, which, depending on the tenure of housing, requires all new developments to comprise a mix of family sized homes, ranging from 15 to 36%.

The council considers that there will remain sufficient school places in the planning area, and within statutory walking distance, for the entire length of time for which it has information available to it. Places required to accommodate the yield of school aged children from proposed developments is not anticipated to exceed availability of places even with the discontinuance of Colvestone and progression of the proposed developments.

Despite Hackney building new homes the numbers will be insufficient to have any significant impact on the proposals in this report for schools in scope for closure and/or merger.

- 4.46. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission points out that the Council has no recent experience of closing schools and should have done so in an "informed, holistic and consultative fashion".

Response: For many years school closures were not necessary. The Council's consultation process included all steps required by the Guidance, as well as an additional engagement at the start and additional action to publicise the statutory representation period. The Council's powers are limited in dealing with the challenges it faces over falling rolls; parental choice for example, and its very limited powers in relation to opening a new school under current legislation. It consulted on the option of closing some of its schools as a last resort having previously taken steps outlined in this and previous reports in order to avoid this.

- 4.47. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission points out that the consultation has had a "chilling" effect on transfers and enrolments into schools that are the subject of the proposals.

Response: The Council acknowledges that the proposals, sadly, and perhaps inevitably, have resulted in changes to choices parents have made, reducing numbers of children in affected schools further.

School	Total on Roll (Provisional October 23 census)	Change since Jan '23 census	% Change since Jan '23 census
Baden Powell Primary School	154	-8	-4.9%
De Beauvoir School	57	-58	-50.4%
Colvestone Primary School	116	-14	-10.8%
Randal Cremer	128	-114	-47.1%

The Council is monitoring pupil movement closely and supporting schools as required. The Council acknowledges the impact for staff and pupils to see their peers and friends leaving the school prior to any final decision.

The Council acknowledges the uncertainty parents have faced and has supported parental preference as to whether they acted in anticipation of a decision to close their school, or waited until after the decision.

4.48. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission claims that “through the successful partnership with the Blossom Federation, in only 6 months the new Senior Leadership Team have demonstrated that they can return the school to financial health despite the reduced pupil numbers.”

Response: Colvestone School submitted an agreed 2023-24 budget to the local authority in May 2023 inclusive of the savings achieved in the previous 2022-23 financial year of £28,320.

The school forecasted an increase in the deficit for the following 3 years 2023-26 and were anticipating a significant growth in pupil numbers in academic year 2027-28 which would facilitate the process of recovering the deficit to a larger extent.

However, following a review of the actual income and expenditure for period 6 (September 2023) the forecast financial position was revised as stated below:

Financial Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Projected Deficit May 2023	-589,261	-682,951	- 793,491

Financial Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Projected Deficit Nov 2023	-601,964	-819,693	-1,041,600

The revised forecasts show the deficit exceeding £600,000 at the end of the current financial year and growing over the coming years.

The Council acknowledges the outstanding support offered to Colvestone by the Blossom Federation who have expertly stabilised the school's education provision and their financial position having inherited an historical deficit from the previous leadership of the school.

After the executive headteacher and head of school left Colvestone in August 2022, the school's governing body supported by the Council looked at proposals from Blossom Federation and Princess May. This temporary soft partnership (recently extended until July 2024) allows Colvestone to receive leadership and business support to improve standards and children's outcomes, and stabilise the budget, all of which has been achieved with the support of The Blossom Federation.

This expert support was reflected in a recent Ofsted Inspection which found the school good overall.

4.49. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission claims that, despite persistent requests, there remains no cost-benefit analysis of each of the individual proposals. Closing a school is hugely costly, and the submission identifies multiple additional costs not budgeted for in any of the consultation documents prepared by the Council. It claims the likely costs declared by the Council for realising the proposals to be a substantial under-estimation.

Response: The council acknowledges the points raised. The rationale for taking action is to ensure our primary schools can continue to offer the very best education for residents and this is directly linked to the financial viability of schools.

Decision makers were presented with estimates of the costs of closing schools in the May Cabinet report and are included with this report in Appendix U. The council acknowledges the associated costs are significant and largely fall to the local authority and, most significantly, include any deficit a school is carrying at the point of closure. Without reducing the number of surplus places in our primary schools financial pressure will continue to grow and push a growing number of schools into or toward deficit.

In the current climate where supply of school places has exceeded demand for 8 years, reserve funds across maintained schools are being exhausted at an alarming and unsustainable rate (ie. forecast to reduce by 70% in just two years, see section 5.4 to 5.10), and two thirds of maintained primary schools (or the federations they form part of) are forecasting they will be unable to

operate within budget this financial year, the local authority will face even greater costs when closing schools in the future as school deficits build.

- 4.50. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission includes the 11 September 2023 Judicial Review pre-action letter (Appendix V), which states; the Council has wholly failed to factor air quality impact into the PSED analysis. Negative air quality impacts are known to harm those who are more vulnerable, in particular, children. Hackney’s own Air Quality Action Plan 2021- 2025 identifies school communities as amongst the most susceptible groups to the serious health impacts of air pollution within its strategy to improve air quality throughout the borough.

Air pollution levels are significantly higher at Princess May than at Colvestone. Princess May is on a main road (the A10); Colvestone is on a quiet back street, part of a fully-funded re-greening project which will further improve air quality, meaning that closing Colvestone will inevitably expose children to poorer air quality.

Response: The Council acknowledges concern that children may be exposed to pollution when travelling to schools. The Council’s [Air Quality Action Plan](#) seeks to improve air quality in the community.

The Council has looked closely at the air quality at Princess May, as we know this is a concern for some parents.

Air quality as measured by average Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) at the six school sites in Hackney was reviewed. For 2022 all of the diffusion tubes located near these schools were well below the Hackney air quality objective of 40 (µg/m³), as seen in table below, with some improving since 2021.

Site name	2021 NO ₂ annual concentration (µg/m ³)	2022 NO ₂ annual concentration (µg/m ³)	Pollutants monitored
Randal Cremer	20	19	NO ₂
Nightingale	19	17	NO ₂
Baden-Powell	18	19	NO ₂
De Beauvoir	39	36	NO ₂
Colvestone	23	21	NO ₂
Princess May 1	23	20	NO ₂
Princess May 2	32	32	NO ₂

Source (Air quality Action plan 2021-2025 and ASR Hackney 2022)

Air quality is measured near Princess May School in two places. While the latest air quality monitoring shows that one of them has higher nitrogen dioxide levels than Colvestone, both are within air quality objectives. We will be doing further work to bring this down, as part of the wider mission to improve air quality and reduce traffic around all schools in Hackney.

Princess May already has greenery and screening between its playground and the A10, and has been shortlisted for further work as part of our green screen programme involving the installation of 2-3m high ivy plant screens on the perimeter of schools between playgrounds and busy roads.

The school has also benefited from the 3.9% reduction of traffic on the A10 side as a result of the wider Stoke Newington Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN), which covers three sides of the school, and has a School Street on two sides, which has further reduced traffic

We've rolled out School Streets to nearly all Hackney primaries to tackle air pollution, and we want 75% of the borough to be low traffic by 2026. To keep reducing pollution, we need people to ditch the log burners, and walk, cycle or take public transport, or, if they need to drive, switch to car clubs or EVs.

Further information is added to EIA (Appendix B)

4.51. **Comment:** The save Colvestone submission states that there will be “no going back” should the school be closed. Some points made include:

- Under ‘free school presumption’ a local authority cannot open a local authority school – new schools will automatically be free schools run by the for-profit sector, with Hackney Council forced to give over the historic (or modern) school buildings to the private company, along with all oversight on how the school is managed and what they teach, on a long lease without generating any rental income (and yet incurring costs) for the Council
- Claims the LA has consistently refused to release information related to the deeds of Colvestone school – denying both FOI requests and legal representations.
- Due diligence has not been conducted on the status of school buildings as demanded by the Estate Strategy with regards to building deeds / titles, particularly with regards to restrictive covenants, and specifically with regards to restrictive covenants believed to be included in the transfer deeds (1906) of the Colvestone school buildings when they were acquired by the LCC in 1906 from an educational charity (still extant).

Response: The Council acknowledges that the free school presumption has limited its powers dramatically. This is discussed within this report at paragraph 10.6 to 10.8.

The council’s legal team has confirmed that, having reviewed the title, no such restriction exists. There is no implied assumption that charities have a right of first refusal in respect of education land/buildings disposals.

A FOI was received and has been responded to.

5. Recommendations for proposals

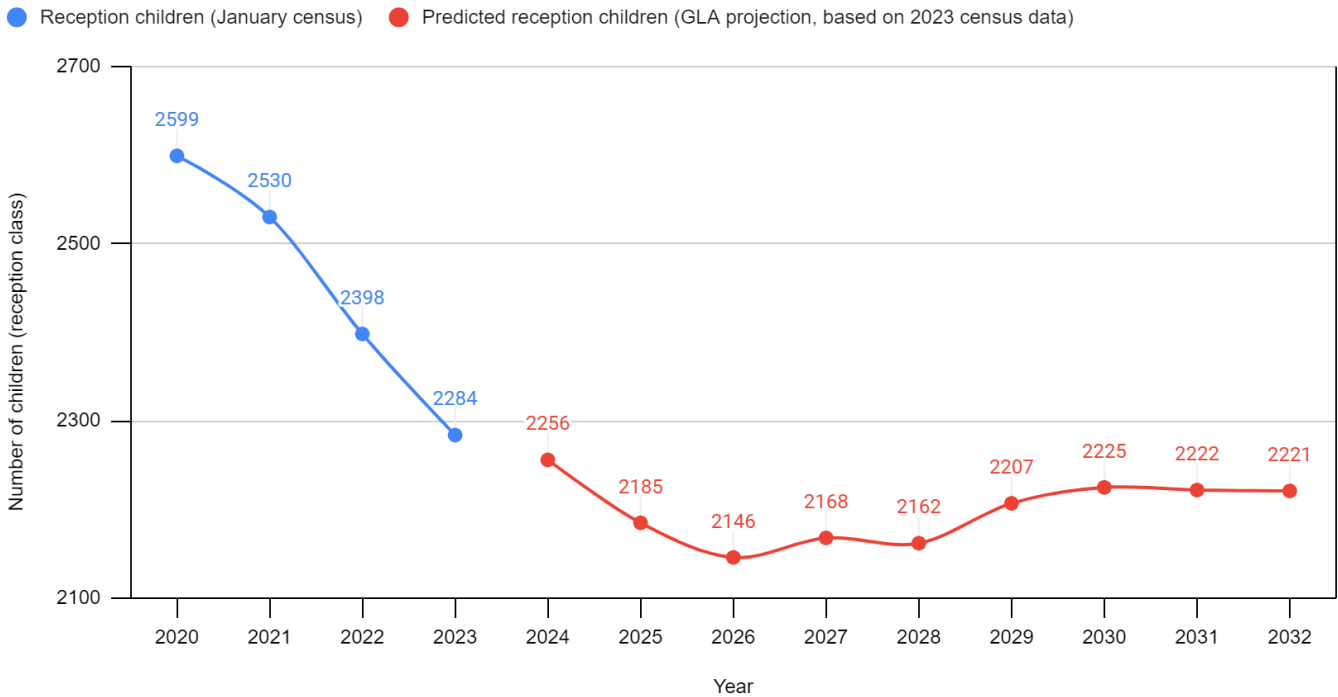
- 5.1. **In making their decision Cabinet members are reminded that ‘conscientious consideration’ must be given to the responses before the decision is made. The statutory notice comments are mostly very much opposed to the proposals, however Cabinet is recommended to determine the statutory proposals described in section 3 of this report for the following reasons:**

Decreasing demand for primary places

- 5.2. There are fewer children requiring reception places than 9 years ago, resulting in a significant level of surplus primary places in Hackney. Our schools currently have over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (21% surplus) - the Council aims to have between 5 and 10% surplus. Based on the most up to date projections available to us, the number of children projected to need places in Reception over the coming years shows that, without reducing the number of places in the borough, we will continue to have over 550 vacant spaces (20%+ surplus) until at least 2030. (table 3, Appendix C).
- 5.3. Hackney is observing lower than forecast numbers of children joining reception classes this academic year. Provisional October 2023 census figures show 2164 on roll in reception while the GLA forecast 2256 would join reception classes. This equates to an additional 3 reception classes (92 children) remaining unfilled.

Observed and projected number of children in reception classes in Hackney schools

Recorded January school census, 2007 - 2023 & GLA projections 2024 - 2032



Financial viability

- 5.4. A high number of surplus places (vacancies) means that schools become financially unviable over time. A school's funding is based on the number of children on roll, so schools with a high number of vacancies have a smaller budget than schools that are full, but they carry the same financial, educational and wellbeing responsibilities to their children, families and staff. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.
- 5.5. As an example, in 2022/23, for every surplus place that a maintained primary school carried, it lost on average £6,484 per surplus place. For a one form entry school carrying 33% surplus places in every year group (10 empty seats in a class of 30), the school would be losing out on a potential £453,880 additional income, with no change to the number of class teachers, who represent the primary expense in school budgets.
- 5.6. In this situation schools are forced to use their surplus funds or go into deficit to ensure the quality of education for Hackney children is maintained. Over two thirds of Hackney's maintained schools, or the federations they form part of, are predicting they will over-spend by the end of the 2023/24 financial year.
- 5.7. Financial reserves are reducing at an alarming and unsustainable rate across Hackney's maintained primary schools, or the federations they form part of, and are projected to fall by £6.48m or 70% in the two years to March

2024. The combined surplus totalled £9.08m in 2021/22, fell significantly to £5.8m in 2022/23, and is forecast to drop further to £2.6m at the close of 2023/24 financial year.

- 5.8. The Council is financially liable for any maintained school deficits, and must decide each year whether to continue to fund a school in deficit. When a maintained school closes the Council is responsible for the debt carried by the school at the point of closure. This also applies when schools faced with financial challenges convert to academies.
- 5.9. If the Council does not take action to reduce the number of primary places to align with the current and projected demand, we knowingly take on increased financial burden and responsibility at a time when we are required to find £57m in savings over the next 3 years.
- 5.10. The longer the Council delays taking action on reducing primary places, the greater the financial burden it will inherit.

Quality of Education

- 5.11. To avoid going into deficit, or to bring a school's deficit back under control, school governors and leaders are forced to make difficult decisions about whether to reduce the number of teachers or teaching assistants, support staff, school leaders, put off investment or maintenance in school building and equipment or find other savings, all of which impacts negatively on the quality of education and school experience for Hackney children and staff.
- 5.12. Schools with reduced budgets have less income for support staff such as teaching assistants and learning mentors, who provide important support for pupils through academic and pastoral interventions. Specialist teachers with expertise in physical education, music, languages or art become too expensive, meaning primary class teachers who may not be skilled or trained in these areas have to teach these subjects themselves. It is also common in small schools to see leaders double up on roles, such as headteachers taking on the SENCO responsibility.
- 5.13. As budget pressure becomes greater, and class sizes drop below 50%, schools must also consider the option of "vertically grouped" classes to avoid going into deficit. This requires a sufficiently experienced and able teacher to teach children from across two year groups in the same classroom. Vertical grouping brings increased complexity in day to day management and organisation and increased workload for the teacher. The challenges of recruiting and retaining skilled and experienced teachers in London can make schools under financial pressure less attractive.
- 5.14. In addition, limited budgets mean that occasional but important work to maintain the quality of experience at school is not taken forward in a timely manner e.g. the computers used by staff and children become increasingly obsolete and need replacement, sometimes across the whole school at once due to their original purchase being made in bulk.

- 5.15. Enrichment activities have to be curtailed such as curriculum days which schools might run to enhance an offer (i.e. Roman Days led by external companies). Clubs and wrap around provision can also be affected.

The Council's duty to ensure there is a sufficient level of school places

- 5.16. Based on the most up to date information available it is likely that further measures, over and above those currently proposed, will be needed to address falling rolls and align the borough's primary school estate with expected demand.
- 5.17. If the Cabinet decides to progress the proposal 105 reception places will be removed from the borough PAN and reduce reception surplus to 17% by 2029 (based on current projections). This would be achieved through reduction of 135 places, namely closure of Colvestone (PAN 30), Baden Powel (PAN 30), De Beauvoir (PAN 30) and Randal Cremer (PAN 45), offset by an increase of 30 places at Nightingale.
- 5.18. However, in isolation, this does not sufficiently address the problem and, based on the latest projections, further action to bring surplus reception places under 10% will be required. The current level of surplus primary places would suggest that the Council needs to do more to reduce the number of vacant school places.
- 5.19. It is for this reason that the Council will continue to work together with our schools to review and adjust future plans in line with the priorities outlined in the Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy to bring surplus reception places to within a sustainable range (ie. 5-10%).

Benefits of the proposed amalgamation

- 5.20. The amalgamations of Baden Powell and Nightingale Schools, and Colvestone with Princess May School, can deliver significant benefits financially. Two form entry schools benefit from economies of scale in meeting fixed costs and infrastructure expenses, such as building and facilities, utilities, technology and equipment. Purchasing power is greater in a two form entry school which generates savings that can be used to re-invest in the school's priorities for driving up standards.
- 5.21. It is anticipated that, should the proposals proceed, the receiving schools (Nightingale and Princess May) will benefit from increased income and financial stability through higher numbers of pupils on roll. Managed effectively the schools could benefit from more robust resourcing and could positively impact academic opportunities, access to specialised teachers and wider range of extracurricular activities and clubs. A larger student body can provide pupils with a more extensive and diverse peer group, promoting social skills and cultural awareness. It is believed the proposed mergers could, with the positive engagement of parents and school leaders, foster a sense of community among parents and pupils from both schools.

6. **Impact of the proposals**

- 6.1. The impact of the proposals on the community are acknowledged. Schools are often considered the hub of a community with long standing intergenerational ties and memories for residents. This process has been challenging for the whole school community including Governing Bodies, school leadership teams, teachers, support staff, families and pupils in the affected schools. The council have therefore sought to foster a proactive approach with all those involved during the engagement events and stages, including an ongoing comprehensive support offer to schools to support and mitigate the impact of these proposals, should they be agreed by Cabinet. This would also include helping families plan for and identify an alternative school for their children and support for staff to seek redeployment opportunities.

Impact on pupils

- 6.2. The number of pupils at each of the schools in the proposal can be seen in section 4.37 above.
- 6.3. The positive impact of pupils moving to a full sustainable school can be seen in section 5.20.
- 6.4. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to those proposed to close shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. (Appendix N - Nearby schools and vacancies - SES - November 2023). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following proposed closures/mergers and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided as Appendices O to T (there is one map provided for each year group addressing all schools). The Council is confident that all displaced children would be able to attend another good or outstanding school local with a similar range of opportunities available at their previous school.
- 6.5. There has been in year movement since the proposals were announced earlier in 2023, the impact on current enrollment can be seen in section 4.47. The Council is monitoring pupil movement closely and supporting schools as required. The Council acknowledges the impact for staff and pupils to see their peers and friends leaving the school prior to any final decision. The Council acknowledges the uncertainty parents have faced and has supported parental preference as to whether they acted in anticipation of a decision to close their school, or waited until after the decision.
- 6.6. If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. There will be one-to-one support for families to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools. There are sufficient school places in the areas where the schools are affected to accommodate all children.

- 6.7. The Local Authority has proposed amalgamation/merger sites that are close walking distance to the original schools, to ensure travel times don't exceed the statutory walking distance requirement two miles for children aged between five and eight, and three miles for children eight and over. This will help with pupils staying in areas that they are familiar with. Should parents prefer a school other than the proposed merging school the Local Authority will support them to secure a suitable school place.
- 6.8. In the case of a merger/amalgamation, all children will be transferred to the merged school if that is what the families want. This means they would attend that same school as their friends. The Council will support families who do not want their children to attend the merged school to explore other options. We want to carry out changes in a way that minimises disruption and distress to children and families, communities and staff.
- 6.9. If a decision is made to close/merge schools the council is committed to ensure that support is available for pupils. The council will create an in depth transition plan which includes a similar data collection to the year 6 transition, where current schools will provide information on each pupil which can be passed to their new school. This will be used by Hackney support staff to ensure that pupils where needed are monitored and via Multi Agency Partnership meetings extra support will be provided as needed. Further work would be introduced to ensure as little impact and a smooth transition which will be finalised if a decision is made.

SEND pupils

- 6.10. The Local Authority will ensure that children with SEND are placed in appropriate settings to minimise disruption. The transition information in section 6.8 will be for all children.
- 6.11. The number of pupils with an EHCP and SEND support at each of the schools in the proposal can be seen in section 4.31.
- 6.12. If a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, their SEND key worker will work with the family directly to consult and determine another school that can meet their needs. Children with SEND but without a plan will be supported to ensure special transition arrangements are in place to help the move go smoothly.
- 6.13. £1,000 will be given to schools receiving children with SEND needs from one of the schools with proposed closure/merger to ensure a smooth transition. The purpose of the funding is to provide transition support for our high needs children. Settings will be able to use the Team Around the School process to help plan the use of support.

Parental Choice

- 6.14. Under Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Local Authorities and the Governing Bodies of maintained schools are under a

duty to comply with the wishes of a parent in expressing a preference for a particular school, and admit the child, unless complying would prejudice the provision of education or the efficient use of resources. Parents have a right to express a preference for the school they want their child to attend, but do not have a right for their child to attend that particular school.

- 6.15. Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 requires the local authority to ensure compulsory school aged children can access full time, efficient education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that a child may have.
- 6.16. Parents have a right to express a preference for a particular type of school, for example a non-faith school, a one form entry school or an academy, and may seek a place at schools outside their local area in preference to local schools, if that is what they wish. However the local authority is under no obligation to ensure parents have all of these options within walking distance of their home or their local area.
- 6.17. There are numerous good or outstanding primary schools with vacancies within walking distance of the schools that may close (see section 4.35). Should the closures go ahead, the Council will work closely to support families to make a planned transition to a new school for the start of the new academic year in September 2024. Families may also seek to secure a place at an alternative school via the 'in-year' admissions process if they wish.

Impact on staff

- 6.18. The number of teachers and support staff that would be affected if the proposals are taken forward are summarised in the table seen in section 4.35, this includes teachers and support staff.
- 6.19. We acknowledge the serious impact these proposals have on staff wellbeing prior to any final decision and the direct impact on the lives and livelihood of staff should the decision to close or merge schools go ahead. In view of this we will ensure those staff have access to an employee assistance programme, where they can access confidential advice and counselling.
- 6.20. In the event of closures, the Council will do everything it can in accordance with statutory procedures to help staff find alternative roles in schools across Hackney and beyond. However, as a last resort, staff will be offered redundancy and/or retirements.
- 6.21. Those affected will be supported through practical outplacement support such as application and CV writing, interview skills and potential job opportunities in other Hackney Schools. A particular emphasis will be given to supporting support staff, many of whom are Hackney residents.

Support offer

6.22. In addition to the support offer detailed above. The impact of the proposals will continue to be monitored and an appropriate support offer is in development. A support package for schools impacted by falling rolls and the current proposals has been communicated, and includes direct financial support. Other support includes:

- Support available for 6 headteachers / school leadership wellbeing
- Extended CPD offer for the staff at the schools
- Financial support for the six schools as the council recognises the impact of these proposals on them, to support continued focus on children and education
- Financial support for SEND pupils (and receiving schools) where pupils have already moved
- Training support for staff is in the pipeline
- Transition focus and community cohesion work for pupils and families in progress

6.23. The above impacts are acknowledged and the council is committed to ensuring an ongoing comprehensive support offer to support and mitigate the impact of these proposals. As part of this and the general impacts of school closure of amalgamation/merger the decision makers should further consider the protected characteristics and equalities impact assessment below.

Equality impact assessment

6.24. Allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on quality and breadth of the education offer at those schools.

6.25. The Council must make best efforts to ensure that the gradual attrition of pupils does not further disadvantage those who are already disadvantaged socially/educationally.

6.26. In making any decision to amalgamate/merge or close schools the Council must consider the school and local communities and groups with the following protected characteristics:

- Age (a person belonging to a particular age or range of ages)
- Disability (a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)
- Gender reassignment (the process of transitioning from one sex to another)
- Pregnancy and maternity (Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks

after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding)

- Race (Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.)
- Religion and belief (Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.)
- Sex (A man or a woman)
- Sexual orientation (Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.)

6.27. In addition to the above protected characteristics, Hackney also considers disadvantages for people by socio-economics and identifies other priority groups, for example, children in care and single parents. It also considers Gender reassignment, the definition is broad, so is likely to cover a wide range of transgender and non-binary people. As well as environmental impacts such as air quality.

6.28. The Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix B) details Hackney's protected characteristics profile, risks, impacts and mitigations if a decision is made to accept the proposals. Members are asked to review this document carefully before the meeting and consider the effect of the proposals on our young people including, those with SEND, on having to move school, including the effect of air pollution (see especially page 20). This document also considers issues relating to local integration and community cohesion objectives, which have regard to the [Integrated Communities Action Plan](#)

7. **Consideration of alternative options to address falling rolls**

Option 1 - No action

7.1. The Council has a duty to manage school places effectively, and to ensure that schools provide high quality education for children, and deliver Best Value, and continuous improvement through the efficient, effective and economic management of our school estate.

7.2. The Council is ambitious for Hackney children; our schools achieve excellent results and we want to ensure they remain among the very best in the country.

7.3. If no action is taken it is inevitable that quality of education and outcomes for Hackney children are at risk and the Council will be liable for the costs of schools worst affected by falling rolls as they move into debt or increase their deficit and eventually close for financial reasons.

7.4. As outlined in section 5.4 to 5.10, the operational and financial challenges affecting schools with falling rolls will continue to increase with a negative impact on pupils and the Council's financial position. Taking no action to the issues affecting schools with falling rolls is not an acceptable option available to the Council.

Option 2 - Phased implementation of the current proposals over 2 or more years

- 7.5. This option was rejected as there is an urgent need to take action and any delay is very likely to result in increased financial liability for the council as schools at risk move toward or increase their deficit position.
- 7.6. Additionally, further measures to address falling rolls are likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand. If taken forward, the proposals outlined in this report would begin to address the issue of falling rolls by removing 105 reception places; however, in isolation, this is unlikely to resolve the problem and, based on current projections, further action to bring surplus reception places under 10% is likely.

Option 3: Close/merge more schools than those currently proposed.

- 7.7. Further measures to address falling rolls, over and above those proposed in this paper, are likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand.
- 7.8. Action to address falling rolls that involve more schools than the six that would potentially be affected by the current proposals was considered. This option might be considered by some to be favourable because it could provide greater reassurance that children, forced to move school as a result of their school closing, would be less likely to have to move primary school again if further action is required in the future.
- 7.9. This option was not preferred due to limited resourcing and capacity to effectively manage and mitigate impact of a greater number of closures/mergers.

Option 4: Alternative options for De Beauvoir primary

- 7.10. Alternative pairings for the proposals were considered and detailed in the May Cabinet report, additional suggestions have been put forward in the consultation summarised below:
- 7.11. Merging De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer on either site was suggested however it was not considered a feasible option for all families as the schools are 1.1 miles apart, walking distance which is a 25 minute walk, and the distance would be a barrier for those living for example, north of De Beauvoir or south of Randal Cremer.
- 7.12. Merging De Beauvoir and Princess May on either site was suggested however it was not considered a viable option as it was considered unlikely to lead to sufficiently stabilising numbers of pupils at either school. Although a merger with Princess May was not proposed, at 16 minute walk (0.7 miles away) it is likely the school will have capacity to accommodate any families from De Beauvoir if that is what they want. Colvestone was considered a

better school to merge being 0.4 miles and 8 minute walk away from Princess May.

Option 5: Alternative options for Colvestone primary

- 7.13. Merging Colvestone and Princess May on the Colvestone site was suggested however this option was considered infeasible as the Colvestone site is unable to accommodate all the children from Princess May. The decision to propose a merger onto the Princess May site may positively impact that schools' falling roll and unused capacity.
- 7.14. Merging Colvestone with other schools in the Blossom Federation was suggested however these options were considered unsuitable due to the distance between Colvestone and other schools in the federation.
- 7.15. Merging De Beaviour and Colvestone on the Colvestone site was suggested however, based on pupil numbers at the time, Colvestone appeared unable to accommodate all the children from De Beauvoir. The subsequent drop in pupil numbers at both schools makes this option feasible in terms of pupil numbers, however this is not favoured due to Colvestone's financial position. Amalgamating into a one form entry school is not financially preferable.
- 7.16. It has also been proposed by those in support of Colvestone remaining open, that it could be a school for pupils with SEND. However in the short term this option is unfeasible because the school would need to be closed while building modifications and arrangements were made requiring all children to move to other schools. However all options regarding future use will be considered for medium to long term should the school close as a result of these proposals.

Option 6: Alternative options for Randal Cremer Primary

- 7.17. Options for merging the school were considered but there was no single school located near enough with the sufficient places to accommodate all of the pupils. However, there are sufficient schools nearby with surplus places that could accommodate the pupils from Randal Cremer. Hoxton Garden, Sebright, St Monica's and St John the Baptist are likely alternative schools and all rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted.

Option 7: Alternative options considered for Baden Powell Primary School

- 7.18. Options to merge Nightingale and other schools with surplus places rather than Baden Powell, were considered. This option was not progressed primarily because Nightingale did not have capacity to guarantee all children at neighbouring schools with surplus capacity a place, based on pupil roll data at the time, and because the distance between these other schools was less optimal than between Baden Powell and Nightingale.

The Councils powers in relation to falling rolls

7.19. The limiting factors at play in our options; The Council has to make arrangements for enabling parents to express a preference for their child's school. The Council does all it can to accommodate parental preference for a school. It is of course limited in this when a school is oversubscribed. It can no longer open a new school, as mentioned elsewhere in this report. It has the power to close a school it maintained, but no such power in relation to an academy or free school. Options available to it in taking action to reduce the issues it faces with falling rolls are limited to closure and amalgamating maintained schools. Continuing with current and projected levels of deficit in the circumstances of significantly reduced pupil numbers would be irresponsible.

8. **Risk assessment**

8.1. The implementation of this strategy is key mitigation associated with the surplus of mainstream school places and key risks and mitigations at this stage are outlined below.

	Risk	Mitigation
1	<p>No action taken</p> <p>Growing financial burden (highlighted in section 5.4 to 5.10), reputational damage and risk to quality of education (highlighted in sections 5.11 to 5.15).</p>	<p>This report and other evidence produced for decision makers clearly sets out the financial and quality of education risks associated with no decision and emphasises the need for action .</p>
2	<p>Decision making is delayed</p> <p>If the decision making timeline outlined at 9.1 is not achieved statutory school admissions lead times would push any proposed closures/mergers by at least 12 months (i.e. September 2025 or later), resulting in continued and escalating pressure on school finances, the quality of education offered to residents and continued uncertainty for families and staff.</p>	<p>Decision makers are made aware and reminded of timeline dependencies and impact.</p>
3	<p>Decision to implement cannot be taken by the Council if it is not taken within two months of the end of statutory representation period.</p> <p>If Cabinet does not determine the statutory proposals within two months of the end of the representation period, (that is, by 3 January 2024), under the statutory process that must be followed, the decision can only be taken by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.</p>	<p>Decision makers are made aware and reminded of timeline dependencies and impact.</p>

	Risk	Mitigation
4	<p>Impact of proposals on schools proposed to close or amalgamate/merge.</p> <p>Pupils and staff leave schools proposed to close/merge following decisions and prior to July 2024 (highlighted at 6.18 to 6.21), affecting quality of provision or making schools unviable during the current academic year.</p>	<p>Monitoring pupil and staff movement, robust communication and early reporting of viability concerns in cooperation with schools. Support offer developed and implemented</p>
5	<p>SEND to mainstream pupil ratio increases</p> <p>SEND to mainstream pupil ratio in schools proposed to close/merge increases as rolls and funding continue to fall, bringing additional pressure to schools, with adverse effect on remaining pupils with SEND</p>	<p>Monitor impact and progress proposals to provide direct financial support.</p> <p>Progress implementation of ESES, priority 1 creating new SEND provision in borough (further information can be found on the Local Offer.)</p>
6	<p>Engagement disparity between school communities</p> <p>Parent/carer voice and ability to engage differs between schools/communities and is not necessarily reflective of the impact of proposals or strength of feeling.</p>	<p>Independent assessment and thematic reporting of consultation responses for decision makers.</p> <p>Raise awareness with decision makers around disparity between school communities' ability to engage.</p>
7	<p>Meeting potential future demand</p> <p>Ability to meet future demand if schools are closed/merged and pupil numbers increase.</p>	<p>Unused capacity in existing school estate is monitored and retained to allow for expansion of places by increasing schools PANs (Appendix C, section 5)</p>

	Risk	Mitigation
8	<p>Legal action</p> <p>A Judicial Review pre action letter was sent to the Council on 11 September 2023 on behalf of Colvestone Family and Staff Association, a legally registered charity, acting on behalf of Save Colvestone Primary School (“Save Colvestone”), a group of Colvestone parents and carers.</p> <p>The Council responded to this on 25 September 2023. (We append a copy of the PAP dated 9.11.2023 (Appendix V) together with a copy of the Council's response(Appendix W).</p> <p>A Cabinet decision in relation to any of the proposals before it for determination could become the subject of a further pre action letter and/or an application for permission for judicial review in the High Court. This could become a full hearing by the Court, if permission were granted. Such action would result in considerable expense in officer time and legal costs and potential delay to the process of implementing the proposals.</p>	<p>Officers have sought legal advice throughout this process. They have taken advice and steps to ensure that they have followed the Guidance and the law it refers to, as well as Council procedures and policies and duties under the Equality Act 2010. Relevant Council departments have worked with each other and external stakeholders to ensure that their actions, consultations and proposals are lawful, made in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, the budget and policy framework.</p>
9	<p>Call in</p> <p>This is the procedure by which Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet can request that executive decisions are considered by the Scrutiny Panel. This power should only be used in exceptional circumstances, in accordance with the procedure. The process is described in the Constitution at Part 4E.</p> <p>This would impact the community by further elongating the period of uncertainty.</p>	<p>Officers have sought legal, financial and other advice throughout the considerations and processes that have resulted in the request for these decisions.</p>

9. **Next steps**

- 9.1. If the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposals the table below details the timeline if the decision is made to progress te closure/mergers
(*Approximate dates subject to change depending on the progress*):

Date	Event
December 2023	Responses made during the statutory representation period are considered by the Cabinet, who makes the final decision

Date	Event
<i>Cabinet Decision 3</i>	<p>to proceed or not with mergers and/or closures, on 11 December 2023.</p> <p>Implementation Date if Not Called In = 19 December 2023</p> <p>Stakeholders will be informed of the decision.</p>
January-August 2024	<p>School merger and closure arrangements are made (subject to Cabinet’s decision in December 2023).</p> <p>If cabinet agrees to the proposals for closure/mergem then implementation plans in draft for merger/closure will be developed with the school leadership to ensure they reflect the needs of the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The HR process for staff will begin ● The transition plan for pupils and families will begin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEND and admissions teams will be in contact with families regarding finding alternative schools. ● Asset and operational process <p>August: Schools in scope officially close.</p> <p>Undertake options appraisal for the future use of each site in the context of the local area and council priorities</p>
September 2024	Children begin at the new schools.

10. Policy Context

School Organisation Plan & Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy

- 10.1. Hackney’s aims are to create a fairer, more inclusive borough, which supports children and young people to thrive. We want to optimise schools’ roles as an anchor system in the borough and ensure that developments and changes are sustainable. Hackney Education’s mission is to improve the life chances of every child, young person and learner in Hackney.
- 10.2. The School Organisation Plan (SOP) (Appendix X) is reviewed and updated annually and provides schools, governing bodies and the public with: an overview of the educational provision on offer in Hackney; a summary of current pupil numbers and projected demand across the primary and secondary phases; the factors considered by Hackney Education when determining the need to increase or reduce school places; a summary of historic and planned primary school place reductions from 2019 to up until September 2023.

- 10.3. The SOP is reviewed and updated annually with the latest school roll and projections data, as well as any further proposed changes to school organisation.
- 10.4. To best respond to the borough's school organisation challenges Hackney Education has developed The Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy (Appendix Y) approved at Cabinet on 28 February 2022, a 10 year, medium to long term strategy, to consider how best to resolve four priority issues: the significant increase in demand for SEND education provision; falling primary mainstream school rolls; the projected fall in secondary mainstream school rolls due to a declining primary roll; a long term sustainable use plan for all education sites in the borough. The proposals in this report relate to priority 2, to address falling primary school rolls, by working with schools with budget pressures and falling pupil rolls to seek viable long-term solutions.
- 10.5. In addition, if the proposals in this report are taken forward, the Council will consider whether any vacated site could reasonably be utilised in addressing priority 1, the significant increase in demand for SEND education provision.

Amalgamation and closure of schools

- 10.6. Section 6A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, requires that, where a local authority identifies a need for a new school in its area, it must establish an academy (free school). This requirement, known as the 'free school presumption', means that the Local Authority is unable to open a new school and must instead seek proposers for a free school/academy.
- 10.7. This removes the option for the Local Authority to consolidate one or more schools at risk due to falling rolls by closing them all and creating one new school that brings governors, staff and students from all schools together on an equal footing.
- 10.8. Given this context the Council has the following options:

1. Merge/amalgamate schools by closing one school and guaranteeing places for displaced children in another 'host' school if that is what parents want. This gives the option for all pupils to move to the new school with their peers as a group. This option means the host school retains its original DfE school number as it is not technically considered a new school. However, following the merge/amalgamation process, governors of the 'host' school have the option to rename the school to create a new identity for the merged schools.

This process would mean that the staff who are currently working at the closing school would be at risk of being made redundant, as merging/amalgamating the children may not result in new jobs being created in the host school. Firstly as stated earlier the parents may not choose to move their children to the host school therefore opportunities for additional roles in the host school will

only be known following completion of the schools admissions process. However, as part of the drive to avoid redundancies as much as possible, we are seeking to obtain agreement from the host school and the Hackney family of schools to support job opportunities for those staff at risk of redundancy.

2. Close a school and support all displaced children to access places in other local schools. This can take the form of a full and immediate closure or a 'staggered' closure.

A staggered closure option would cease the admission of children into reception each year until all remaining children have worked their way through to year 6, at which time the school would close. While this may be a less disruptive option for some families, it significantly increases the financial burden and further damages the quality of education at the school as pupils do not benefit from the mixing of year groups they would usually experience. Therefore full and immediate closures are recommended in this report.

Sustainability and climate change

- 10.9. The proposals in this report will lead to a more efficient use of school buildings. Running a higher number of school sites with fewer pupils is inefficient in terms of energy usage, as the buildings still need to be heated and lit. Reducing the number of buildings with surplus places will mean that the retained buildings will start working to their designed capacity in terms of number of occupants, both pupils and staff, leading to more efficient energy use instead of running a higher number of schools with fewer pupils.

11. Comments of the Interim Group Director, Finance

- 11.1. The potential closure and/or mergers will incur costs such as redundancies, site security, the write off of any school deficits and maintenance as well as other incidental costs. The overall costs of closure are estimated to be £3.5m, which includes £2.5m of one-off costs such as redundancy costs and deficit write-off and £1m of ongoing costs linked to site security and maintenance, until alternative use options are developed. (Appendix U) Redundancy costs have been calculated on the age and length of service of different staff groups and based on a number of assumptions, and there are risks that the final costs could be higher than estimated. These costs would fall on the Council's General Fund and the impact of these will need to be factored into the Council's financial planning.
- 11.2. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block, which is awarded to fund education provision, is primarily calculated using pupil numbers and pupil characteristics. Schools are funded on a formula basis and the number of pupils attending the school drives the level of funding received by a school. As such, schools with unfilled places are under increased financial challenge and struggle with financial sustainability. Reducing the number of school places in a planned way would support schools to manage within

their funding allocations. At a borough level, there is expected to be a minimal impact on the amount of the grant received as a direct result of the closure and/or mergers of the schools within this report. With a similar amount of income spread over a smaller number of schools, there may be a positive impact on the financial position of individual primary schools.

- 11.3. The future use of sites will be considered with their local geographical context in mind, the options for their future potential use will also be balanced against the broader financial pressures the Council faces in the medium term. Any future decisions for sites vacated would need to minimise the impact on the Council's overall financial position and the services we provide for our residents.

12. VAT implications on land and property transactions

- 12.1. No land or property transactions are being recommended at this stage. VAT implications will be considered if changes to the site usage in the future are proposed.

13. Comments of the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services

- 13.1. Cabinet is being asked to determine proposals to make a significant change to one of its maintained schools by increasing its size to 2 forms of entry, and to close four others. Two mergers, or amalgamations of the student body are proposed. Only one of these requires an expansion of its published admission number. Officers working on the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy and falling rolls agenda have taken legal advice throughout the process.
- 13.2. Ensuring the sufficiency of school places, making significant changes to schools and closing schools require further consideration of the following:
- 13.3. S14 Education Act 1996 (EA 1996) imposes a duty on the Council to ensure the provision of sufficient schools for the provision of primary and secondary education in its area.
- 13.4. The Department of Education (DfE) publishes statutory guidance related to the legislation that empowers the Council to add a form of entry to a school and separate statutory guidance that empowers the Council to close a maintained school. These are "Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools, Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, January 2023" and "Opening and closing maintained schools, Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, January 2023" respectively. These sets of guidance include statutory processes, guidance on consultation and guidance for decision makers when determining proposals.
- 13.5. Those making proposals to make significant changes to maintained schools or to close them must have regard to these sets of guidance. The proposed addition of a form of entry constitutes a significant change ("prescribed alteration") to a school.

- 13.6. s 1(1) Local Government Act 1999 imposes a duty on the Council to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. The Council has fiduciary duties towards residents.
- 13.7. S149(1) Equality Act 2010 (EqA 2010) imposes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on the Council.
- 13.8. The PSED requires public authorities to have "due regard" to:
- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA 2010.
 - The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This involves having due regard to the need to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that is connected to that characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and
 - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding.
- 13.9. The PSED should be considered at all levels of decision making. Cabinet will wish to consider the effect of these proposals on children with SEND as having the protected characteristic of disability and of children as having the protected characteristic of age, in, for example, regard to air quality.
- 13.10. In taking decisions the Council must act lawfully, including acting within its powers and following its own procedures as well as those required by law.
- 13.11. The Council must ensure that all required consultations are properly undertaken in accordance with relevant law and guidance. It must make rational, evidence based decisions, take into account all relevant considerations, act for a proper purpose, and be properly reasoned.
- 13.12. The Council is the employer of staff engaged at its community schools. It must take further advice to ensure compliance with employment law should staff become affected by these proposals.
- 13.13. Following determination of the proposals before Cabinet, the local authority should continue to seek detailed legal advice where required.

Appendices

- [Appendix A - Letter to Secretary of State DfE](#)
- [Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment](#)
- [Appendix C - Demand for reception places](#)
- [Appendix D - Community queries and feedback March - May](#)
- [Appendix E - May 2023 Cabinet paper](#)
- [Appendix F - September 2023 Cabinet report](#)
- [Appendix G - Kwest report consultation findings for September cabinet decision](#)
- [Appendix H - Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [Appendix I - Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [Appendix J - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School](#)
- [Appendix K - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School](#)
- [Appendix L - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry \(1FE\) to 2 forms of entry \(2FE\)](#)

- [Appendix M - Kwest report statutory notice consultation findings](#)
- [Appendix N - Nearby school and vacancies - SES - November 2023](#)
- [Appendix O - Year R map](#)
- [Appendix P - Year 1 map](#)
- [Appendix Q - Year 2 map](#)
- [Appendix R - Year 3 map](#)
- [Appendix S - Year 4 map](#)
- [Appendix T - Year 5 map](#)
- [Appendix U - financial considerations](#)
- [Appendix V - Colvestone JR PAP of 11.09.2023](#)
- [Appendix W - response to PAP of 25.9.2023](#)
- [Appendix X - School Organisation Plan \(SOP\)](#)
- [Appendix Y - Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy](#)

Exempt

None

Background documents

London Councils - Managing Surplus School places in London (2023)

<https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/children-and-young-people/education-and-school-places/managing-surplus-school-places>

Public Version - Census 2021 Briefing 5: Ethnic Group, National Identity, Language and Religion

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wzarOaz1ac1qGtNxTpx82C2dceEQuzxJAUxFe0NV--o/edit#>

Hackney Air Quality Annual Status report
<https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality-reports#repor>

The Council's [Air Quality Action Plan](#)

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Mayor of Hackney
Cllr Antoinette Bramble
**Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for
Education, Young People and
Children's Social Care**
Hackney Town Hall
Mare Street
London E8 1EA

Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State for Education
20 Great Smith St
London SW1P 3BT

24 March 2023

Dear Secretary of State

Schools' funding and falling rolls

You may be aware that we (along with other London Lead Members for Children) wrote to your predecessor, Nadhim Zahawi, on 24 September 2021, raising a number of concerns in relation to the government's proposals for funding of schools, whereby a new national funding formula risked a substantial cut in funding. We committed to working with the minister to build a stronger and fairer schools' system, in the light of pressure on the existing configuration of schools' provision as a result of the new formula and predicted falling rolls.

In his response, the then Secretary of State said ‘We recognise the pressures that falling rolls can place on school budgets, and my officials will arrange to meet with school leaders and local authority representatives in Hackney to discuss these issues further.’ He went on to note that ‘The 2021 national pupil projections show the primary population now flattening out and being projected to decrease steadily throughout the next period,’ and recognised education authorities’ ‘options for reconfiguration, including via remodelling, amalgamations, mergers or closures where this is the best course of action.’ He concluded by saying; ‘We recognise the removal of surplus places involves some difficult decisions.’ We are sure you will concur with this and, similarly, want to offer your department’s support throughout this process.

The London context

More recently, you will also be aware of the London Councils’ report ‘Managing Surplus Places in London Schools (published in January 2023) which opens:

‘London local authorities and schools are currently dealing with a significant and sustained period of reduction in demand for reception places, which has implications for school budgets and standards. The fall in demand reflects the decline in the birth rate since 2012 and changes in migration patterns in London.’

The report goes on to set out an analysis of borough four-year forecasts of demand, the current challenges facing schools and local authorities in relation to planning school places, and makes a number of recommendations setting out what local government, London Councils and the government can do to support the school system through this challenging period.

Without rehearsing the entirety of the findings of the report here, We would like to draw your attention to its most salient points as they relate to school place planning in Hackney:

‘Funding system

The majority of school revenue funding is allocated on a per pupil basis. Therefore, any decrease in pupil numbers will reduce the funding a school receives. Many primary schools in London are already struggling to balance budgets this academic year, due to a combination of factors including inflationary price increases, a shortage of teaching and support staff leading to increased spend on expensive agency staff, and a significant pay award for support staff. The government has committed through the Autumn Statement to increase core revenue funding for schools, which is welcome for the sector, but it is not yet clear whether the funding for London’s schools will be sufficient to cover increased costs. If a primary school is also struggling with falling rolls this will lead to a smaller government funding allocation which will put further pressure on the budget.

School mergers and closures

In the face of a combination of such increasingly difficult circumstances, primary schools with small rolls and that are forecast to remain low will find that the only option for the school and their local authority is to merge the school with another school or close it altogether to avoid negatively impacting on children’s outcomes.

Many one form entry primaries, including many Church schools, in London are particularly at risk. In some cases, there are liabilities, for example Private Finance Initiative (PFI) payments, that would continue even if the school closed. It is important that school and local authority leaders are supported when needing to consider school closures to make decisions in a timely and effective manner to benefit local children, whilst also being mindful of protecting the school’s estate ahead of a potential population increase in the future.

Academies

Local authorities rely on effective partnership with academies to manage the impact of falling rolls, for example by securing reductions in Published Admission Numbers (PANs) where there is a drop in local demand for places. The lack of statutory levers can make it difficult for local authorities to influence decisions made by academies in

relation to falling rolls, for example when an academy is resistant to changing its Published Admissions Number (PAN) despite a reduction in demand patterns which could destabilise other local schools.

Free schools

The DfE has shifted away from opening new primary free schools in London, in recognition of the lack of demand for new places and the impact that new schools can have on other local schools if there is no demand. Applications for new free schools must demonstrate that there is a clear need for new places in the chosen area before the DfE will support the bid.

However, some primary free school developments that were approved some time ago have been delayed and are still in the pipeline to open, despite demand patterns shifting dramatically in local areas. Opening a new school in an area where there are falling rolls can cause significant and unnecessary turbulence to the system. In some parts of London free schools in the pipeline have been withdrawn by sponsors in response to changing need, but it would be helpful if the DfE took a more proactive role in withdrawing applications in areas where needs have changed.'

The Hackney context

Within this wider analysis, Hackney Council is currently consulting on closing or merging six primary schools, as a direct result of the significant decrease in pupil numbers, and which has caused some schools to face serious and irreversible financial pressure. The key dataset underpinning this decision is as follows:

Snapshot 2022-2023

58: number of primary schools in the borough

2,900: overall number of reception places in Hackney, the equivalent of 97 classes

634: number of **vacant** reception places in 2022/23, the equivalent of 21 classes

589: 'missing' number of reception-aged children compared to 2014 - the equivalent of 20 lost classes

5%: healthy reception vacancy rate

More than 20%: current overall reception vacancy rate

£6,484: the amount each primary school in Hackney loses per pupil vacancy this school year

£4.11m: funding missing this year from school budgets in Hackney as a result of vacant reception places

More than £30m: this school year's overall loss in funding for the 58 primary schools in Hackney across all year groups, compared to what they would receive if running with all classrooms full

While the impact of our 'doing nothing' in these circumstances will be well understood to yourself (and is clearly not an option), it is worth setting out the material financial and educational risks of this:

- State-maintained schools lose money for each empty school place, every single year.
- It means less money for staff; less money for resources and equipment; less money to pay bills and to carry out maintenance work; and less money for extracurricular activities.
- This income loss means it is no longer practical for some schools to function properly, and means that in time the education and offer to their pupils and staff will suffer as a

result. It is our duty, as a Council, to ensure all pupils receive the very best education, and that all schools in Hackney remain strong and stable.

Therefore, the Council is now considering closing two schools and carrying out two further mergers of two schools each to mitigate this loss, and maintain the highest possible standard of primary education for Hackney children. We would, however, like to place on record here, that the changes we are considering are in no way a reflection on the work of the schools' staff and leadership, or on the quality of teaching in those schools. Indeed, more than 90 percent of the borough's schools are Ofsted-rated 'outstanding' or 'good' and are considered some of the best in the country. We are justifiably proud of our children, who are among the first in the country for reading, writing and maths.

We have therefore established an evidence-led process, driven by a number of factors to be considered by the Council when considering possible alternatives and solutions, and which include:

- Schools most financially at-risk
- Number of vacant places
- Physical size of schools and suitability of sites to host a merger
- Geographic partnership options (such as the existence of other schools within walking distance)
- Whether new neighbourhoods and new-build estates will create significantly more need for school places in the future
- Current Ofsted grading and projected outcomes of pupils
- Community impact.

We are also cognisant that merging schools that have seen large decreases in pupil numbers can bring significant benefits (and would seek to maximise these) including:

- Creation of one new, stronger school community, maximising the funding available to it
- Increased specialist expertise from a wider teaching team
- Stronger finances
- Increased resources
- Increased potential for school improvement

These closure and merger plans are a very last resort. However, they are a direct result of the significant decrease in the number of local reception-aged children. Factors that account for this decrease include falling birth rates, families relocating outside London (as a result of the pandemic and other factors including housing costs, the return to Europe of families as a result of Brexit), and competition from free schools. The Greater London Authority (GLA) projects the decline to continue until at least 2028. The key numbers for Hackney are as follows:

- In autumn 2014, there were only 10 unfilled reception places out of the 2,865 available in Hackney (0.35%). By 2022, this number rose to 634 unfilled reception places out of the 2,900 available in Hackney (21.86%).
- The six schools that the Council is currently looking at saw their total number of unfilled reception places go from 6 out of 270 in 2014 (2.22%) to 101 out of 225 (44.88%).
- This year alone, primary schools in Hackney are therefore set to lose more than £30m in funding compared to what they would be entitled to if they were running with all classrooms full.

As you will appreciate, significantly smaller class sizes might sound like good news, but the opposite is true, because this reduces the amount of money the school receives from central government. Therefore, some schools are facing a significant income loss. This means they have less money to:

- Pay salaries
- Provide the good quality of education that we expect for our children
- Provide extracurricular activities

- Access the most modern equipment and resources.

Additionally, small schools on larger sites can no longer afford to continue to pay for maintenance, and meet escalating heating and lighting costs.

A school that is running at a deficit is an unstable learning environment, and will almost inevitably see performance and standards fall over time. If we do not act now, the future quality of education some children receive may start to suffer. We need to ensure all our schools continue to provide excellent education for our children, with the very best resources and facilities. Therefore, to best respond to the challenges that a changing pupil population brings, Hackney Education has put in place an Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy, which sets the 2021-2031 priorities for the Council.

The Council - alongside other London councils - asked the government for help by giving schools additional one-off funding to manage their falling rolls while numbers stabilise. We also asked for greater powers to manage school places in free schools and academies, which are independent of the Council, in order to pool pupil place-planning resource. The government, in response, increased funding per pupil nationally - by around 2 per cent per pupil - but that is simply not enough to sustain schools with large vacancy rates.

We are proud to note that there are numerous good or outstanding Hackney primary schools with vacancies within walking distance in all directions of schools that may close. Should the closures go ahead, the Council will work closely to support families to make a planned transition to a new school for the start of the new academic year in September 2024. Of course, families may also seek to secure a place at an alternative school via the 'in-year' admissions process at any time.

According to the numbers published by The Greater London Authority, the decrease in the number of primary school aged children will continue until at least 2028. When looking at the proposed solutions to respond to this trend, we took into account any planned development work that could impact the number of families with young children in the areas affected.

Should future demand for reception places unexpectedly increase, there is existing physical capacity within schools to absorb additional children, and additional places could always be added if needed. It's also possible for additional accommodation to be built in the future on some school sites that have potential, in order to add more capacity.

It is worth noting that there are no plans to close or merge secondary schools. There is currently a small surplus in secondary schools, which is set to peak in September 2025, before falling again.

No closure or merger would take place before September 2024. This would only follow in-depth discussions as well as formal, statutory consultations with parents/carers, teaching staff and leaders, and governors of the affected schools. We will also seek to speak to the children and young people affected by the potential changes.

Our asks of Government

Given the forecast decrease in demand across London and in Hackney in particular, it is imperative that schools, local government, and central government work together to strengthen the places planning and admissions system to ensure that all children have access to a high-quality school place, in the face of falling demand for school places. We support the London Councils' report's recommendations to government to strengthen the places' planning and admissions system, i.e. to:

- *Ensure school funding levels keep up with inflationary increases, which will help schools to be more resilient in the face of changing demand patterns*
- *Work with local authorities and schools to promote more inclusion in schools, including reviewing funding allocations to ensure that schools receive consistent and appropriate levels of funding to enable more children with SEND to access mainstream*

school places

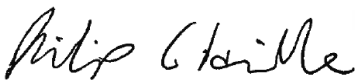
- *Enable local authorities to open their own special provision, where there is no strong MAT willing to sponsor a local special school and there is clear demand for more provision, and make capital funding available to support this*
- *Give local authorities the power to manage an academies' reduction of PAN or closure, where there is clear evidence locally of a significant drop in demand and a need to act to ensure that a school remains financially viable. Local authorities already have stronger powers in this area in relation to maintained schools, working in consultation with headteachers and governing bodies.*
- *Give local authorities the responsibility for in-year admissions, as set out in the Schools White Paper, and powers to direct all schools to accept local children on to their roll, where appropriate. Local authorities already have this responsibility in relation to maintained schools.*
- *Work closely with local authorities where there are still free schools in the pipeline, to ensure that they are still needed and withdraw applications where there is no evidence of need.*

Additionally, we have the following additional requests in relation to the specific scenario in Hackney described in this letter:

1. Pause the establishment of further Free Schools while the current challenge is addressed by the authority
2. Grant local authorities greater powers to manage school places in free schools and academies, which are independent of the Council, in order to pool pupil place-planning
3. Provide additional financial support sufficient to bridge any unplanned additional expenditure incurred by the implementation of the reconfiguration programme

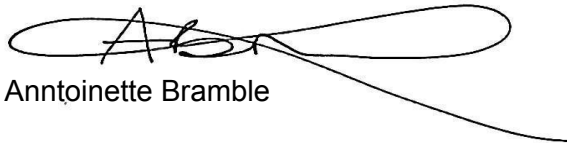
We are sure that you and your department will want to support the authority as it delivers this challenging but necessary reconfiguration, and look forward to receiving your detailed and considered response.

Yours sincerely



Philip Glanville

Mayor of Hackney



Anntoinette Bramble

**Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for
Education, Young People and Children's
Social Care**

London Borough of Hackney Equality Impact Assessment Form

The Equality Impact Assessment Form is a public document which the Council uses to ensure that it can show that decisions it makes impact in a fair way, are based on evidence and are transparent. The process helps show that it has complied with the Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 of the Equality Act 2010) when making and implementing decisions which affect the way the Council works.

The form collates and summarises information which has been used to inform the planning and decision-making process.

All the information needed in this form should have already been considered and should be included in the documentation supporting the decision or initiative, e.g. the delegate powers report, saving template, business case etc.

The form must be reviewed and agreed by the relevant Director, who is responsible for ensuring it is made publicly available and is in line with guidance.

Title of this Equality Impact Assessment:

Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy

Purpose of this Equality Impact Assessment:

To ensure there has been due regard to the Equalities Act 2010 and the duties outlined within when developing the strategy. To further ensure that the strategy seeks to advance equality within its recommendations.

Officer Responsible:

Name: David Court	Ext: 020 8820 7667
Directorate: Education	Department/Division: High Needs and School Places

Name of Director: Paul Senior

Date: 30 November 2023

Comment:.

Version control

v4	EIA	Date approved 30 November 2023
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STEP 1: DEFINING THE ISSUE

1. Summary of the reason/s for having to make a new decision.

The following reflects the Council's views in considering putting forward these proposals. Hackney's Education Sufficiency and Estate (ESE) strategy, agreed at Cabinet February 2022, is a 10 year plan which seeks to address four strategic priorities:

1. The creation of sufficient additional in borough special school places;
2. Partnership working with mainstream primary schools whose rolls are falling to seek viable solutions;
3. Partnership working over the coming five academic years with mainstream secondary schools whose numbers are likely to be below PANS over the period 2022-2027, and;
4. A long term sustainable use plan for all education sites in the borough.

In progressing priority 2, Cabinet made the decision, in May 2023, to consult on proposals to amalgamate or close a number of schools in Hackney.

Following years of growth, the number of primary aged children joining Hackney primary schools has been in steady decline since 2014/15, a trend observed across London, and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Pupil numbers are forecast to continue falling until at least 2028.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equates to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource per school/child.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools. This is because schools with less income have less money for staff salaries, for extra curricular activities, for equipment, to pay bills and carry out maintenance work. The quality of education and classroom support offered for children in these schools would deteriorate in time, as the affected schools would have to deplete surplus funds or go into deficit to maintain their current education offer.

Whilst mainstream primary rolls have fallen in Hackney, there has been an increase in the prevalence of children identified as requiring Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) provision, partly due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which led to the disruption of 2 years of schooling. In addition, the impact of falling rolls has affected schools' financial stability and limits their capacity to invest in training, resources etc. to meet the increasing Page 139 of pupils' needs across the borough.

The council must make best efforts to ensure that the gradual attrition of pupils does not further disadvantage those who are already disadvantaged socially/educationally.

2. Who are the main people that will be affected?

The following groups may be affected by the proposed closures/mergers

Children and young people attending the mainstream school affected by the proposals & Children and young people with SEND in Hackney

Within this group the following protected characteristics may be present;

- **Age** (a person belonging to a particular age or range of ages)
- **Disability** (a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)
- **Gender reassignment** (the process of transitioning from one sex to another)
- **Pregnancy and maternity** (Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding)
- **Race** (Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.)
- **Religion and belief** (Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.)
- **Sex** (A man or a woman)
- **Sexual orientation** (Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.)

In addition to protected characteristics, Hackney also considers disadvantages for people by socio-economics and identifies other priority groups, for example, children in care and single parents.

If the decision is made to either close or amalgamate schools, pupils at the schools affected will be supported to move to a neighbouring school during the Summer Term of 2024. There are sufficient school places in the areas where the schools are affected to accommodate all children. The Local Authority has chosen amalgamation/merger sites that are close walking distance to the original schools, to ensure travel times don't exceed the statutory walking distance requirement of 2 miles or under. This will also ensure that pupils stay in areas that they are familiar with. Should parents choose a different school closer to their home, the Local Authority will support them with this.

The Local Authority will ensure that children with SEND are placed in appropriate settings to minimise disruption. Specialist SEND professionals including Educational Psychology and Speech and Language therapists will continue to work with settings and pupils to ensure that children with SEND receive robust and appropriate transitional support.

None of the schools that are being considered during this phase are faith schools, however should parents wish to enrol their child in one of these schools we will work with the Diocesan Board to accommodate this wish.

Teaching and support staff who work within the schools affected

Within this group the following protected characteristics may be present;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The proposals will impact staff at the schools with potential redundancies and/or redeployment. The Local Authority will work closely with staff impacted by the proposals to ensure that any needs of staff are taken into account, especially those with protected characteristics. Should the proposals go ahead, the Local Authority will work with affected staff and their trade unions in the reorganisation process and commit to providing extensive support throughout the consultation process and beyond. This will include, where possible, HR overseeing redeployment support throughout the family of Hackney schools and also emotional and reflective support via our employee assistance programme. We will also work with our partners in Hackney Works and Employment and Skills to support staff with job applications, interview skills and job searching generally.

Parents and carers of the children and young people attending the schools affected

Within this group the following protected characteristics may be present;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Should the proposals go ahead, parent-carers will have a choice of local provision. The Local Authority will maintain a surplus of between 5-10% in order to meet their statutory duty in providing sufficient school places. Although the Local Authority cannot guarantee all parents will get their first preference, we will be committed to year groups staying together in the case of amalgamation/merger and siblings moving to the same school.

We recognise that single parents may be a specific group and 90% of single parents are women. Just under 10% of households, or 10,000 households in Hackney are single parents with dependent children and a further 6% are single parents with non dependent children. Whilst the proportion of single parents with children has decreased slightly since 2011, the proportion of those with non dependent children has grown more than for couples with non dependent children. Nationally, 90% of single parents are women and half live in poverty.

We recognise multigenerational/intergenerational family groups live in Hackney - we recognise that parents and carers may include a broader range of age

groups - from very young to much older including grandparents.

The difference in location may impact parents and carers with longer travel times. We have provided a list of all schools within 2 miles of each affected setting. We recognise that longer travel times may impact groups of parents and carers differently, especially those who are disabled parent carers, single parents or those who rely on older relatives for the school run.

Services and provisions supporting children and young people in Hackney [Staff]

Within this group the following protected characteristics may be present;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Local residents living near the potential sites for amalgamation/merger / closure

Within this group the following protected characteristics may be present;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Residents living near potential sites considered may experience noise disruption in the future depending on what the vacant sites are used for/ whether there is building work to adapt the sites. Depending on what the future site use is, this may benefit local residents.

STEP 2: ANALYSING THE ISSUES

3. What information and consultation have you used to inform your decision making?

Information and Consultation

The Education Sufficiency & Estate Strategy addresses the need and plan for falling primary school rolls and surplus reception places. Hackney seeks to retain 5% surplus reception places, however the January 2023 school census shows 616 surplus reception places (21%), the equivalent of over 20 empty reception classes. On the information we have, and without taking action, surplus reception places are forecast to rise above 23% by 2025. This would bring sustained and increasing financial strain on affected schools. .

An evidence based framework was used to identify the six schools proposed for amalgamation/merger and/or closure. Schools were only considered where they are actively seeking change such as amalgamation/merger with support from the Local Authority.

The initial long list included schools meeting one of the following three criterion

- greater than 25% surplus reception places
- greater than 25% surplus physical capacity
- budget deficit in the top 10 schools raising most financial concern

The list was then reduced to schools meeting more than one of the initial three criteria or with greater than 45% surplus reception places. Additional schools falling outside these criteria were also considered where they are located near a shortlisted school and identified as a potential partner for amalgamation/merger. The list of schools derived from the above quantitative data driven criteria were then reviewed for further data and qualitative considerations. The community schools were reviewed based on: locality and geographic partnership options, suitability of site to host an amalgamation/merger and finally overall school effectiveness and quality of education, as indicated by current Ofsted grading, trajectory of pupil outcome data and local reporting. The framework was applied to schools and resulted in options to either amalgamate/merger or close schools. Options for amalgamation/merger pairings and closure options were reviewed and finalised put into a shortlist.

Governance

Each stage of the process for the selection of the amalgamation/merger and/or closure option has been reviewed by the Education Senior Leadership Team, ESES executive board and members' oversight group.

Evidence and Data

Table 1 shows the level of surplus reception places in Hackney since January 2016. It shows that the current level of surplus reception places stands at 21% (616 places), the highest level recorded, despite permanent published admission number (PAN) reductions made in 2019 and 2022. Officers have sought to mitigate the effects of falling rolls through the use of temporary and permanent PAN reduction measures. Rolls have continued to fall each year in Hackney and across local authorities in London. This trend looks set to continue, as data from the pan London admissions

coordination scheme shows that Hackney received 6% fewer on-time reception applications for September 2023 entry, when compared to 2022.

Table 1. Number of surplus reception places compared to number of available places (2015 - 2023)

Academic year (January school census)	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No. of children on roll	2805	2757	2635	2565	2599	2530	2398	2284
No. of reception places available (PAN)	3080	3170	3155	3155	3035	3035	3035	2900
No. of surplus reception places	275	413	520	590	436	505	637	616
% surplus reception places	9%	13%	17%	19%	14%	17%	21%	21%

The impact of falling rolls and surplus place is multifaceted and can effect the following:

Roll instability

Surplus places in a local authority context also provide an opportunity for children to move from school to school - again often in an unorganised way. This 'school hopping' is rarely in the best interest of the children and presents challenges for schools as high levels of mobility are unsettling and reduce the quality of teaching and learning and require significant additional resources to properly induct and support new starters.

School income and deficit

The Council considers that significant levels of surplus reception places lead to a reduced income for schools and often bring the added challenge of vertically grouped classes across two year groups increasing the complexity of day to day management and organisation.

High surplus results directly in a reduction in income which can lead to deficit budgets. Falling rolls is a major theme that runs through the budget planning considerations of many schools in financial difficulty. A number of schools are currently managing small year group sizes that prove to be uneconomical and require adopting a more flexible approach to resourcing i.e. vertical grouping and capping of PAN. Whilst federations can provide some financial support through economies of scale, our current data in relation to budget deficits suggests that it does not protect schools sufficiently. Deficit budgets of course directly contribute to a school's lack of viability.

As the majority of school funding, in accordance with DfE funding regulations, has to be allocated on the basis of pupil numbers the impact of surplus places can be significant to a school's overall budget and financial viability.

School performance

School performance and Ofsted grading can often be seen as a protective factor in the context of falling rolls. This might be the case in less severe circumstances, however in the current climate when surpluses across the borough are so high, and schools across the board in Hackney are generally good or better (97% of schools in Hackney are rated 'good' or 'outstanding'), it is not as predictive. What is clear is that the effectiveness and capacity of school leaders to strategically plan for a falling roll is somewhat dependent on school leaders and Governors making difficult decisions over changes to provision for existing pupils, this relates to decisions around restructuring and removal of provision such as after school clubs to balance the budget in light of falling rolls.

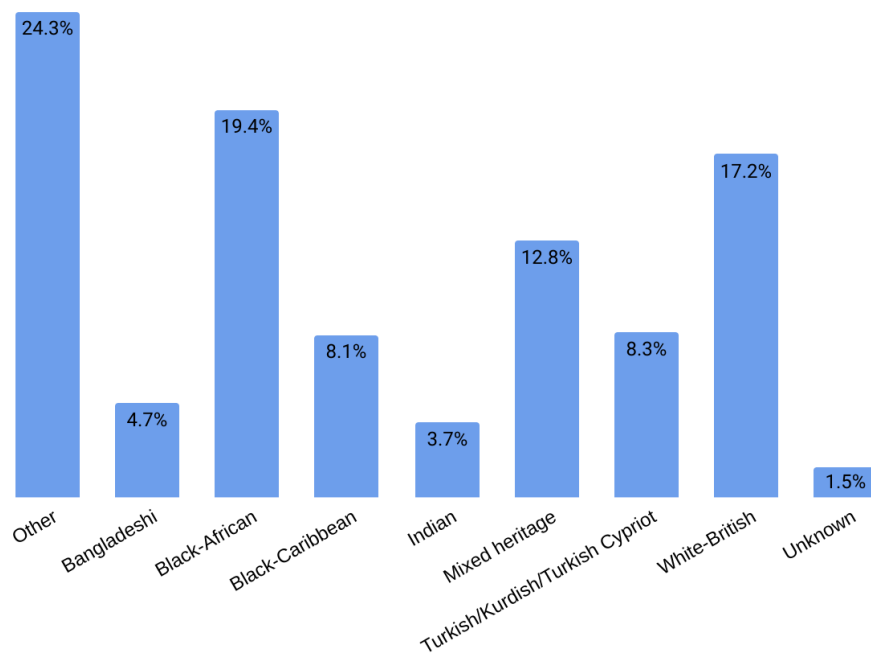
Schools with excess physical space and large sites

We have a few examples where the school simply cannot 'afford' to live within their current estate in the short to medium term. Reduced budgets will impact on the schools ability to set aside sufficient budget to deal with day to day repair and maintenance issues as tight budgets will be prioritised to deal with staffing and essential resources. This can have a significant impact on larger school buildings and sites with fewer pupils which will have higher premises costs. Underinvestment in the premises will create longer term issues for the future and increased need for capital funding to deal with a lack of maintenance.

Hackney profile and data review

Protected Characteristic	Hackney profile
Age	Primary school children, parents and staff ages
Disability	<p>Hackney has an increasing high number of EHCPs partly due to schools' increasingly high budget deficits - The number of Hackney residents with an EHCP rose from 3,062 in 2022 to 3,243 in 2023, equivalent to a 5.9% increase. At 4.08%, the percentage of resident 0-24 year olds in Hackney with an EHCP was the second highest among statistical neighbours and the 9th highest across England. [Mime Dashboard October 2023]</p> <p>The proportion of both primary and secondary school pupils in state-funded mainstream schools with an EHCP is high in Hackney. This is particularly striking for primary pupils and at 4.6%, the proportion of these pupils with an EHCP is the second highest of any England local authority, and just under twice the England figure of 2.3% [Mime Dashboard October 2023].</p> <p>High levels of EHCP and SEN support will be imperative for any changes.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	The LA will work with the school to establish numbers of staff currently on MAT and will engage and consult appropriately.
Race this includes ethnic or national	<p>Hackney all pupil average Ethnicity breakdown: [May 2023 School Census]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 144</p>

origins,
colour or
nationalit
y



According to the Census 2021, over half, 53.1% of Hackney's residents identify as 'White', 21.1% as 'Black', 10.4% as 'Asian', 6.7% as 'Mixed' and 8.7% identify within the 'Other ethnic group' category. [[2021 Population Census](#)]

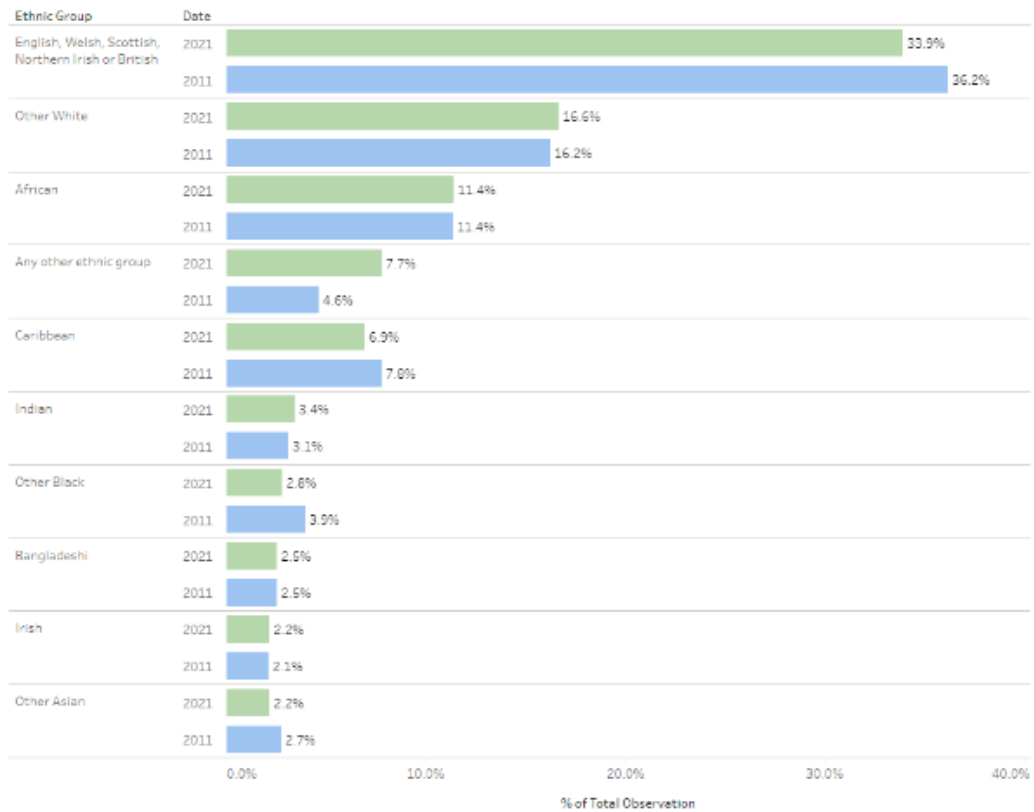
The multi-dimensional and subjective nature of ethnic identity is reflected in the fact that equivalent responses are also recorded within other high-level categories. For example, Turkish, Jewish, Hispanic/Latin American, Arab, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot are also responses that can also be found within the 'White' category in the Census 2021 data. This includes 2.0% who identify as Turkish, and 1.2% as Jewish.

The proportion of people of the Jewish faith living in Hackney has increased slightly from 6.3% to 6.7% of Hackney residents. According to the 2021 Census, the number of people who identify as being of the Jewish faith has risen from 15,477 in 2011 to 17,426 in 2021, an increase of 1,949 persons in the past decade. The vast majority of people of the Jewish faith living in Hackney belong to the Orthodox Jewish community, located in and around Stamford Hill in the North East of the borough.

However, the Interlink Foundation, an organisation which brings together Orthodox Jewish communities in Hackney estimates Hackney's Orthodox Jewish community at between 27,405 and 29,460 individuals, between 11.7 and 12.5% of Hackney's population.

Ethnic Group (detailed)

Figure 1: Breakdown of ethnic groups in Hackney(2021/2011 comparison)



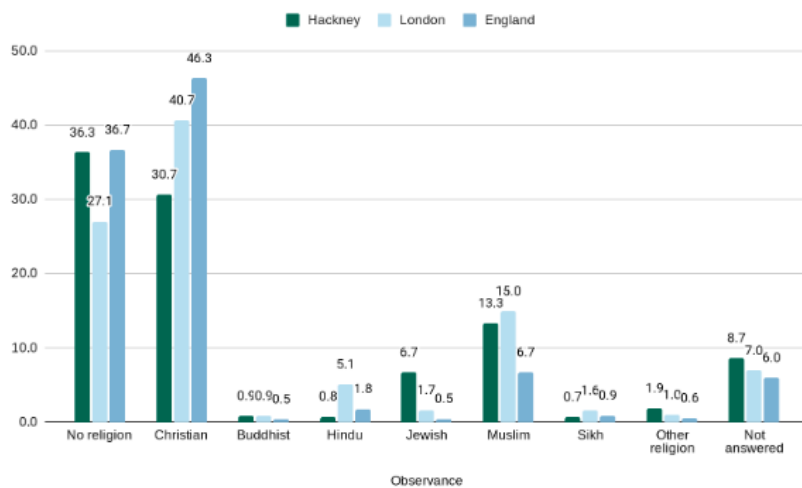
Source, Office for National Statistics 2021 Census

[Source Census 2021 briefing](#)

Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief

Hackney’s communities represent a diversity of religions and beliefs. In terms of religious observance, the largest group of census respondents in Hackney (36.3%) stated they had ‘no religion’. Nearly a third of Hackney residents identify as Christian (30.7%), 13.3% identify as Muslims, 6.7% as Jewish faith (This community is largely made up of Orthodox, or Charedi Jewish people who mainly live in the North East of the borough. The Census did not distinguish between Orthodox, and Non-Orthodox Jewish people so all are categorised as ‘Jewish’ in the Census). In Also 0.7% identify as Sikh and 0.8% as Hindu and 0.9% as people who practise Buddhism:

Figure 2: Religious observance for Hackney, London and England



Office for National Statistics 2021 Census, Percentage of all usual residents

[Office for National Statistics 2021 Census, Percentage of all usual residents] Source- Census 2021 Briefing

Sex	The gender split at primary schools in Hackney is almost equal [boys 50%, girls 50%, Yearly School Census 2023]
Sexual orientation	<p>In Hackney 7.8% residents identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or another non-heterosexual orientation. This means Hackney has proportionally the 6th highest LGB+ population in England & Walks and the 5th highest in London. In comparison to other London boroughs, Hackney has the highest number & proportion of residents who identify as “bisexual” or “queer”.</p> <p>Given that Hackney has a relatively high population of residents with a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or other non-heterosexual identity it is reasonable to assume there are LGB+ pupils within many Hackney schools, although the number is not possible to ascertain.</p> <p>While the council holds no school or ward level data on sexual orientation of under 18 year olds means it is not possible to ascertain how many young people may be affected by the closures, there is research that demonstrates a significant impact when a young person is supported/unsupported at school or home.</p> <p>An LGB+ young person who is currently in a supportive school environment moving to another environment may experience anxiety about the move if there is uncertainty about how they will be supported. Schools may have different policies and practices around support LGB+ children. This can be mitigated by ensuring all schools have visible, robust policies and practices on supporting LGB+ children.</p> <p>LGB+ parents may have similar anxieties about schools closing around levels of support and acceptance. Parents may have chosen a school or location due to reputation or community support. This may be mitigated by ensuring visible, robust policies and practices supporting LGB+ children and have</p>

	<p>clear anti-discrimination policies. Further information can be found in the Positive Futures report.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>“Gender reassignment: The definition is broad, so is likely to cover a wide range of transgender and non-binary people, but in the UK it is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act (2010). A person is protected from the point at which they propose to undergo “a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person’s sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex”. In England, Scotland and Wales, this does not have to involve any surgical or medical procedures. So, someone would almost certainly be protected if they were simply changing their name, hairstyle, voice and/or presentation.”</p> <p>“there is a broad consensus that the definition of ‘gender reassignment’ in the Equality Act (2010) is broad and covers a wide range of transgender and non-binary people.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fletcher, L., & Marvell, R. (2023) Transgender and Non-Binary Inclusion at Work Guide. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Doi: 10.15125/BATHRO-271384630 <p>It can be understood from the above that “gender reassignment” covers “gender identity”.</p> <p>“(Taylor v Jaguar Land Rover Ltd) ruled that non-binary and genderfluid people have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment and so are protected from harassment, discrimination and victimisation”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fletcher, L., & Marvell, R. (2023 s for the first time in 2021. Respondents were asked “Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?”. This question was a yes or no answer, with a box to write in a gender identity if the response was “no”. This question was only asked of those aged 18 and upwards. <p>2241 people responded that their gender identity was different to the sex registered at birth, representing 1.07% of the population aged 16 or over (although 16 and 17 year olds were not asked this question, it is not possible to remove them from the data, as the census age category is 16-24, and we do not have data for individual ages)</p> <p>According to the Census, Hackney has the highest number and proportion of adults who identify as a gender other than male or female (a nonbinary+ gender identity) than any other London Borough. Hackney has a roughly average number of trans women and trans men in Hackney compared to other London Boroughs.</p> <p>Given that Hackney has a relatively high population of gender diverse adults, it is reasonable to assume there are gender diverse pupils within many Hackney schools, although the number is not possible to ascertain.</p> <p>While the council holding no school or ward level data on gender identity of</p>

under 18 year olds means it is not possible to ascertain how many young people may be affected by the closures, there is research that demonstrates a significant impact when a young person is supported/unsupported at school or home.

There is currently no means for gender diverse young people under the age of 18 to legally change their gender identity. The Gender Recognition Act 2004 only applies to adults aged 18 or over, and only to binary gender identities (male/female). Young people with the protected characteristic of “gender reassignment” therefore rely on the support of those around them, including their schools, to support and affirm them.

Studies have demonstrated a clear link between affirmation of gender identity and better mental health outcomes, with lack of affirmation being linked to worse mental health outcomes; and the benefits of a whole-system approach to reducing minority stress e.g. Dolotina B, Turban JL. A Multipronged, Evidence-Based Approach to Improving Mental Health Among Transgender and Gender-Diverse Youth. JAMA Netw Open. 2022;5(2):e220926. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0926

Data in the Just Like Us Positive Futures report outlines the impact of an unsupportive home and/or school.

LGBT+ young adults from unsupportive school and home backgrounds were:

- Four times as likely to feel ashamed of being LGBT+ (41% vs 9%)
- More than twice as likely to have experienced panic attacks (60% vs 28%) and nearly twice as likely to have experienced depression in the past year (82% vs 42%)
- More than three times as likely to ‘never or rarely’ feel optimistic about their future (42% vs 12%)
- Three times more likely to not be confident they’ll have a career they enjoy (48% vs 17%)
- Half as as likely to feel good about themselves (41% vs 89%)
- More than four times as likely to ‘rarely or never’ feel close to other people (49% vs 11%)
- Half as likely to be confident that they will find a life partner (34% vs 70%) and have children (25% vs 49%), even though they want to
- Nearly half as likely to say they are happy in adulthood (43% vs 85%)
- More than twice as likely to have had suicidal thoughts and feelings (85% vs 39%)
- More than twice as likely to have self-harmed (71% vs 33%)

There is currently no specific national guidance for schools on how to support gender diverse children in school settings in England. The UK Government have repeatedly delayed publishing guidance. As recently as September 2023 it was reported that this guidance would likely be subject to continual delay due to legal advice to the government that its own guidelines were likely to breach the Equality Act.

Sources - [Pink News](#) & [The Times](#)

This demonstrates the context in which schools are operating of the

	<p>politicisation of gender diverse youths, a factor which increases the “minority stress” referred to in Dolotina B, Turban JL (referenced above).</p> <p>A gender diverse young person who is currently in a supportive school environment moving to another environment may experience significant anxiety about the move if there is uncertainty about how they will be supported. Schools may have different policies and practices around supporting and affirming gender diverse children.</p> <p>The Census records data on family composition and therefore the number of households likely to feature Gender Diverse parents. The 2021 census records:</p> <p>By family composition 0.9% of households with dependant children include a gender diverse adult 1.2% of single parent households include a gender diverse adult</p> <p>By gender identity Single parent households: 15.2% of gender diverse adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disambiguated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 21.4% of trans women ● 17% of trans men ● 19.5% of trans people who did not declare their gender identity but said their gender identity was different to their sex registered at birth <p>Family/couple with dependent children: 15.7% of gender diverse adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disambiguated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 19.5% of trans women ● 27.2% of trans men ● 17.8% of trans people who did not declare their gender identity but said their gender identity was different to their sex registered at birth <p>Gender diverse parents may have similar anxieties about schools closing around levels of support and acceptance. Parents may have chosen a school or location due to reputation or community support.</p> <p>Child and parental anxiety can be mitigated by ensuring all schools have visible, robust, evidence-based policies and practices on supporting gender diverse children, clear anti-discriminatory policies with reference to children and their parents/carers and that there is a whole-school approach towards gender diversity, which includes the students, teachers and parents.</p> <p>(The Census defines “dependant child” as “A dependent child is a person aged 0 to 15 years or a person aged 16 to 18 years who is in full-time education and lives in a family with their parent, parents, grandparent or grandparents”)</p>
Other considerations	<p>Free School Meals: “In 2020/21, Hackney’s state-funded special schools had the highest proportion of children that were eligible for free school meals at 59.9%.”</p>

This equates to almost 2 out of every 3 children (134)” - [Health Needs Assessment](#)

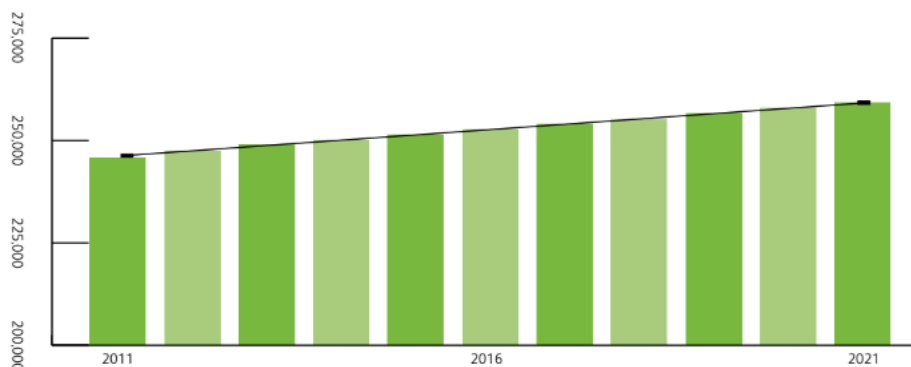
Deprivation - IDACI 2019 - (Income Deprivation Affecting Children)

The London Borough of Hackney is one of the most socio-economically deprived areas in England, ranking among the most deprived 30% of areas in 2019 (40). The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of children aged 0-15 living in income deprived families in each of the small local areas (called Lower Layer Super Output Areas or LSOAs). IDACI is a subset of the English Indices of Deprivation that allow categorisation by LSOA into five quintiles of deprivation: with quintile one the most deprived and quintile five the least (41).

In Hackney, more than 80% of LSOAs fall within quintiles one and two of IDACI, the most deprived in the country. None of the LSOAs fell within the least deprived quintile, with only 5% in the second-least deprived quintile. The percentage of under 16s living in low-income families in Hackney (24.7%) is higher than both London (18.8%) and England (17.0%) averages (42).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-indices-of-deprivation>

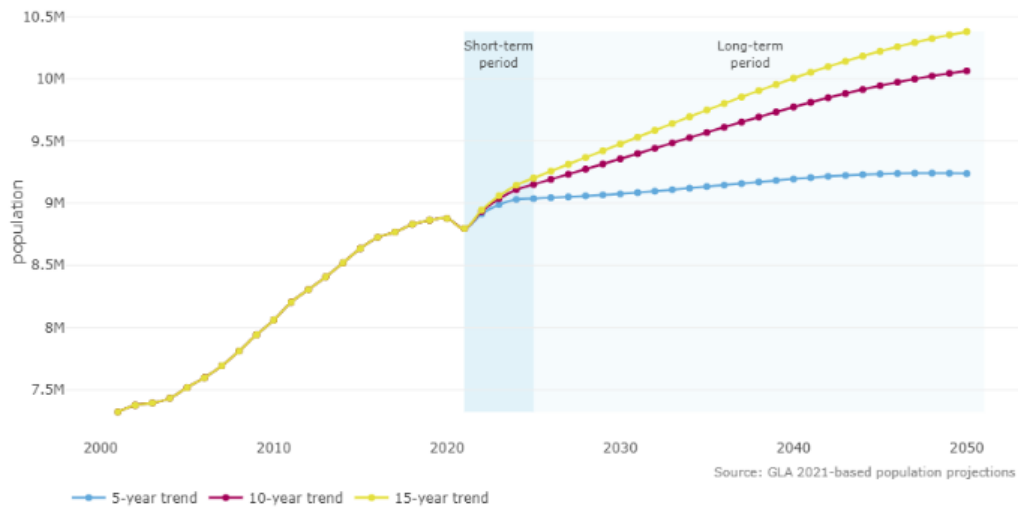
Population trends



Source <https://hackney.gov.uk/strategic-plan>

The London Datastore (drawing on census data) shows that since 2016 London’s population has markedly slowed down, and that the trend is set to continue:

Figure 1: Projected Population, London



Source

<https://data.london.gov.uk/blog/new-population-projections-for-london-building-on-the-2021-census/>

Air quality:

Air pollution is the largest environmental risk to the public's health in the UK. There is evidence to suggest that children in their early years are especially at risk, including increased risks of asthma and poorer lung development. Whilst the impact to health from air pollution depends on multiple factors such as exposure time, age and gender; children, pregnant women, the elderly and those with certain pre-existing medical conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are considered at most risk of poorer health outcomes.

The borough's strategy aims to improve air quality across the area with a specific focus on implementing initiatives that target the most susceptible groups in Hackney so that those most at risk are not disproportionately affected by the impacts of poor air quality. Within Hackney, current air pollution levels exceed legal standards at some locations and can lead to negative impacts on the health of all residents and visitors.

Air quality, as measured by annual average nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), at the six school sites in Hackney was reviewed. For 2022 all of the diffusion tubes located near these schools were below the air quality objective of 40 µg/m³, as seen in table below. Levels of nitrogen dioxide fell or stayed the same at most schools between 2021 and 2022, with only a small increase at one school where NO₂ was already low.

Site name	2021 NO ₂ annual concentration (µg/m ³)	2022 NO ₂ annual concentration (µg/m ³)	Pollutants monitored
Randal Cremer	20	19	NO ₂

Primary School			
Nightingale Primary School	19	17	NO2
Baden-Powell Primary School	18	19	NO2
De Beavior Primary school	39	36	NO2
Colvestone Primary School	23	21	NO2
Princess May 1	23	20	NO2
Princess May 2	32	32	NO2

Source ([Air quality Action plan 2021-2025](#) and [ASR Hackney 2022](#))

Data reviewed includes: Actual data for children on roll at school and year groups, demographic data from Census, actual data regarding children on roll at neighbouring schools to determine options for amalgamations/mergers such as capacity, data regarding SEND the number of children with an n Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Financial information for the school, school improvement information, information relating to nearby schools including distance, impact assessment on staff numbers, children centres , Free School Meals, place projections from GLA.

A statutory consultation and period of representation will take place to ensure that all parents, carers, families, staff and others in the community have an opportunity to give feedback on the proposals.

Equality Impacts

4. Identifying the impacts

4 (a) What positive impact could there be overall, on different equality groups, and on cohesion and good relations?

Key benefits (positive impacts)

If taken forward, the proposals outlined in the December 2023 Cabinet Report would begin to address the issue of falling rolls by removing 105 places. The council has a legal responsibility to manage school places and ensure that schools provide high quality education for all children. The impact of fewer children starting reception in individual schools creates challenges for school leaders and needs to be managed both individually and collectively.

This impacts disproportionately with oversubscribed schools being unaffected while others are now facing serious financial pressure after year-on-year declines to their roll. This impacts on the efficient running of schools, financial stability and education outcomes as outlined below.

The council is trying to avoid this gradual decline and inevitable “market” forces and unplanned attrition that would impact on the quality of school experience and resources

associated with schools experiencing falling rolls. The gradual decline in the quality of school experience would likely disproportionately impact certain groups such as families with SEND pupils and black and global majority families.

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact
Age	<p>The proposal will not be disruptive to pupils who are currently in year 6 as they will have progressed to secondary school by the Autumn term 2024.</p> <p>The proposed changes will take place at the start of a new academic year, this will allow for a new start and give pupils time to settle in their new setting without disrupting their academic studies in the middle of a term.</p> <p>Pupils' educational outcomes shouldn't be affected and may be improved. This is because the educational quality of 95% schools and therefore a school they may move to is likely graded either 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.</p> <p>The proposals would affect all children of a primary age and parents/carers irrespective of age.</p> <p>Acting sooner rather than later to create a stable school estate means less disruption for younger pupils and their families in terms of school choices and reduced number of moves and transitions.</p>
Disability & SEND	<p>Outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school, this means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required.</p> <p>Priority 1 of the strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.</p> <p>Parents who are disabled may have access to a school which is able to provide further support.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Admissions arrangements operate irrespective of gender reassignment of the child or parents. We hold no school or ward level data on gender reassignment.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>The LA will work with the school to establish numbers of staff currently on maternity leave and will engage and consult appropriately.</p>
Race this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality	<p>Different schools have different ethnicity breakdowns, however the schools which are proposed as appropriate settings to transition to remain local to the setting, therefore, pupils will still remain close to cultural connections and community spaces. Reception and in year admissions are undertaken irrespective of the race or ethnicity of the child or family.</p>

	The amalgamation/mergers will lead to more diverse communities which will be reflective of the Hackney Census 2021
Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief	None of the schools that are being considered during this phase are faith schools. Community schools admission arrangements admit children irrespective of religion or beliefs of the child or family. The Council does not have the same authority over Voluntary Aided schools.
Sex	The gender split at primary schools in Hackney is almost equal, therefore no consequences relating to gender are expected .
Sexual orientation	<p>In Hackney 7.8% residents identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or another non-heterosexual orientation. This means Hackney has proportionally the 6th highest LGB+ population in England & Wales and the 5th highest in London. In comparison to other London boroughs, Hackney has the highest number & proportion of residents who identify as “bisexual” or “queer”.</p> <p>Given that Hackney has a relatively high population of residents with a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or other non-heterosexual identity it is reasonable to assume there are LGB+ pupils within many Hackney schools, although the number is not possible to ascertain.</p> <p>While the council holds no school or ward level data on sexual orientation of under 18 year olds means it is not possible to ascertain how many young people may be affected by the closures, there is research that demonstrates a significant impact when a young person is supported/unsupported at school or home.</p> <p>An LGB+ young person who is currently in a supportive school environment moving to another environment may experience anxiety about the move if there is uncertainty about how they will be supported. Schools may have different policies and practices around support LGB+ children. This can be mitigated by ensuring all schools have visible, robust policies and practices on supporting LGB+ children.</p> <p>LGB+ parents may have similar anxieties about schools closing around levels of support and acceptance. Parents may have chosen a school or location due to reputation or community support. This may be mitigated by ensuring visible, robust policies and practices on supporting LGB+ children and have clear anti-discrimination policies. Further information can be found in the Positive Futures report.</p>
Community	The amalgamations/mergers and closure could support community cohesion by reducing the number of school choices in a local area.
Other socio economic factors	Consolidation of Hackney’s primary school estate could result in benefit for children in receipt of FSM through the consolidation and

	injection of increased pupil premium to the school.
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Based on projection data evidenced in section 3 the availability of reception and primary school places is scheduled to remain some way above the recommended 10% for the next 5 or 6 years' time, which would imply that there would remain extensive choice for applicants, [irrespective of characteristics] both locally and across the LA. There is room in the locality to accommodate all children affected by the proposals.

4 (b) What negative impact could there be overall, on different equality groups, and on cohesion and good relations?

Protected Characteristic	Negative Impact
Age	<p>Changing schools can be seen as disruptive for school age children.</p> <p>Higher impact for those currently in Y4 as will do one year in a new school and then move to secondary. Higher impact for those who have just joined reception and will do one year and then move.</p> <p>To seek to mitigate this impact, the Local Authority will need to work closely with pupils and families to minimise disruption to their education. Should the proposals go ahead, amalgamated sites will have whole year groups moved to a different setting and therefore minimising disruption. In the case of closures, the Local authority would work with families to review that siblings are placed in the same setting where possible.</p> <p>The effect on children of poor air quality is well documented. Air quality has been found to be worse at Princess May than at Colvestone. Children moving from Colvestone to Princess May would be subject to higher levels of poorer quality air, and may experience this too on their walk to and from school.</p>
SEND	<p>Strong representations have been made by some parents that they believe some of the schools proposed for closure (particularly Colvestone) provide very good education for their SEND children, are a valuable local resource for SEND children, and believe the provision for SEND children locally will be detrimentally affected.</p> <p>Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open draw attention to the proportion of children on the SEND register at that school, which is higher than other schools. A concern was raised that the Council has not addressed Colvestone's record on SEND; and that that the School has implemented a SEND strategy with excellent feedback. It is also said that consideration should be given to the potential savings of Colvestone's integrated SEND provision, and its current surplus capacity, which it is said has</p>

	<p>the potential to save the Council money that it would otherwise have to spend in sending children with SEND to independent schools</p> <p>The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND, and particularly in those schools proposed to close. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.</p> <p>The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition.</p> <p>Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by the proposals will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools if the Cabinet decision is to proceed with the proposals.</p> <p>Hackney has a high number of children and young people with EHCPs - there were 3,243 issued in 2023, at 4.08% the percentage of resident 0-24 year old in Hackney with an EHCP was the second highest among statistical neighbours and the 9th highest across England [Mime Dashboard October 2023].</p> <p>There may be additional pressure on receiving schools to ensure that they have the right SEND provision in place for the children with EHC plans and on SEN support. Additional resources (e.g. equipment, staff training, time from external agencies...) will be needed to support smooth transitions for the children identified with SEND.</p> <p>Parents who are disabled may have longer travel times.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Stonewall's 2017 schools report suggested that 64% of trans pupils experience bullying at school, with 1 in 10 being subjected to death threats.</p> <p>Changing schools may be disruptive to trans pupils as they will be moving to a new school where they are not known / may not feel as accepted and safe. This could lead to them experiencing discrimination and bullying. Which could impact on their emotional wellbeing and academic performance.</p> <p>Their current setting may be familiar with the needs of trans pupils and has a plan in place to support them</p>
Pregnancy and	<p>The LA will work with the school to establish numbers of staff</p>

maternity	currently on maternity leave and will engage and consult appropriately.
Race this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality	No impact, Hackney is a diverse borough
Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief	None of the schools that are being considered during this phase are faith schools. Community schools admission arrangements admit children irrespective of religion or beliefs of the child or family.
Sex	No impact, all children, families and staff impacted will be supported.
Sexual orientation	The council holds no school or ward level data on sexual orientation. All children, staff and families will be supported throughout any change.
Other socio economic factors	Families in receipt of FSM and those living in income deprived families could struggle with the costs associated with their children having to change schools, eg. purchase of uniforms.

STEP 3: REACHING YOUR DECISION

5. Describe the recommended decision

It is recommended that Cabinet agrees to proceed with the following proposals to:

- a. close De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024.
- b. close Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.
- c. close Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guarantee all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.
- d. close Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guarantee all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.
- e. increase the published admission number of Nightingale Primary School by adding an additional form of entry to all year groups. This proposal is related to proposal d above.

STEP 4 DELIVERY – MAXIMISING BENEFITS AND MANAGING RISKS

6. Equality and Cohesion Action Planning

N o :	Objective	Actions	Outcomes highlighting how these will be monitored
1	Provide continued support to families and staff affected by the proposed changes	<p>Keep all groups up to date on changes and options available to them.</p> <p>Hold a statutory consultation so that their views are reflected in the decisions.</p> <p>Provide dedicated support through agreed plan throughout any change.</p> <p>Ensure trade unions have a regular forum to raise any concerns/issues on behalf of their members and staff generally.</p>	Parent-Carers and staff affected feel supported on the proposed changes
2	Publication and communication of the plan to schools, parents/carers and young people	<p>Publish the plan on Hackney Education's Website</p> <p>Promote the publication through schools, parent forums, and staff (internal and external communications)</p>	Schools, parents/carers and young people are informed of the Council's plan for falling rolls

3	Review of the implementation plans	Regular review of the plan to ensure feasibility and appropriateness.	Will ensure the plan remains relevant and is cohesive within a wider provision plan for the borough.
4	Support package for families going through closure and amalgamation/merger	<p>Support offer to be in place for families impacted by the proposals The support package should include tailored processes for families going through the process.</p> <p>Work closely with proposed schools to ensure messaging and support reaches all communities.</p>	Parents, carers and pupils impacted by the proposals are aware of the proposals and feel supported.

Appendix A - Data on the protected characteristics at the six schools

The school profile for the proposals includes data on protected characteristics for each of the above schools, highlighting key school community information for consideration. The decision makers should consider this fully when making their decisions, thus complying with their ongoing duty under s149 Equality Act 2010:

Disability - EHCP:

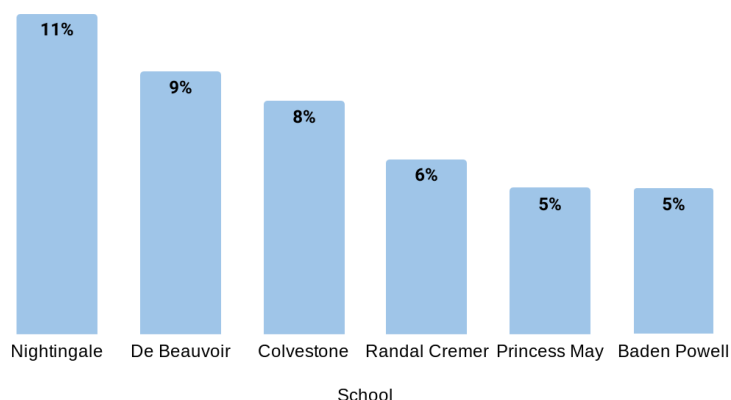
The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support in schools impacted by the proposals is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Baden Powell	8	4.8%	22	13.1%
Colvestone	10	7.7%	21	16.2%
De Beauvoir	10	9.1%	28	25.5%
Nightingale	24	11.9%	30	14.9%
Princess May	10	5.1%	17	8.7%
Randal Cremer	17	7.0%	42	17.4%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

** Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023*

Representations made to the Council state that Colvestone School has a higher proportion of children with SEND (17%) than the national average (13%), and that the numbers are such that 25% of children in that school have SEND. Cabinet will wish to be aware of this when taking into account the extent of impact of the proposals.

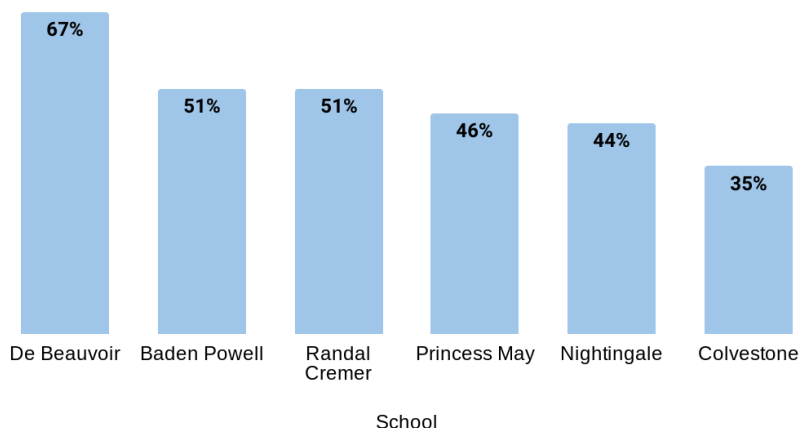
% of pupils with EHCP



The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly in those schools proposed to close. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

The % of pupils with an EHCP in state-funded mainstream schools in Hackney is 4.6%, second highest in England (*Mime Data October 2023*), All schools currently in scope have a higher proportion of EHCPs than the Hackney average, with the top two highest % of EHCPs being Nightingale having 11% and De Beauvoir 9%.

Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility figures:

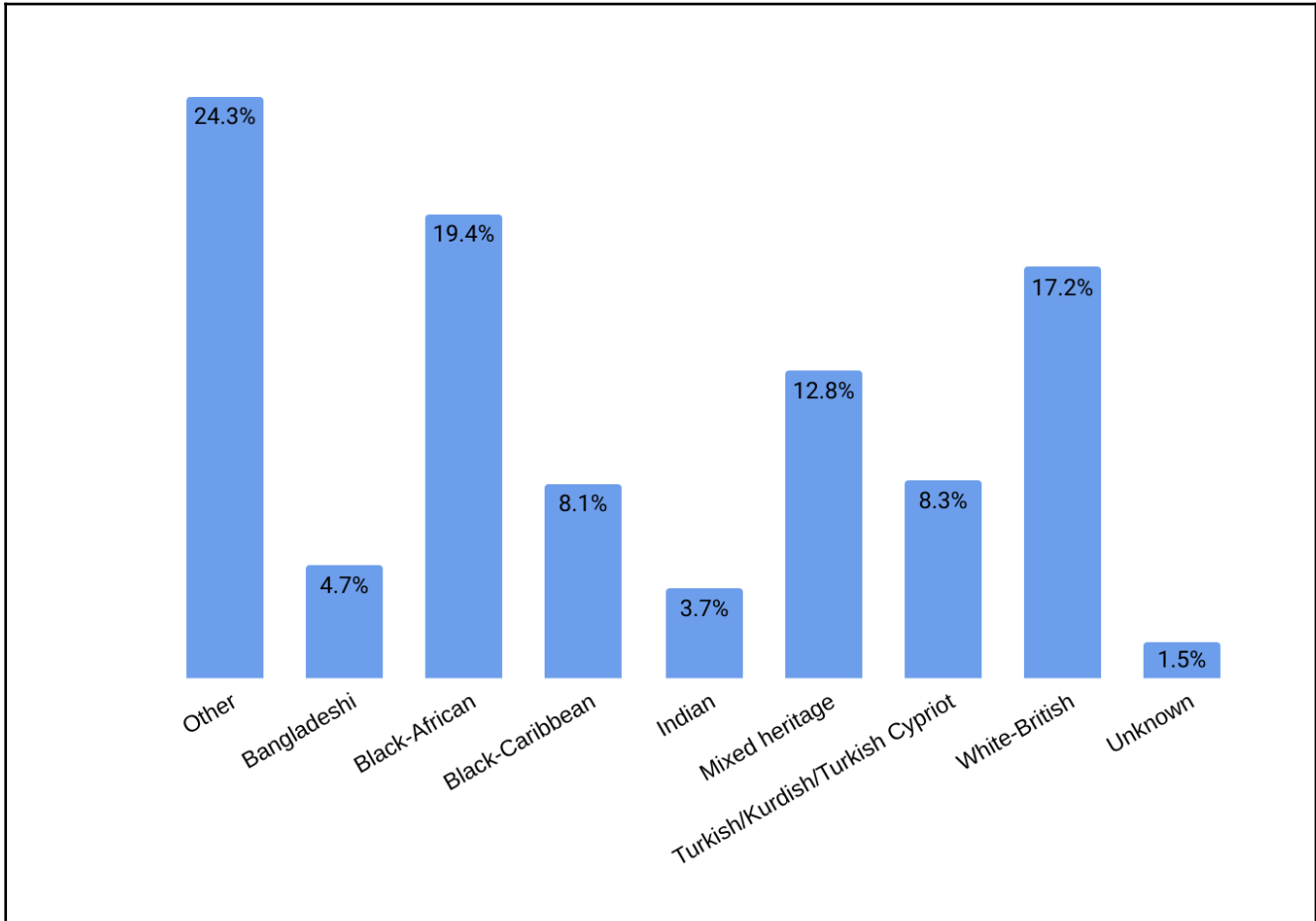


Free school meals are available to pupils in receipt of, or whose parents are in receipt of, one or more government benefits.

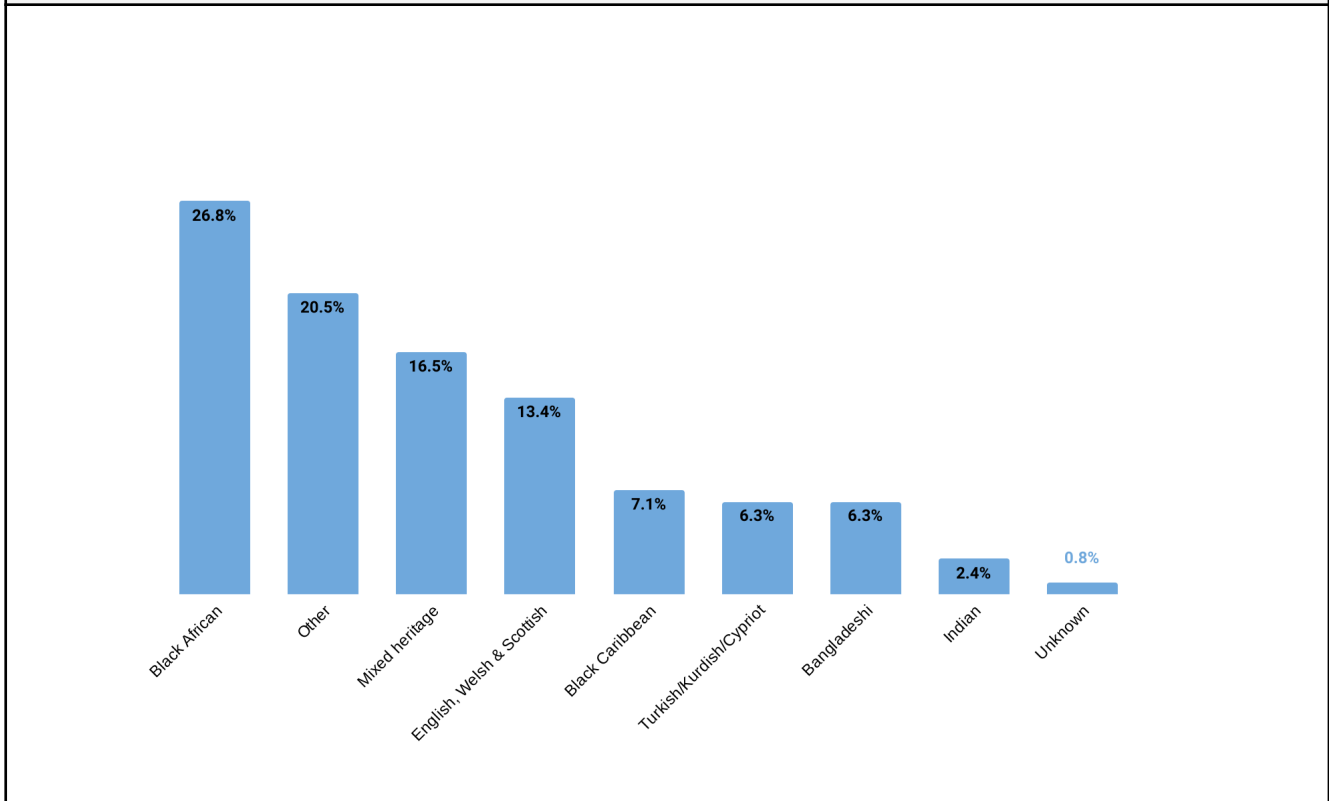
The average percentage of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals in primary school in Hackney is 38%, apart from Colvestone (35%) all other schools in scope have a higher than average percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Ethnicity (School Census May 2023) -

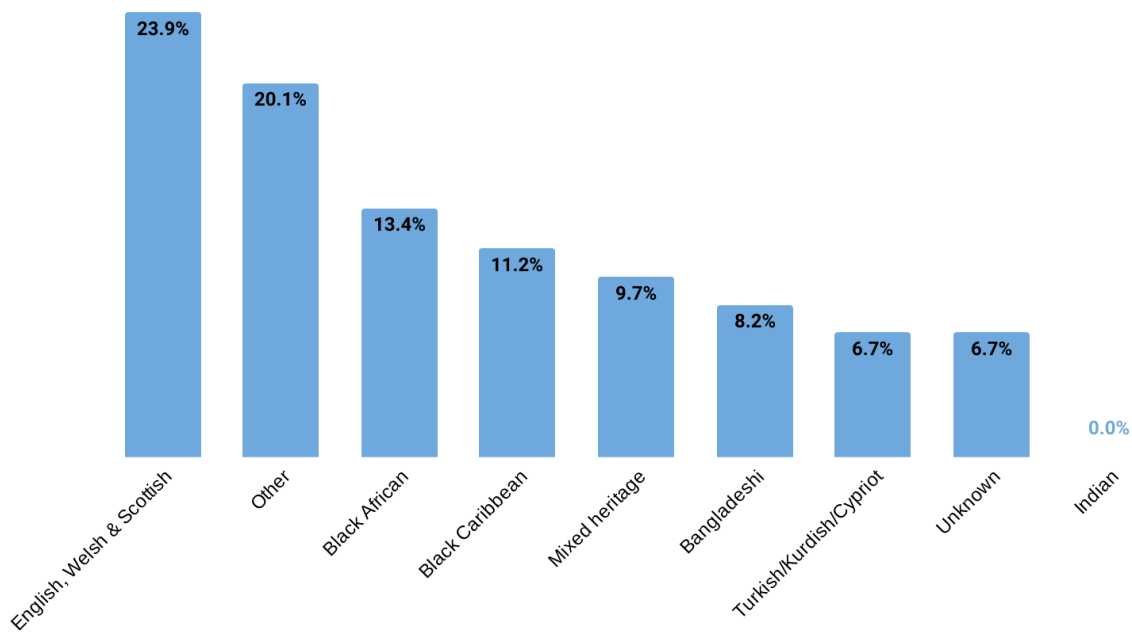
Hackney all pupil average ethnicity breakdown as percentage:



De Beauvoir Ethnicity Breakdown:

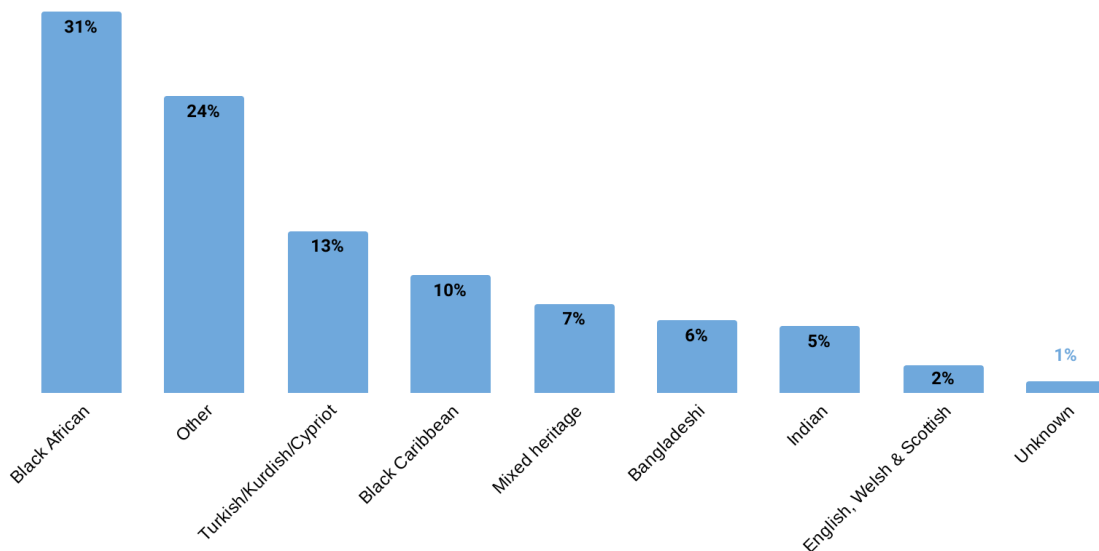


The top three ethnicities that will be most impacted by a proposed school closure of De Beauvoir would be Black African (26.8%), Other heritage (20.5%) and mixed heritage (16.5%) - this accounts for 63.8% of the pupils at De Beauvoir.



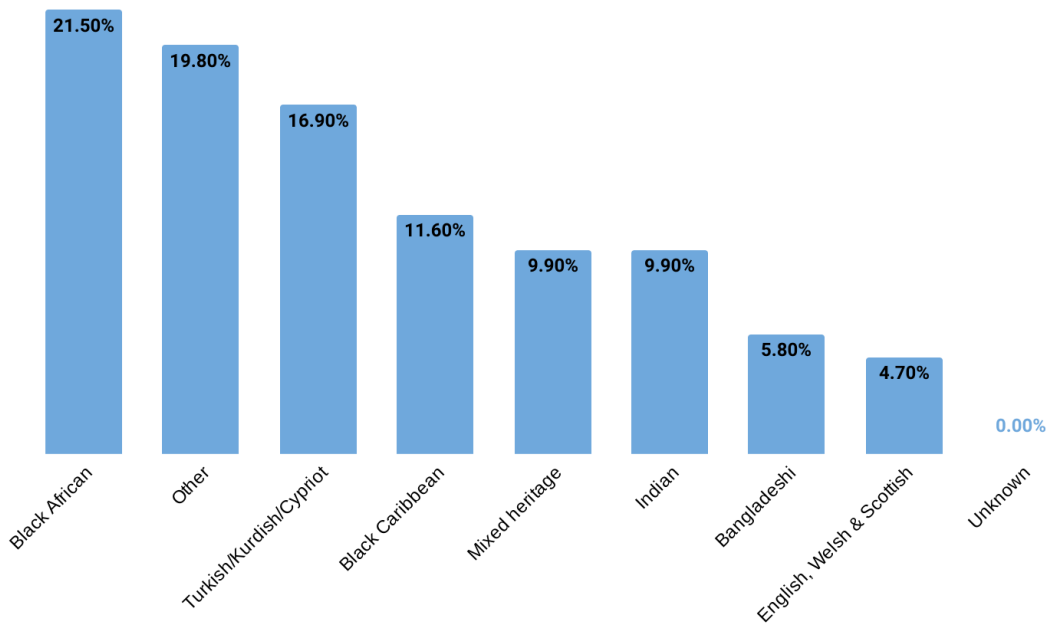
The top three ethnicities that will be most impacted by a proposed school closure of Colvestone and amalgamation/merger with Princess May would be English, Welsh and Scottish (23.8%), Other heritage (20.1%) and Black African (13.4%) - this accounts for 57.4% of the pupils at Colvestone.

Princess May



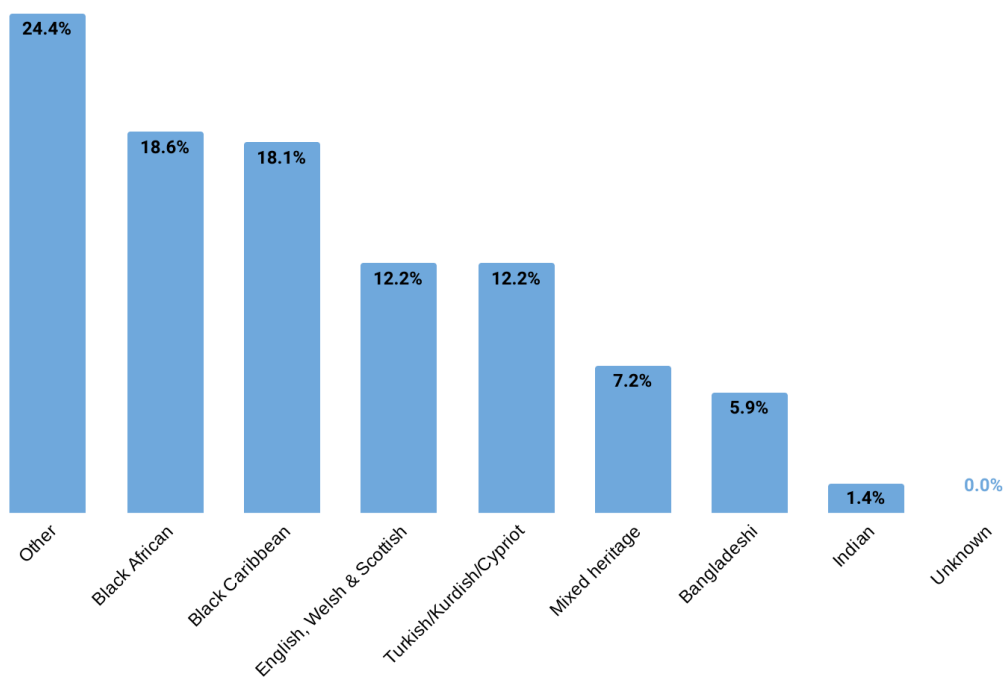
The three main ethnicities at Princess May are Black African (31%), Other heritage (24%) and Turkish/Kurdish/Cypriot (13%).

Baden Powell



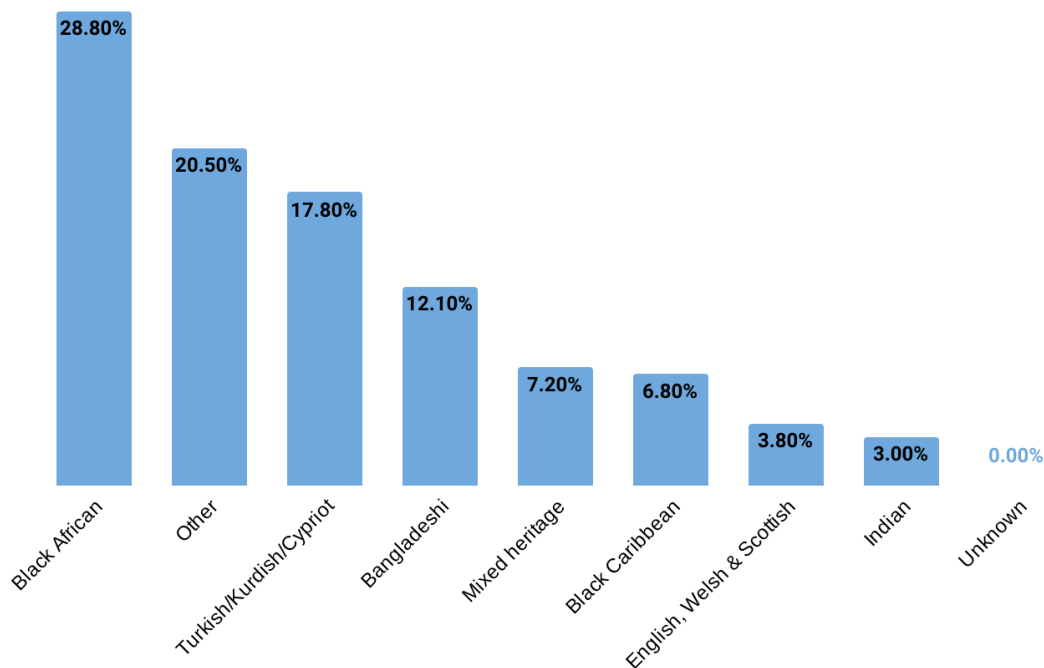
The top three ethnicities that will be most impacted by a proposed school closure of Baden Powell and amalgamation/merger with Nightingale would be Black African (21.50%), Other Heritage (19.80%) and Turkish /Kurdish/Cypriot (16.90%), this accounts for 58.2% of the pupils at Baden Powell.

Nightingale



The three main ethnicities at Nightingale are Other heritage (24.4%), Black African (18.6%), Black Caribbean (18.1%).

Randal Cremer



The top three ethnicities that will be most impacted by the proposed school closure of Randal Cremer would be Black African (28.80%), Other heritage (20.50%) and Turkish/Kurdish/Cypriot (17.80%) - this accounts for 67.1% of the pupils at Randal Cremer.

Gender [Yearly School Census 2023]

Schools	% of Female pupils in primary phase schools (R-Y6)	% of Male pupils in primary phase schools (R-Y6)
Baden Powell	47%	53%
De Beauvoir	60%	40%
Colvestone	49%	51%
Nightingale	47%	53%
Princess May	56%	44%
Randal Cremer	52%	48%

Pregnancy and maternity

- Figures of staff numbers which are in this category at the time of any consultation will be reviewed and the LA will engage appropriately

Age

- All primary school pupils - The proposals would affect all children of a primary age and parents/carers irrespective of age.

Sexual orientation

- The council holds no school or ward level data on sexual orientation. All children, staff and families will be supported throughout any change.

Number of staff impacted

We acknowledge the serious impact these proposals have on staff wellbeing prior to any final decision and the direct impact on the lives and livelihood of staff should the decision to close or merge schools go ahead. In view of this we will ensure those staff have access to an employee assistance programme, where they can access confidential advice and counselling.

The number of teachers and support staff that would be affected if the proposals are taken forward are summarised in the table below (data as at 31/08/2024).

School	Teachers	Support staff	Total
Baden Powell	13	22	35
Colvestone	10	8	18
De Beauvoir	8	11	19
Randal Cremer	18	31	49
Total	49	72	121

In the event of closures, the Council will do everything it can to help staff find alternative roles in schools across Hackney. However, as a last resort, some staff will be offered redundancy, which the Council hopes would be managed through voluntary redundancies and retirements.

In the event of a merger, we will work with the leadership teams of the affected schools to assess the full impact on staff. Governors and school leaders in receiving schools will lead the significant changes brought by these proposals.

Staff and all other relevant parties including trade unions would be consulted about any potential changes.

Those affected will be supported through practical outplacement support such as application and CV writing, interview skills and potential job opportunities in other Hackney Schools. A particular emphasis will be given to supporting support staff, many of whom are Hackney residents.

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Appendix C: Demand for reception places in Hackney

1. Historical and current demand	p 1
2. Projected demand for reception places	p 3
3. Factors driving the reduction in reception demand	p 4
4. Managing surplus through reducing Published Admission Numbers	p 4
5. Unutilised capacity in schools	p 6

1. Historical and current demand

In 2007 a surge in demand for reception places began to occur in Hackney, a trend replicated across other London boroughs. In response to this, LAs created additional places at speed, either through new provision or by implementing bulge classes in existing schools.

In addition, outside of Hackney Council's control, the Department for Education (DfE) approved the opening of four new free schools/academies, creating a further 290 unplanned reception places: The Olive School (Sep 2013), Hackney New Primary School (Sep 2015), Halley House School (Sep 2015), and Mossbourne Riverside Academy (Sep 2015). The current number and types of Hackney schools are outlined below (Table 1).

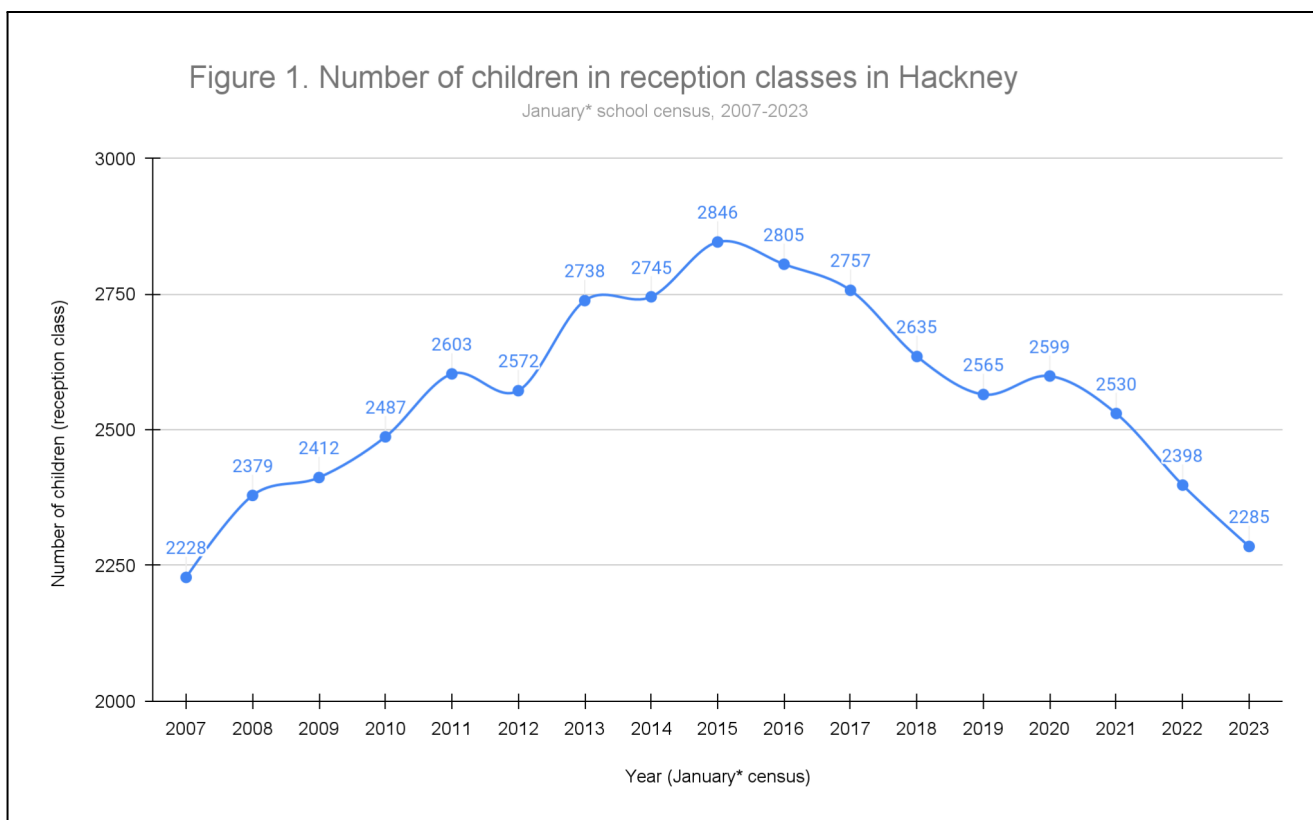
Table 1. Primary and secondary schools by type

School type	Primary	Secondary
Community schools (<i>schools which are controlled and run by the local authority</i>)	38	1
Voluntary aided schools (<i>A state funded school in which a foundation or trust (usually a religious organisation) contributes to building costs and has a substantial influence in the running of the school. In most cases the foundation or trust owns the buildings.) These schools are maintained by the local authority.</i>)	12	4
Academies (<i>state funded schools outside of LA control. Many of these schools converted from maintained to academy.</i>)	5	9
Free schools (<i>a type of academy set up and run by an organisation outside of LA control. These are newly set up schools.</i>)	3	2
Total	58	16

After the surge in demand for reception places between 2007/08 and 2014/15, demand has decreased, with the most recent years seeing drops of over 100 children each year (see Figure 1 below).

This London-wide decrease in the demand for reception places has resulted in LAs (including Hackney) having to take action to reduce the high levels of surplus reception places to more manageable levels.

Historically, LAs have sought to maintain a level of 5-10% surplus reception places against the total number of places available, to accommodate in-year arrivals. However, as rolls have reduced, surplus reception rates have far exceeded the target level.



**Note: Census data is from the January census each year, with the exception of 2023, where the latest census data (May 2023) is shown.*

Table 2 shows for the current academic year (2022/23) 2285 reception pupils on roll against a total number of 2900 places available. This equates to 615 surplus reception places (21%).

The current surplus is the highest level recorded, despite reductions to the published admission number (PAN) made in the academic years 2019/20 and 2022/23 (see section 4).

Table 2. Number of surplus reception places compared to number of available places (January census)

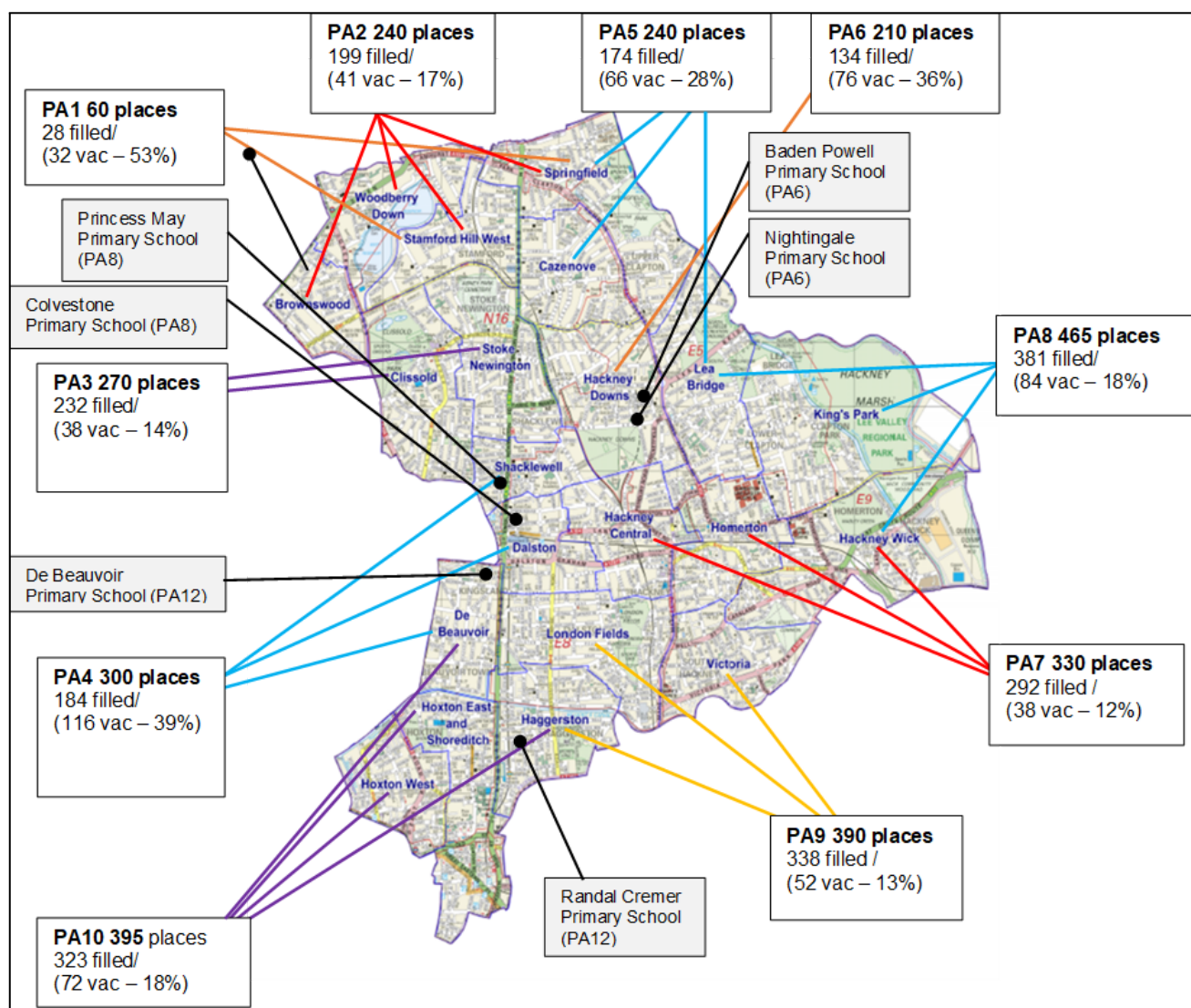
Academic Year	Children on roll (January census)	Number of places available based on PANs	Surplus places based on PANs	% surplus places based on PANs
2015/16	2805	3080	275	9%
2016/17	2757	3170	413	13%
2017/18	2635	3155	520	17%
2018/19	2565	3155	590	19%
2019/20	2599	3035	436	14%
2020/21	2530	3035	505	17%
2021/22	2398	3035	637	21%
2022/23	2285	2900	615	21%

**Note: Census data is from the January census each year, with the exception of 2023, where the latest census data (May 2023) is shown.*

Figure 2 below shows the high level of surplus reception places throughout the borough at the May 2023 school place census, with vacancy rates ranging from 12% to 53%* in the

individual planning areas (PAs). Four out of the ten planning areas (PAs) had a reception place surplus of 20% or more.

Figure 2. Surplus reception places by planning area (PA) - May 2023 census



The location of the six primary schools proposed for amalgamation and/or closure are represented by the grey boxes.

*Note: PA1 with a vacancy rate of 53% only includes the Lubavitch Boys' and Girls' primary schools. Both schools have historically had similarly high vacancy rates.

2. Projected demand for reception places

Hackney commissions the Greater London Authority¹ to provide an annual school rolls projection output based on January school census data in the year that the projections are produced.² Projection models take into account a range of data such as population, births, migration, fertility rates, GP registrations, housing data and school rolls. The model then predicts the number of children expected to require places in the borough.

Despite a reduction of 375 reception places between 2018 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in reception place surplus from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in

¹ The Greater London Authority's (GLA) school roll projections service is commissioned by Hackney and the majority of London LAs. The GLA's model is extensive and utilises a range of data sets such as population, births, migration, fertility rates, GP registrations, school rolls and housing data to generate annual school roll projections.

² Every school in England has a statutory duty to complete the DfE School Census every term.

2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease to reach 20% in 2029/30 and is forecast to stagnate at this level until the end of the projection period in 2031/32. (Table 3)

Table 3. GLA projected number of reception children compared to the number of places available

Academic Year	Reception projections based on January 2023 census	Number of places available based on PANs	Projected surplus places based on PANs	% surplus places based on PANs
2023/24	2256	2780	524	19%
2024/25	2185	2780	595	21%
2025/26	2146	2780	634	23%
2026/27	2168	2780	612	22%
2027/28	2162	2780	618	22%
2028/29	2207	2780	573	21%
2029/30	2225	2780	555	20%
2030/31	2222	2780	558	20%
2031/32	2221	2780	559	20%

Projections become less robust the further forward the data projects. This risk is mitigated by ensuring that the number of reception applications are routinely monitored against current projections data. It is clear that further action must be taken to reduce surplus places.

3. Factors driving the reduction in reception demand

Demand for reception places depends upon a range of factors including parental perceptions of schools in a given area, parental choice, birth rates, migration and the ability to afford to live in an area.

The reasons for Hackney’s declining numbers are multifaceted, but include a combination of falling birth rates, changes to welfare benefits, the housing crisis, increases in the cost of living, the withdrawal of the right of entry and freedom of movement from EU nationals (Brexit), and as a result of families leaving London during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many of these factors remain outside the council’s control and are no fault of the schools or their current leadership. A report on [Managing Surplus School Places in London \(2023\)](#) published by London Councils in January 2023 provides some wider context and independent analysis of the issue.

4. Managing surplus through reducing Published Admission Numbers

[Published Admission Numbers](#) (PANs) reflect the maximum number of pupils schools can accommodate in each year group and define the maximum number of children admitted into reception classes.

Hackney council has the power to reduce school PANs at all community schools (i.e. 38 out of 58 primary schools), and to recommend PAN reductions at the remaining 20 academies, free or VA (faith) schools. The final decision to reduce the PAN at these schools rests with the academy trust or governing body, respectively.

Reducing a school’s PAN (e.g. from 60 to 30) allows governors and school leaders to plan for and employ fewer staff knowing they will only need one teacher for each year group. However,

while PAN reductions directly reduce the number of surplus places, they are not a long term solution because the size of the school building remains unchanged. The unused space (e.g. empty classrooms) that PAN reductions create in schools, must still be maintained, heated etc., and this draws on resources that could be more directly used to educate and support children.

In response to falling reception rolls and the resulting increase in surplus places Hackney reduced school PANs in 2019, removing 120 places across 4 schools, in 2022, removing 135 places across 6 schools, and in 2023, removing a further 120 places across 4 schools (Table 4, 5 and 6).

Table 4. PAN reductions implemented from September 2019

School (ward)	Planning area	Previous PAN	Current PAN	No. of places removed
De Beauvoir (De Beauvoir)	4	60	30	30
Gainsborough (Hackney Wick)	8	90	60	30
Halley House* (Shacklewell)	4	60	30	30
Harrington Hill (Springfield)	5	90	60	30
Total number of places removed				120

*= The decision to reduce the PAN at Halley House was taken by Bellevue Academy Trust.

Table 5. PAN reductions implemented from September 2022

School (ward)	Planning area	Previous PAN	Current PAN	No. of places removed
Harrington Hill (Springfield)	5	60	30	30
Gayhurst (London Fields)	9	75	60	15
Mandeville (King's Park)	8	60	45	15
Randal Cremer (Haggerston)	10	60	45	15
St Dominic's (Hackney Wick)	7	60	30	30
Thomas Fairchild (Hoxton West)	10	60	30	30
Total number of places removed				135

Table 6. PAN reductions implemented from September 2023

School (ward)	Planning area	Current PAN	Proposed PAN	Proposed No. of places to be removed
Gainsborough (Hackney Wick)	8	60	30	30
Daubeney (King's Park)	8	90	60	30
Mossbourne Parkside* (Hackney Central)	7	60	30	30
Sir Thomas Abney (Stamford Hill West)	2	60	30	30
Total number of places removed				120

* = The decision to reduce the PAN at Mossbourne Parkside was taken by the Mossbourne Federation.

Note: PAN reductions as shown in Tables 4,5 and 6 do not reflect changes to the physical capacity of schools. Should future demand for reception places suddenly increase, there is existing capacity within schools to absorb additional children.

The council continues to consider reducing PANs wherever possible at schools significantly affected by falling rolls.

5. Unutilised capacity in schools

Table 7 shows the physical capacity in schools and possible additional places that could be reinstated should they be required in future years.

Table 7. Potential available physical capacity in schools with reduced PANs

School	Current PAN	Future PAN Potential	Additional Places
Gainsborough	30	60-90	30-60*
Halley House	30	60	30#
Harrington Hill	30	60	30
Gayhurst	60	75	15
Mandeville	45	60	15
St Dominic's	30	60	30#
Thomas Fairchild	30	60	30
Daubeney	60	60-90	0-30*
Mossbourne Parkside	30	60	30#
Sir Thomas Abney	30	60-90	30-60*
Total			240-330*

*The higher figure may be possible but some schools have plans for their spare capacity.

#Subject to discussions and agreement with the Academy or Diocese.

Note: This table does not include the possibility for additional accommodation to be built on some school sites that have the potential to add more capacity if required in the future.

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School Estates Community Queries [March-May 2023] - by theme

This document includes comments, questions and feedback submitted from

- 1) Governor's / School Leadership
- 2) Questions from specific Engagement event at each school - Nightingale, Baden Powell, Randal Cremer, De Beauvoir, Colvestone, Princess May
- 3) Questions, comments and feedback from the google form and emails submitted by Parent/carers, staff members, governors,

Answers have been provided to questions submitted at the engagement events [time permitting]. An updated FAQ will be provided to ensure consideration of these if the proposals progress to informal consultation.

It is important to note that this stage is not a consultation yet. If the decision is made to move to informal consultation then there will be a structured process to gather feedback from the community on proposals. Further advice on this will be given at that time.

Themes by school:

Jump to

- [Baden Powell](#)
- [Randel Cremer](#)
- [De Beauvoir](#)
- [Nightingale](#)
- [Princess May](#)
- [General - All schools](#)

Colvestone Primary School

Colvestone
Known or likely question
Theme: PM school fabric and pollution
Princess May has a very poor reputation in the local area
It is ugly and noisy and polluted
I am at a loss to understand how Hackney can seriously consider moving children from Colvestone to Princess May, whose playground is right next to the A10. The Council's own air quality monitoring system shows Princess May had 40 percent higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO2) in 2021 than Colvestone. Adding more students to a school closer to the A10 with higher pollution levels is a backwards step in the effort to reduce children's exposure to air pollution.
Colvestone Crescent is currently a 'school street' which is in effect a no-through street with limited traffic on all sides, protected by the Ridley Road market/landscaping, and was the logical choice to become the first 21st Century Play Street in the borough (Hackney / 21st Century Streets / Colvestone Crescent masterplan). The borough's first 'permanent play / school street' and already extant greening of Colvestone Crescent naturally has the school at the heart of this community-led project (the result of

neighbourhood parklets / local resistance to road traffic) that has been so thoughtfully expanded in Hackney Council's signature environmental proposals for the site. Already the playground that adjoins the meeting of the two roads on the school boundary shows on the Council pollution 'heat maps' as one of the least polluted regions in the whole local area, rather fitting for an outdoor classroom designated as an 'Asset of Community Value' (August 2021)
As a parent I strongly object on many grounds, not least because Colvestone and Princess May are two completely opposing schools in style. Princess May didn't even feature anywhere on our list when making choices. It is on a main road, with much higher levels of pollution.. It has a completely different feel to it, in style and size. It does not have the community feel that is so present at Colvestone. We would need to cross a main road. I could go on. Needless to say if you go ahead with this merger I will be seeking to send my child to a different school. We have absolutely zero interest in her attending Princess May now, in the same way as we had zero interest in it when we were first making choices.
The school you propose merging Colvestone with - Princess May, next to the A10 - has almost 50% higher air pollution than Colvestone (according to Hackney Council's own figures), a more dangerous environment for children.
Why has health not been factored in? We would like it added to the list for consideration.
Theme: Vibe
No Colvestone parent will accept a place on the Princess May school site. Colvestone parents will look to other schools further afield, home school or leave the borough altogether
Did we consider the vibe of schools we are trying to merge?
Parents want their children to attend a small, intimate school with a big heart.
If we wanted a three-form entry we wouldn't have chosen Colvestone
The beautiful listed building is an inspiring place to learn.
Colveston is a 'community treasure'
Colvestone Primary School is a friendly, close-knit, one-form entry community school with a strong academic record and close ties to Ridley Road Market and the surrounding community.
Have you thought about proposed closure and the numbers and impact on schools that will have to take the additional children?
Do you now understand that it is not numbers versus emotion?
Is the consultation a done deal?
What happens if parents are overwhelmingly against the plans, does their voice count?
This time last year parents of years 3 and 4 sat with the Director of Education at the time with real concerns about this. *** told us in no uncertain terms that the school was not at risk of closure. What has changed the process?

When it refers to 'forming a new school', does this mean a brand new name, staff team etc or an expanded Princess May?
We chose Colvestone for our children due to its small size and caring family atmosphere. Also for its strong connections with the local community as a well-established non-denominational school which had been educating local children for over 150 years. Back in 2008, we had to fight to get our oldest child a place in the Reception Class as the school was so popular and oversubscribed.
Theme: Pupil support and SEND provision
SEND pupils: what will be the impact on them moving to other schools?
Colvestone has 10.7% of pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan (national average is 4%) plus another 12% of pupils who need additional support. So 1 in 5 of the pupils have additional challenges of some kind. This proposal will adversely affect these vulnerable children as they will find it particularly difficult to cope with a transition to a new school.
What is going to be done for children with SEN for transition as adaptation issues and for those one that doesn't like a crowded environment? Are the teachers and TAs going to be enough for children with SEND?
My older daughter with ADHD and ODD went to 5 schools in Hackney, including outstanding schools. She was facing being out of mainstream education and Colveston showed her love, acceptance and support which totally changed things around and she is now at a mainstream secondary. The fact that Colveston accommodates for so many children with additional needs and keeps them in mainstream schools saves Hackney a lot of money. My younger daughter, like so many other children, is on a 2-3 year wait list for a diagnosis with CAMHS and therefore is not part of the SEN stats we were discussing at the meeting today which were already higher than other schools in the area. I believe the education department are cherry picking the figures to suit their agenda and are not looking at the bigger picture or the cost of cleaning up the mess that will be left by traumatising the SEN children who will have their fragile world torn apart, including providing for many children who will be left outside of the school system.
Our children have been through so much from being scared that they will die due to a terrifying virus, mask wearing whereby they can't read people's facial expressions and emotions accurately, being locked down in their homes without socialising with their peers or teacher's, too returning to school and loosing their TA's and headteachers and now just as things were beginning to become "normal" again the council are taking away their normality. This is horrendous for children's social and emotional well-being.
There is no other school in the area that can ensure that our SEN children get the access to education they have a right to. - The Cull de sac nature of Colvestone facilitates a safe access to school. SEN children get overwhelmed when they are walking through busy streets and can often run into traffic.-Being a one form entry Colvestone is naturally a calmer and less overwhelming environment.-I implore you to consider Colvestone as the perfect school to create an autism friendly environment.
with great effort, determination and tedious work we thankfully managed for *** to be happy going out and then managed to bridge her back to school, with the School Senco we worked very hard collaboratively to get *** back and *** did for the end of year one. Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support which as you may have heard from other families is not a given,
*** Sometimes struggles with social situations and 'joining in' with organised clubs and activities and the small size of the classes, closeness of the teachers and supportive community around the school have been a massive benefit to her development. I feel that in a larger school with larger classes and larger demands on teaching staff she may not have received the attention needed to encourage her

development. This is why I feel Colvestone is such a unique and vital option for parents looking for a school in the Borough of Hackney.
What are the SEND numbers in both the proposed amalgamated school, the nearest school to Colvestone and in other schools that have been proposed to close or amalgamate?
Theme: Rationale
Why is Hackney focused on community schools rather than faith schools?
Why can't we use Colvestone as the host site and expand capacity?
Did we consider merging it with De Beauvoir or another school?
Colvestone is the only non-denominational school in Dalston, and with the proposed closure of nearby De Beauvoir school, current and future parents in this area have few nearby options that are not either religious schools, academies or free schools.
Can we give Colvestone a chance to turn it round?
ONS data shows very strongly that in just a few years 4 or 500 more spaces will be needed in reception again in Hackney.
What about the Colvestone Crescent 21st Century street plan?
What would happen to Colvestone's historic debt if the school was to close?
Proposing to spend millions to make Colvestone Crescent into a 21st century Show road while closing the school is a ludicrous proposal that shows how inverse the council's priorities are in this.
This year our daughter's class (year 3) was merged with year 4 due to low numbers. When this decision was being made, Annie Gammon (Director of education at the time) sat in the school and 100% reassured us that Colvestone was under no threat of closure. How do you explain this reverse in ideology less than a year later?
How are FREE schools allowed to continue to run but state maintained are not?
A partnership with Princess May was proposed in the past and rejected.
The current ratio of available places in Hackney are 70.5% community, 9.5% academy/free, 20% faith – suggesting both the damage caused by opening academy schools, the problematic and disproportionate allocation of pupils to them in the reception intake process when no places are offered to any preference on a parent's list, and the necessity to reduce the number of faith school places to better reflect Hackney's population. It is noted that neither faith schools nor academies are considered in this consultation. In 2022 places were allocated (when no preference places were available for a pupil) 40% academy/faith v. 60% community across all places and in 2021: 46% academy/faith v. 54% community. The proposed changes will, of course, further skew this bias away from community schools.
I'd like figures on numbers of Colvestone parents who had Princess May in the top three of their application list.
Distance to other schools
The council's policies that have reduced affordable housing for families has had a direct result on these dwindling numbers.

What will happen to Colvestone's debt if Colvestone is amalgamated with Princess May / closed?
The timeline does not give enough time.
There is a problem, in terms of the merger of Colvestone and Princess May as they are both very different, very few parents want their children to go there. What are you going to do?
Personally, I think the public meetings would be better held directly after the Easter holidays. I imagine we won't be able to set March dates until near the end of term, and having the holidays to mull things over and not have any of us to talk to will provide some anxieties for staff and parents.
Why doesn't Princess May come to Colveston instead?
Why not change the process?
Is the school on-board to amalgamate with Colvestone?
Questions around Princess May (PM) Does it have a deficit or a projected one? This would also be challenging for proposals of amalgamation.
How many children have PM as their first choice? What is the projected reception intake for Princess May? None of the Colvestone families have moved to PM this year even though there are spaces.
Can your team provide an update on the questions posed at the last meeting e.g. admission numbers/trends and provision/incentives to keep staff in post should a decision to 'close' be decided.
RW questioned if the schools have ever been asked to cap their reception numbers previously. Schools that previously expanded during boom years, have they gone back to their substantive PAN or have they remained?
RC questioned in relation to the first and second preferences, what is the likelihood of numbers increasing in reception with second/third places? DC commented it is unknown and more in depth analysis could be done.
SB questioned data presented regarding first preference v how many actually ended up at the school and if we could get a sense of how many first preferences end up at the school
Theme: School falling roll and numbers
What are the first numbers for schools in the area like?
Do you accept that there are numbers you haven't considered? Our children are not just numbers. There are factors buried under the factors. The numbers mean nothing if they don't work for us. When you say you hear the passion you're not hearing a parent talking about their child.
Theme: Financial cost
Can the school's own financial projections in terms of deficit be submitted to the Cabinet for the next four to five years to come?
Will detailed costings be produced if this proposal is put to the wider community?
The school is financially viable on current student numbers.

<p>This is about a sea of lost revenue rather than viability figures. We have seen what might be perceived as losses but not about whether the school is viable. There is an inference that they are both the same in terms of loss of income and not being viable, which is not the case. I would like to see the financial viability report, rather than an obsession with lost revenue</p>
<p>If Colvestone merges does that make PM complete and if not why would that be more financially viable than Colvestone?</p>
<p>Theme: Increase in hackney population</p>
<p>I have seen birth rates that have increased with 400-500 nursery places needed. It is confusing why a year ago we were told the opposite of what we are told today. What happens if there are 70 families told that the children have to go to Princess May and we don't want to go.</p>
<p>We don't understand the timeline, e.g. Brexit and pandemic - numbers show that in 2019 massively decreased, pandemic had a huge effect, lots of parents moved out, what will change because numbers will change, there are big decisions that could go catastrophically wrong. Pupil numbers will increase with residents coming to live in building projects. It seems really short sighted.</p>
<p>Aside that the school is financially viable on current student numbers, the Hackney Local Plan (LP33) / the 'Dalston Plan' (adopted 22nd July 2020) commits to the building of hundreds of new homes in the immediate vicinity of Colvestone Primary School – a substantial proportion of which will be mandatorily designated as family homes, this being the proportion of the population identified as finding it most difficult to stay in the borough (Council conditions, as per the new Hackney Council developments around the Britannia Leisure Centre, for example). In addition the Hackney Plan predicts a continuing rise in Hackney's population, and projects a need for more primary and secondary places within the scope of the plan. A strong community school, in addition to being a strong draw for prospective residents, will also be required for the family occupants of the new residential developments in central Hackney (the development sites are extremely close / clustered around Colvestone Primary School, as identified in the plan).</p>
<p>The Dalston Area Plan shows that more residential properties are planned for the area which will lead to an increase in demand for more school places in a few years time. Local residents deserve to have a school they can easily walk to, one that has a strong academic record, that offers the closeness and individual attention of a one-form entry environment, and that is not tied to any particular religion.</p>
<p>As a Dalston resident, I am also aware of the proposals in the Dalston Development Plan to build c600 new homes on the site of the current Sainsbury's car park. Colvestone would be the closest school for any children living in this development.</p>
<p>Theme: Previous investment in Colvestone</p>
<p>New school playground and other investments</p>
<p>What would happen to Colvestone's historic debt if the school was to close?</p>
<p>Theme: Timing</p>
<p>I made a complaint about the fact that we have only been given till Friday to get our points into the report and were not given time to receive answers to our many questions or requests.</p> <p>The complaints team said there is no such deadline.</p> <p>Please can you clarify urgently as this has a significant impact on what we do.</p>

Theme: Blossom Federation support
<p>Why did we allow Blossom in?</p> <p>Colvestone has been in partnership with Blossom Federation (who manage three other schools in the borough) since September 2022. They were selected by Hackney Education and the governing body in June last year to give the best support to Colvestone - Princess May was rejected as a partnership option at that time.</p> <p>During that process, the then Director of Education at Hackney reassured parents that there were no plans to close the school. The school leadership is extremely disappointed that the new partnership with Blossom Federation has not been given an opportunity to show its impact.</p>
<p>Colvestone has benefitted from significant capital investment by Hackney Council over the last 12-18 months with significant external repairs to the stonework and leadwork on the roof and careful restoration of the Grade 2 listed railings in front of the school. Without the scaffolding, the school building looks very attractive. Blossom Federation has attracted further Council funding to upgrade facilities and redecorate inside the school as well.</p>
<p>I am aware as a parent that the school has been in consultation with the Council over its structure in recent years and the new leadership team and partnership with the Blossom Foundation, agreed as I understand with the Council, has injected real impetus to the school – an impetus that has been supported by the improvements and repairs to facilities supported by the Council and finished in recent months. It is my understanding that these arrangements have also made the school more financially secure, running a budget surplus, and assured for the forthcoming academic year.</p>
<p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering local children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p>
<p>Is Thomas Fairchild in consideration of closing/amalgamating? If not, why not? Their situation is comparable to Colvestone and they have had more financial support than Colvestone.</p>
<p>it was wonderful to see how the new management team and Blossom Federation have pulled up the school in just two terms.</p>
Theme: Colvestone site usage
<p>What are we going to do with the Colvestone site?</p>
<p>Leaving the Colvestone building (grade 2 listed) empty and letting it become derelict would be a travesty.</p>
<p>The closure of Colvestone would have a negative impact on this community and leave an empty building in the heart of the local area.</p>

Colvestone has been part of the Dalston community for more than 170 years. It is a beautiful Grade 2 listed building, and the only surviving example of the original Birkbeck schools, part of a mid-19th century radical education movement.
We will not allow you the opportunity to shaft our children and families in order for to make money from the sale of the school site to the highest developer bid to create more multi-million pound 'luxury apartments' that nobody in the community can afford.
The land behind Colvestone school is disputed, community won against developer due to the school being there. What will happen to the land?
What would happen to the Colvestone building if the school is closed?
Is the new road going here?
DCAAC is concerned that if the school site were to be sold on, it may be considered untenable to retain an educational or communal use, so a change of use may be sought for the listed building, requiring physical changes which may detract from its special historic and architectural interest. Furthermore, development pressures may result in ambitious plans to redevelop the site, which at best may harm the setting of the listed building and at worst obliterate it. Such changes may also harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. DCAAC asserts that the character and appearance of the St Mark's Conservation Area will be severely affected by the loss of its only primary school, which is one of a small number of buildings in the neighbourhood with a community use. The school closure will have an unwelcome homogenizing effect on the conservation area as well reducing the quality of life of its residents.
Why have plans for the future use of the school site not been included in the preparatory work? I understand that Colveston is a Grade II listed building.
Theme: Staff
What will happen to the staff?
Change.org petition
Link
Theme: Lack of non-faith schools
he closure of Colvestone and De Beauvoir would mean that there would be no non-faith, one-form local authority schools within a mile of the Colverstone building, leaving the area dominated by religious schools, free schools and academies. (For reference, the current ratio of available places in Hackney are 70.5% community, 9.5% academy/free, 20% faith – suggesting both the damage caused by opening academy schools, the problematic and disproportionate allocation of pupils to them in the reception intake process when no places are offered to any preference on a parent's list, and the necessity to reduce the number of faith school places to better reflect Hackney's population. It is noted that neither faith schools nor academies are considered in this consultation. In 2022 places were allocated (when no preference places were available for a pupil) 40% academy/faith v. 60% community across all places and in 2021: 46% academy/faith v. 54% community. The proposed changes will, of course, further skew this bias away from community schools).

as one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. I believe merging the children from Colvestone Primary into a larger, arguably less suitable school, would be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area.

Why does LA allocate non faith children to religious schools?

Baden Powell Primary School

Baden Powell
Known or likely question
Theme: Costs of the move
My child would be in year ** if you were to merge. Would we have to buy a whole new set of uniforms just for one year ?
Uniform is an issue. Will there be something put in place for parents regarding the costs of new uniforms?
Will there be any support to purchase the uniform if changed
The government has cut funding so there was already a lack of funding before all the other issues described in the powerpoint took place?
Question asked on if there is a way to address the funding, perhaps raising money/ charity donations- has this been discussed/raising a fund?
Would it be legal to raise funds for the school?
Theme: Rationale / Is the decision finalised?
Regarding the stats from around 10 years ago, if birth rates were going down, then why was Nightingale school built?
Are Nightingale in the same position as us? Why does our school have to merge with them on their site?!
Is the decline in numbers similar for Nightingale?
At the last meeting, there were many issues that came up. It is being made to seem as if parents are just anxious.
It has been mentioned that a final decision has not been made, but from powerpoint it seems as if a definitive decision has been made?
Is there anything that could be done to stop this from happening?
This decision is being made based on Nightingale having the capacity. But this change would destabilise families- Will there be any help to lessen destabilisation that is going to be experienced ?

Will any of these questions/information be fed back?
If there was an influx of children before september- what would happen?
Based on the statistics, it is either we merge or we close
The council needs to be straightforward with parents
There are other children on a waiting list for Nightingale, For those that are in favour of the merger- will they take up possible places for children coming from Baden Powell?
it does not feel like there is a chance for change. Is there any point in saying we do not want the merger to happen? It all feels very finalised. We all understand the reasons why it has to happen, but it is a difficult situation. It feels like parents' voices are not going to be heard. This is a major change, not a tiny shift. The new Nightingale building is big, this is a close community which will see a change of teachers and a new big building, it is a lot to take in
HE seems as if they are coming from an academic perspective, coming across as condescending. The council is coming from a numbers perspective. The audience are parents, not academics. This is why HE is receiving hostility from parents. The parents worry comes from their passions/love for the school but the council's priorities are funding and numbers, but they are not discussing the damage that's going to be caused
Theme: Children with SEND
Will children with learning difficulties have the same support or extra support put in place for them not to be affected?
What measures are being put in place for pupils with Special needs to make sure that this change has no effect on their education?
What is the plan for children that have SEN? There needs to be a plan
From a parent with an autistic child- We all have personal reasons why we do not want the schools being merged. It is about the school, it is not about the space, we love this school. From nursery parents to Year 6 parents, everyone knows each other. It is a close school in which children are learning happily. If this merger happens and everyone has to move, her child will go through change twice and this will affect him hugely in future. He will already make a move from Year 6 to secondary school. We are unable to cope with that much change
Theme: Ethos
Will the two schools be given a new name?
How will the receiving school accept the students and make them feel welcome?
How will you ensure that students are not going to be bullied and made to feel like an outsider?
Theme: Building
What will happen to the Baden Powell School site?

Theme: Staff
Are teachers from this school going to be present in Nightingale schools?
Baden Powell is a unique school, it is an established school with a unique teaching style, that has been running for years Nightingale is a new school with a new teaching style, they are still looking for a unique style to teach their kids I don't want Baden Powell Primary School to merge with Nightingale primary school. Baden Powell has a wonderful staff and a very nice big playground for all ages / all classes (nightingale don't have this) and Baden Powell is a small school so it's perfect for children if they feel not well in a big school with a lot of children in a small place. My children feel very well in Baden Powell so they are very sad since they know about this problem. I don't want you to play with my children's future. So please stop this merge and leave Baden Powell as a small wonderful primary School.
Why is it not possible for all teachers from Baden Powell to move to Nightingale if all the children can be moved? It will be difficult for the children to move, it will be easier for teachers to move if there is that much space at Nightingale
Parent commented that she wanted a small school for her children, not a school in which there are two year groups in one class. With the way Baden Powell is currently, teachers can look after students, it is more intimate
The teaching at this school is of excellent quality, it must be matched if we are going to be put through this change. The provisions and measures need to be matched. Parent demands teachers from this school are present in Nightingale if they want parents to go through/support this merger
We do not want the lovely little school to be closed, this is a lovely school with lovely staff and teaching system.
Theme: Parental choice
If parents do not want to send their child to Nightingale school will they be given the option of other primary schools?
Why can it not be done as secondary schools do, and leave the children currently there without taking new admissions?
What can parents do to stop this from happening? Parents have had the option to comment on changes in the area in the past. E.g. a majority of parents were against boxes being put in the road and they were still put there This does not feel like an open discussion
Walks 30 mins from ** house for ** children to attend Baden Powell. There is another school close to ** house, but Baden Powell is a small school, it is very good for ** children and this is why she brings ** children here. Does not want to send ** children to a big school like Nightingale
Theme: Mental health (due to transition)
This will be happening for a child, this is a big change- the effects will be massive for children- they will not cope. What is the plan to make sure her children will be okay?

Randal Cremer
Known or likely question
Theme: Rationale
Why are De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer only considered as closures?
What are you going to do to attract more families to live in the borough, to avoid schools being closed or merged?
How will this announcement affect RC enrollment? Are you sealing our fate with the announcement?
The school is based in an area surrounded with buildings and homes and majority of those homes with children come to Randal Cremer.
Is this a move to acquire prime land for Real Estate purposes?
Why doesn't Randal Cremer have the option of merging, as opposed to closing down, especially as it has fantastic facilities and is easily accessible via public transport? (multiple requests)
Why can we not merge the other school that may be closing with Randall Cramer? Randall Cramer is situated in a safe place with very low traffic. It also has an adventure park close to it where children attend after school. This helps working parents as children can attend for free helping with child care.
Why didn't Hackney Council merge De Beauvoir Primary and Randal Cremer primary school together on the Randal Cremer site as a big school. There should be an option of that rather than closure, Randal Cremer primary school is very good with Autistic kids. When other schools refused my ** they took me in immediately.
The timeline for making a decision is too late. December is too long for the children, families and staff to be in limbo. And I don't think it gives much time to find school places to start in Sept 2024
We want our kids to get a good education and carry on with their peers but economical reasons must be considered as well. After enough research and discussions, I am sure our borough will do the best to not waste our funds and future.
Why have you proposed to amalgamate Colvestone and Princess May, Baden Powell and Nightingale but not Randal Cremer and De Beauvoir?
The position of the school, away from the main road and without almost any traffic outside of school opening and closing hours, means that the school can organise events where they can close off and use Pearson's Street as an extension of celebrations, where they can invite parents to games, events and stage performances for the community.
Our school is situated next to Apples and Pears where the children can go for free after school and can be walked across the road by teachers and staff enabling our Parents to continue to work and earn money for their family.
Hackney Council can use our school as a Flagship School for them to send children that are struggling with places in Hackney. If the parents wish to have places for example at Hoxton Gardens but they are fully subscribed, they can be referred to and accepted at our school.

It is worth noting that Randal Cremer Primary School is open for breakfast club for children from 7.30 even 7.15 if parents need to drop children off earlier
We will need to work closely with Unions, at what point can I speak to them?
Parent applied for child to go to secondary school outside of Hackney, but not given a choice. Can they not bring children in from other schools? Is there enough space in other local Hackney schools for the children affected by the closure? Can we be provided with the facts and figures that show us that this has been thought of and there is enough space?
At what point can I tell staff and the community? Although I appreciate that Hackney have said they will support with meetings in the first instance I would like to do the meetings and then arrange for Hackney to come in to take follow up questions?
How do we keep the focus on school improvement?
How do we manage speculation and reports in press? Will there be consistent messaging around the closure that make it clear it is not about the quality of education or safeguarding?
Which other schools are affected? I would like to set up a support group for Heads facing the same challenges.
The factor that affect the low school capacity is that a lot of family moving out of the borough. There are not enough Social Housing within the borough. What are you going to do to attract more family to live in the borough to avoid the school been closed or merged.
At what percentage has the amount of pupils decreased at Randal Cremer Primary School? I find it absurd and that cannot be true, the school is based in an area surrounded with buildings and homes and majority of those homes with children come to Randal Cremer. I won't stand by this nor accept this decision. I will be looking forward to the agreement and decision making from the council. Randal Cremer has been around for years
Theme: No assurance of closure prevention in the future
Is closing a school going to solve the problem, as you said this is only the start. If we move the children, there's no guarantee that it won't happen again. Same with high school.
Has the decision been made/ will the closure happen?
There is no guarantee that the upheaval of this planned school closure won't mean that the children will have this repeated at another school, at a later date or cannot return to their Primary School.
Theme: Where would the children move
Are there enough spaces in other local Hackney schools for the children affected by the closure? Can we be provided with the facts and figures that show us that this has been thought of and there is enough space?
Which school are you planning to send all the kids at the school because all our local school have no vacancies?
What are your plans for siblings at the school?
If the school closes will we be guaranteed a place in our chosen school which is local to our home?

I am based somewhere else in**, however, my child attends Randal Creamer due to my **being the secondary caregiver who picks and drops my child to school. I would need to have my child attend a school situated near my **. Would the catchment area still play a part?
How can you ensure that our kids will have a place in their local schools?
A child stated when he found out the school was shutting said “But now I don’t belong anywhere!”
children will still have to travel a distance to go to another school. That justification isn’t viable
How will you accommodate families with more than one child? Will the children go to the same school?
If I move my child to another school, will we potentially face another closure in two years? If we could go to other schools across Hackney you cannot assure us that we will not go through a closure process again.
Will the larger class size affect education?
Why is RC still taking children? We moved to the area in November, we applied here after a really difficult time and my child loves it here. I would rather RC have not taken her rather than risk disrupting her again.
Will we compete with all other families applying in September? Will there be a priority list? RC is the only school that accepted my child based on catchment, my mother lives locally and supports childcare. My child's education is going to be uprooted. How will we be supported?
What if parents start removing children now rather than wait until July 2024? How will children be managed – will they be allocated schools based on their location or will parents have a choice? Will parents/ caregivers be guided/ supported by Hackney Education through the difficult process of their children moving to another school?
Theme: Children with SEND
What are your plans for SEN kids? What support and care are you going to give them to settle in another school?
A lot of these schools were not SEND ready or able to offer placements for many kids with SEND needs, but all of a sudden they are supposed to be ready for all these SEND children that they could not support in the beginning.
Alot of these other schools were not or equipped to take on children with SEND needs but now you want to place then in these schools we're Randal Cremer was doing what the inheritance schools could not do?
What will you do for the kids with SEND? Stress impacts on parents and kids.
I have a child with SEND, RC was the only school that accepted my child. ** will not understand that the school is closing. Other local schools did not accept my child.
Member of staff at RC, parent of former pupil, and a former pupil.****, I know that there are problems with schools that are outstanding but don’t accept challenging children. Please consider challenging children

as they will find it hard
What happens to children with SEND – both those with EHC plans and those where we are gathering evidence for an EHC assessment application?
Will children with learning difficulties have the same support or extra support put in place for them not to be affected ?
Theme: Staff
Please can you guarantee that all staff will be offered new placements in a school for work no matter the age
Family recently moved and our daughter settled quickly due to the staff. I want staff to hear how grateful I am. If RC closes, Hackney will lose somewhere very special.
What are the reasons that RC should be kept open? Right now it sounds like it's closing. There are many reasons why school should stay open. There are positives like the adventure playground. It's free, the staff are amazing and work with the school.
RC is not just a school, we are a family. Headteacher has supported lots of families. The school is a family. No good reason to break apart.
Disruption to children, parents and staff working with children. It is traumatic for children. Echoing parent question of where will we go?
What about staff who are unable to secure a job? Similarly, what happens if staff elect to leave before July 2024 – we could end up having to staff with agency staff as a short term solution?
Will there be support for staff in writing application forms and conducting interviews?
How are decisions made and why? What's gonna happen to all the students Teachers and staff? All parents are unhappy and worried about their kids' education.
Theme: Provisions
Our Early Years provision has been noted to be good to outstanding with a new, exciting Early Years playground for the children to play in. The Early Years staff are two of our Middle Leaders team who are fabulous at their jobs and run a very caring and nurturing Nursery and Reception.
What about resources, eg. Computers, laptops, IWB, furniture, brand new £37k climbing frame?
Theme: Financial arrangements
Do I proceed with a restructure for this financial year as with current pupil numbers it is not possible to set a balanced budget under the existing staffing structure?
What about SLAs and other contracts – many of which run April to March and have a penalty clause if finished early – eg. SIMS
Will the school receive additional HR support and will this need to be taken from our budget?

Has additional money been allocated to ensure i)the support needed to manage the situation, ii) the continued delivery of high quality education and iii)a smooth transition?

Theme: Site Usage

What will happen to the school site?

Following site question and response: It seems like the decision has been made.

In front of RC, there is the adventure playground children can go to afterschool if parents need to collect their children late. Has the council looked at playgrounds close to school or looked into closing schools that don't have a playground?

Multiple comments raising concerns that flats could be built on the RC site in the future.

Will you make a commitment to not build flats on the site?

What about the adventure playground?

As residents, we have seen reduction of social housing. Why isn't more social housing being built?

New buildings are not given to people like us. View that flats would be built.

If the school closes, it won't continue as a school so will it be demolished and flats built?

If not because of an underhand move to acquire prime land for Real Estate purposes; I don't see why the option of merging, as opposed to closing down; Is not afforded to Randal Cremer School. Especially as it has fantastic facilities and is easily accessible via public transport.

Theme: Mental health

How will you support the staff and the children, especially older children? I mean in terms of emotion, regardless of whether it will happen. What are you doing now to support children?

The school needs support from Council.

Worry boxes at the school are full.

You say "we're going to" but this should be happening at this stage; if the closure does happen that will be too late to start working with parents on placing children.

My child is in year **, ** has anxiety about where ** will be / belong and whether ** friends will come with **. The emotional impact is important.

Closure is not a solution.
Impact on my child needing to resettle after a year.

Theme: Priority list / Admission arrangement

What about children due to start Reception in September 2023? What happens if parents change their mind once it is announced?

What about children in our Nursery and any on the waiting list?

De Beauvoir Primary School

De Beauvoir
Known or likely question
Theme: Rationale
Why is Hackney focused on community schools rather than faith schools?
Why are De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer only considered as closures?
I do not think De Beauvoir should be closed. In my humble opinion Hackney Education are neglectful of educational provision on this side of the borough in comparison to that in South and Central Hackney.
Given the setting of the building and the existence of four different entries, could part of it be repurposed for other uses (i.e. letting it for companies) until the numbers grow, while the first floor remains for the use of the school?
Are the other schools better than Randal Cremer and have enough funds to take good care of my kids?
This seems like it has already been finalised, like the school is going to be closed, that whilst this is an informal talk, it will be going to Cabinet. You won't look at keeping school open or amalgamation, you have made your final decision which makes parents feel disgruntled. If you are closing De Beauvoir, are our children going on the waiting list or being prioritised? If your business is closing and you have to move to another school, you are guaranteed a place and likewise we want to know our child is going to be prioritised at the new school of their choice. There are children with SEND who will get further with their EHCPs. Children who have social, emotional needs also need to be taken into consideration - where there is a unit and family circle it is being crushed by this situation [round of applause from other parents].
What about the children without those needs?
Why is the school closing when Hackney New School doesn't have adequate play space for play and they use local parks for break time? Why did Hackney agree to them using local parks for this?
How is the quality of what is happening captured? There is complexity around children with complex needs and in terms of scrutinising the closures which is about numbers and viability, is it quantifiable and how is this captured? What process is there for parents to engage in around metrics and how will the closure process be captured to enhance the next provision to ensure the minimum is lost, for example experienced staff and teachers? Unfortunately the process is missing impartiality.
What will happen for practising muslims as most local schools are Christian schools and why is it that non religious schools are in scope and religious ones are not? There isn't another school within walking distance that isn't religious.
What is the position of church schools, is it not the LA's decision to close?
Have other options been considered for De Beauvoir? Has an amalgamation with another school been considered? If not, why not

Is it local or central government policy in terms of dispersal policies that house families out of the borough? Can local government impact this?
How is this fed back in terms of the impact on schools in Hackney?
There is not this huge deficit in other boroughs - Lewisham is a school short.
Are there any restructuring plans for De Beauvoir for the year 2023-2024?
What consideration was given to the wellbeing of families and staff within a timeline which is a long time to wait for things to happen?
Are any other federation schools at risk of closure?
As the number of children and income of De Beauvoir was likely to drop once HE's proposals were made public, some dedicated financial or teaching support was needed for the remaining children.
Are all the schools identified schools like De Beauvoir with high levels of disadvantage? Are they all schools from communities who are less likely to have a voice? If this is the case what will the council do to ensure those families are listened to and supported?
The current estates strategy has an equalities impact assessment which relates to the repurposing of schools for SEND provision. The assessment does not look at school closures. Can we see the equalities impact assessment for the closure of the identified schools?
What is the plan to reassure families that their children will be looked after.
What are the practicalities once the decision is made public. Staffing? Leadership? Pupil mobility? The sustainability of school where pupils are fleeing to find a place at another school?
How will you assure Governors that robust processes are in place to manage this complex situation. So far, we have been invited to a meeting in which very little concrete detail has been provided. We have received no further concrete information and have no date for a follow up meeting or next steps. Apart from a vague date in May when a decision will be made, we have no clear next steps.
When will Hackney Education have a permanent senior team?
why do you need to close school were my kids have been there from nursery
We've got 4 different entries in our building, which give opportunity for others (companies that you can lend hire for sometimes in the future) until we get to have more numbers pupil's in the future, so we can remain on the first floor as we are at the moment...or we've got apex building next to main building, is there any opportunity we can move there until we get to have more children) can you please consider other options
Theme: Lack of Information
HES needed to provide much better and more detailed information at future meetings, including reports in advance, as it was difficult to have a proper discussion without this. Some governors felt unable to comment properly at this stage without that information.
HE needed to provide detailed information on how the closure would be managed if it went ahead,

what support it would provide, and how messaging to parents and the community would be done. Is Hackney doing anything to manage that data? The concern is that in managing the situation for current children, in future it might need to be reversed.
More information was needed about HE's criteria for closing schools.
The current estates strategy does not include the criteria for school closure. When and how were these developed
When will we get further detail, why isn't HES talking directly with Governors about opportunities or options?
Theme: Merging
Why can we not merge the other school that is closest to De Beauvoir?
If another school near our one is closing and going to be out together with Princess May, what if parents don't want the kids to go there? Why can't they come to our school so ours wouldn't close?
Why isn't De Beauvoir being put forward for closure and not put forward as potential merge with another school at the De Beauvoir site, as it has the space.
Has De Beauvoir been considered for merging (potentially with Princess May)?
Why was it rejected to merge with another school?
For many families, De Beauvoir is an important part of their community and for many a safe, secure space where they can share issues and problems. How will they be supported to fully integrate into a new school community?
Theme: Staff
What will happen to the staff?
What funding is there to support the process of closure? How will the wellbeing of staff be managed?
How are education professionals being engaged in making these decisions?
The staff have been excellent, teaching and learning role models and their professionalism and their high regard and care for the children have never faltered. They were exceptional during lockdown and the opportunities they provide in terms of trips and workshops are fantastic. The staff go above and beyond to ensure that their children get the very best and I feel sad to know that others may not get the same high standard of education and care.
What about the impact on the school community and individual pupils and staff, as there is movement already in terms of parents making decisions?
Theme: Priority list / Admission arrangements
If closure is decided, do my children get priority to get into other schools? What if the option my child wants is full, does she have to go to a school she doesn't like?
If we have already applied for other schools and are on the waiting list, what should we do?

To contextualise this, are you recommending that parents who are offered a place now wait until that point or accept places offered to them?
If De Beauvoir closes, its children should be offered places at other federation schools.
How will parents of Rec age pupils due to start in Sept 23 be supported when the decision to close the school is made public in May?
Can the admissions policies for voluntary aided schools in the federation be rewritten to give preference to children from De Beauvoir? What about the admissions processes for other schools?
De Beauvoir pupils should have fair access to all schools in Hackney, including those that were very popular (and full)
Do existing admission arrangements allow priority to be given to children from De Beauvoir?
Can admissions arrangements be changed? Can admission policies be changed to give priority to children transferring from De Beauvoir?
It felt unfair to allow a reception class to join in September 2023, as HE intended.
Will the children who are currently awaiting places in specialist provision be prioritised over children at other schools?
Theme: Additional costs
Most people in this school are in temporary house, social housing and can not afford to take kids to new schools with buses including myself I have ** kids and need to keep them together
How will parents be supported to buy new uniforms?
If the school is costing money, could the school not use half of the school and half of the school be used for generating income - e.g. transform part of the school into a special provision?
Theme: Children's stress
How do you propose to commit to the adequate education required for children in year 6. There will be much anxiety for this year group as they prepare for year 7. The added stress of school closures need to be adequately supported for both the child, the school and parents.
My children have moved numerous times within Hackney and have struggled with the transition. I would rather not move them, I would prefer to home school them. What is being done to increase the numbers, to promote and market the school? What is being done to support parents with the process of how to bring their children to the school?
When this school is closed, my ** will be in year **. ** does not have an EHCP plan. I want to know what support my ** is going to receive. ** is already crying about leaving ** friends, and ** will go somewhere for one year and then have to go on to secondary school. My mum and husband went to this school. Support received here for SEN is amazing. I want to know why this school is being closed down. I don't know how my **is going to cope with this. What support will my ** receive to cope with losing friends, SATs, going to a new school and the social and mental impact? What about all the children that are leaving ahead of September 2024? In the end there will be no children left in the school if they are all leaving.

Theme: Special needs provisions

De Beauvoir has been excellent over the years with regard to nurturing my special needs children, ** of whom have either passed through the school or are still there. The headteacher and previous SENCOs have bent over backwards and gone out of their way to make referrals to the relevant services and to chase up any progress.

Have we considered working with Hackney education to prioritise the placement of children with ASD into specialist schools or ARP schools instead of moving them to another mainstream school if the De Beauvoir does close?

Will additional specialist schools be built in Hackney as these facilities are full to capacity while you are considering closing De Beauvoir due to low admissions ?

A parent of a child with an EHCP wants ** child to stay at school and doesn't know what is going to happen, so this school is the most suitable. Other suitable schools are full. They want to stay here until the end. What is going to happen in September?

You said a few times that SEN children would get priority in other schools, but the process currently is very long winded, everywhere is full to capacity, when would parents get concrete guarantees of closure? For working parents, they cannot have children on the waiting list. Do children need to go to another school in the interim? My *** is quite comfortable in this school and won't get this anywhere else. This child has been waiting for specialist provision since nursery. ** has an EHCP and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis.

For children with severe needs placed in other schools, what happens to those schools if they cannot meet the need of those joining? Won't they feel a strain and pressure having this influx, with more educational health care plans (EHCPs), more support and more outreach teams?

The school has a large number of children eligible for the pupil premium grant and a large number of children with SEN, both of which gave them considerable disadvantages. The closure of the school would create even more disadvantage and this needed to be dealt with very carefully and sensitively by HES.

Currently there are ** children who the school has said during EHCP / annual review processes that it cannot meet needs for those who are still on roll. Will they be expected to transition to another mainstream school and continue to await a specialist place when they are there?

Transition for a high proportion of children with SEN / other social needs will take up a considerable amount of leadership time, which is currently 1.6 of a person. Also, some children will find the emotional element of transition challenging and it may need a higher degree of leadership support to manage this. What support will be provided to add to leadership capacity and enable this?

Theme: No correlation between free places in schools and lack of nursery places

There is already a serious lack of nursery provision and places in Dalston and De Beauvoir especially for special needs children it is even worse. Also the lack of nursery places simply does not correlate with the vast number of spare places in De Beauvoir in various year groups.

My ** is due to start ** at De Beauvoir in September 2023, this was after ** was rejected for multiple other 2-3 years nursery places in Hackney due to ** being a special needs child. The way that the nursery and reception classes are in together in De Beauvoir appealed to me as it meant she would not have the stress of transitioning to a whole new class until year one. Now that looks unlikely to happen and after nursery she will be forced to transition to another setting which is likely to be a greater distance

away from home and that may not be as suitable for her special needs
What will happen with the nursery at De Beauvoir?
What will happen to the nursery?
We would need to get all parents in Hackney involved to get free schools closed, then we could take it to the LA who could take it to the government. If it wasn't for this school my child would not want to go to school. It's those schools that are killing the community schools. Free schools do not invite parental communication directly with the head teacher, they cut you out. In order for this to change we need to get together with other schools. I would suggest a meeting for all parents to come to a consensus about free schools.
Theme: Lack of promotion of De Beauvoir as a good school for new children
Hackney Education has done nothing to promote De Beauvoir to prospective parents in recent years, despite it being rated by OFSTED as good with outstanding features.
Theme: Site usage
What is planned for the De Beauvoir site? The Estates Strategy says to mothball a primary school site can cost in the region of £250,000-300,000 per annum. What is planned for the De B building to ensure this money is spent in a better way?
Theme: Unfair competition from Hackney New Primary School
To me it feels like parents of potential students have instead been encouraged to send their children to other neighbouring schools, including Hackney New Primary school which should never have been approved due to its unsafe location on a busy road. Many parents of children there, who I spoke to on social media a while back felt like Hackney promoted Hackney New School as their only option even though they were in the catchment for De Beauvoir too. Some would have preferred to send their children to De Beauvoir.
My preference is for my child to attend this school. ** doesn't want to go to another school but ** is being forced to go to another school. Why are you not suggesting that she should wait and see? You don't care about children in Hackney. You close schools and profit out of them. This school has been around for many years. I have lived in Hackney for 40 years. This should be a landmark school. I don't care about the numbers dropping. The numbers could change. You can't tell us that there won't be more children in ten years. You just want us to move out of Hackney. We don't care about your numbers. Our children have friends in Hackney. No one knows what is going to happen. Where is our reassurance? I don't want my child put back because she can't get into a school in September. What about the education of our children? We are here because of the education of our children
My child starts ** next year, so I had to choose my school for ** in January. Why were we not given this information before the deadline for deciding our school applications? I now have to find a place for ** as an additional admission when my second and third choice schools have now filled their places. In addition to which you have created a competition for any remaining places at local schools amongst all parents who chose a closing school.
Theme: Where will the children go?
Should the school close down, children should be given automatic places in the school of their choice, waiting list or not.

What help will parents of children at closing schools be given in finding a place at another school in time for academic year 2024-5?
Theme: Over/under subscription
Children want to come to De Beauvoir. Queensbridge has too many children so why can't those children come here? What about free schools? Other schools are oversubscribed. There are so many different ways to do this.
How does the red line trajectory incorporate the covid baby boom in terms of future numbers of children?
I chose De Beauvoir because I wanted a small school that would meet my children's individual needs. I am so happy to bring my children to this school every single day. I know they are looked after, and the teachers are personable. I don't want to move again. We have been to *** and *** which were overwhelmed and my children's needs were missed. I don't want to worry about putting them in another school like that again. How are we supposed to get into a full school when we have a school here?
Schools get a budget on pupil roll and if De Beauvoir continues to lose students up until July 2023, in terms of the impact on staff, will there be really low numbers of children in a class due to those leaving?
If all (or most) of the De B displaced by closure go to a single school, how will that school be supported to manage the influx of high levels of need?

Nightingale Primary School

Nightingale
Known or likely question
Theme: Staff
Is there going to be an additional teaching assistant as the number of the students in the class will increase?
Will all staff including cleaners and mod day supervisors receive training in SEN especially if the school is to expand?
How will this affect the leadership team at Nightingale? Will the newly merged school be run by the current Nightingale head mistress and governors?
Will there be a new headteacher or will there be 2?
How will the teaching time be allocated? Will there be enough time for teachers to do 1 to 1 to support children?
Theme: Ethos of the school
Can the name of the merged school change?
Is the merger going to affect uniforms too?

Will you be turning the Nightingale into an Academy if merge is to be passed.

Finally will the bigger merged school be getting more staff i.e teachers, wellbeing officers to help the children transition into this big change and not impact learning/outcomes for children.

Theme: School organisation post-merger

Nightingale is due to receive funding for an ARP. How will staff impact the space in the school along with a potential 2 form entry? Is there room? Will there be crowding? Is Nightingale built to have 2 forms per year?

How many children will there be per form entry?

Would my daughter's class year remain the same or would she be separated from her peers into the new class with new children and staff?

Nightingale currently has one form per year. What was the decision at the time to not go ahead with two-form year groups when there was space?

I understand that they don't have enough students at the Baden school, that's why they will close/merge with our school.

Will children be separated from their friends in order to have two classes each year?

When were the predictions for falling class sizes first made? Brexit was a while ago; was closure/merger not considered earlier?

I'm a ** mum and chose this school due to one form entry.

Why weren't prospective Nightingale and Baden Powell parents informed when they applied for reception places?

When you apply for schools there is a deadline, we didn't see the enrollment figures when we applied.

Why don't you outgrow the schools/classes over time and start transitioning pupils in reception?

BP stats have been shared but what is the impact [of falling enrollment] on Nightingale?

Parent chose Nightingale because of its size and community. Timeline: What processes and systems will be put in place to support us through to the merger? It feels out of our hands due to the financial reasons you have set out. What additional measures will be in place to manage the long term processes and staff merger?

There will be no more all school play, use of space at Nightingale will change.

Govt funding is a big issue.

What stops it going ahead?

The financial situation seems like the proposal has to go ahead.

Theme: Children with SEND

What percentage of children at Nightingale school have an EHCP and how many are SEN support?

With SEN in mind, how do you predict the merger will impact on those children whose parents initially chose a small 1 form entry for their child in light of the child's needs?

SEND: this school is purpose built for children with SEND. What is the current percentage of children with EHC plan and SEND support at Nightingale? And how might that number rise with merger? How would the transition be managed for children with SEND?
Is there enough teaching support now at Nightingale, and will there be if the school gets bigger?
Scared about impact on children who might or currently fall through the net. Concerned about the exclusion of Black children in particular.

Moved child to Nightingale from BP due to lack of structure, child was “lost in the group” and has SEND. What support will be provided to support children’s anxieties? How will my child’s needs be met in class of 30?

Are staff from Baden Powell going to be trained so that we don’t experience previous issues here?

Theme: Use of the Baden Powell site

Is there a plan for the empty school sites? Could alternative provision be looked at to create provision for children who are currently unable to attend school, particularly autistic children with EBSA?

What would happen to the Baden Powell site in the event of a merger. Would it be demolished and used for other purposes and if so what (housing, park etc) or could it still be used as part of the new merged entity?

What will happen with old school sites? Hackney needs more specialist needs?

Theme: Concerns of children's transition to NG

Parents shared their child's experience of moving to Nightingale from Baden Powell. Resistant to merger because of reasons for moving their child to Nightingale. Concerned about how the merger and impact on children would be managed. E.g. behaviour and interaction of children. Concerned merger could be traumatic for children who moved from BP.

What extra help will school be given to support with the transition? What is the impact if the merger does not take place?

Any change, good or bad, can have a negative impact; what are your predictions?

Also raised concern about “ghost children” and EBSA pupils.

My child has been with the children in her class since nursery. Will they stay together?
For that class to be halved, it would be traumatic.

Princess May Primary School

Princess May
Known or likely question
Theme: Quality of learning
I do not feel comfortable with the two schools to be merged as I am afraid the quality of learning offered might be decreased if too many pupils are in one classroom.

Theme: Needing more details
How large will the classes be in terms of pupil numbers?
Princess May is a very big and good school. Why is it very important to fill the number of the pupils in the school after the school has a very big number of pupils there. Is it better to have 25 pupils in the class than 20? How will the lessons be with more pupils?
You mentioned princess may is highly ranked in London, where can I find further information on this ranking, criteria etc?
Theme: Merge
When will the merge be likely to finish?
and will the current princess may staff including head stay or change?
When would the merge be happening and how will it affect the children moving forward?
Theme: Staff
How will this impact current staff at both schools?
Theme: Site usage
What will happen to Colvestone school building, sold / used for other purposes?

General queries (multiple / all schools)

Multiple schools
Known or likely question
Theme: Impact on other schools
Will secondary schools be affected later on?
As pupil numbers in Hackney are going to continue to decrease, what are the chances that schools that get merged now, might have to go through this again in the coming years?
Theme: Use of the sites if schools close
If it is decided to close one or more schools, what will Hackney Council do with the building? Will Hackney Council use the property for social housing and not sell the buildings/s to the property developer who bids the most?

Theme: Lack of alternative maintained schools
The closure of Colvestone and De Beauvoir would mean that there would be no non-faith, one-form local authority schools within a mile of the Colverstone building, leaving the area dominated by religious schools, free schools and academies.

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Theme:

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
05/04/2023 16:12:17	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	Y do you need to close school we're my kids been there deom nursery
05/04/2023 16:14:01	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	My question is if other school near our one is closing and going to be out together with prenses May what if parents doesn't want the kids to go their why can't they come to our school so ours wouldn't close , most people in this school is in temporary house, social housing and can not afford to take kids to new schools with buses including myself I have 3 kids and need to keep them together
05/04/2023 16:15:51	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	how do you propose to commit to the adequate education required for children in year 6. There will be much anxiety for this year group as they prepare for year 7. The added stress of school closures need to be adequately supported for both the child, the school and parents.
05/04/2023 18:14:18	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	I do not think De Beauvoir should be closed. In my humble opinion Hackney Education are neglectful of educational provision on this side of the borough in comparison to that in South and Central Hackney. There is already a serious lack of nursery provision and places in Dalstion and De Beauvoir especially for special needs children it is even worse. Also the lack of nursery places simply does not correlate with the vast number of spare places in De Beauvoir in various year groups. Hackney education have done nothing to promote De Beauvoir to prospective parents in recent years, despite it being rated by OFSTED as good with outstanding features. To me it feels like parents of potential students have instead been encouraged to send their children to other neighbouring schools, including Hackney New Primary school which should never have been approved due to its unsafe location on a busy road. Many parents of children there, who I spoke to on social media a while back felt like Hackney promoted Hackney New School as their only option even though they were in the catchment for De Beauvoir too. Some would have preferred to send their children to De Beauvoir. De Beauvoir have been excellent over the years with regard to nurturing my special needs children, four of whom have either passed through the school or are still there. The headteacher and previous SENCOs have bent over backwards and gone out of their way to make referrals to the relevant services and to chase up any progress. My *** is due to start *** at De Beauvoir in September 2023, this was after she was rejected for multiple other *** places in Hackney due to her being a special needs child. The way that the nursery and reception classes are in together in De Beauvoir appealed to me as it meant she would not have the stress of transitioning to a whole new class until year one. Now that looks unlikely to happen and after nursery she will be forced to transition to another setting which is likely to be a greater distance away from home and that may not be as suitable for her special needs
07/04/2023 11:18:01	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School, Princess May Primary School	On my behalf	When will they close down the school?
07/04/2023 11:25:04	Staff member - at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	We've got 4 different entries in our building, which give's opportunity for others (companies that you can lend & hire for sometimes in the future) until we get to have more numbers pupil's in the future, so we can remain on the first floor as we are at the moment...or we've got apex building next to main building, is there any opportunity we can move there until we get to have more children) can you please consider other options if you can but not closure of De Beauvoir Primary school PLEASE ..? Thank you.
08/04/2023 11:06:13	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	We are very sad to hear about the possible closure of De Beauvoir Primary School. My children have had access to the very best education and care. It is such a shame that the school, which provides such an important source of education, care, advice and support for the local community, could close. Staff have been excellent teaching and learning role models and their professionalism and their high regard and care for the children have never faltered. They were exceptional during lockdown and the opportunities they provide in terms of trips and workshops are fantastic. The staff go above and beyond to ensure that their children get the very best and I feel sad to know that others may not get the same high standard of education and care. The school building itself has generous sized classrooms and a good-sized outdoor area. This combined with the excellent leadership and management of the school would be a significant loss to the current and future children of De Beauvoir.
13/04/2023 15:17:50	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Nightingale Primary School	Nightingale Primary School	As a parent of a child SECO need	Will you be changing the name of the Nighthingale primary . (2) Will u be turning the Nighthingale into an Academy if merge where to be passed. Finally will bigger merged school be getting more staff i.e teachers, wellbeing officer to help the children transition into this big change and not impact learning/outcomes for children.

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
14/04/2023 12:01:03	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Baden Powell Primary School	Baden Powell Primary School	On my behalf	I don't want that Baden Powell primary School merge with nightingale primary school. Baden Powell has a wonderful staff and a very nice big playground for all ages / all classes (nightingale don't have this) and Baden Powell is a small school so it's perfect for children they feel not well in a big school with a lot of children in a small place. My children feel very well in Badenpowell so they are very sad since they know about this problem. I don't want you to play with my children's future. So pls stop this merge and leave Baden Powell as a small wonderful primary School. Education means not new buildings with a lot of children in there, for me it's much much better in small school so everyone knows everyone and the TEACHERS HAVE MORE TIME FOR THE CHILDREN and they know the children's so they can help more like Baden Powell.
14/04/2023 14:20:37	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	The factor that affect the low school capacity is that a lot of family moving out of the borough. There are not enough Social Housing within the borough. What are you going to do to attract more family to live in the borough to avoid the school been closed or merged.
14/04/2023 14:30:47	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	Alot of these other schools were not or equipped to take on children with SEND needs but now you want to place then in these schools we're Randal Cremer was doing what the inheritance schools could not do?
14/04/2023 14:56:46	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	How are decision made and why . What's gona happen all students Teachers and staff. All parents unhappy and worried for kids education..
14/04/2023 19:14:39	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	At what percentage has the amount of pupils decreased at Randal Cremer Primary School? I find it absurd and that cannot be true, the school is based in an area surrounded with buildings and homes and majority of those homes with children come to Randal Cremer. I won't stand by this nor accept this decision. I will be looking forward to the agreement and decision making from the council. Randal Cremer has been around for years, myself, now 24, has always attended Randal Cremer. It should not shut! Me and family do not want my brother who's attending Randal Cremer, to go through such saddening changes.
14/04/2023 20:23:30	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	If not because of an underhand move to acquire prime land for Real Estate purposes; I don't see why the option of merging, as opposed to closing down; is not afforded to Randal Cremer School. Especially as it has fantastic facilities and is easily accessible via public transport.
15/04/2023 08:15:40	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	It was really a sad one at moment especially for the children... my question is can govt still consider Randal cr�mer to stay???
15/04/2023 11:09:27	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Baden Powell Primary School	Baden Powell Primary School	On my behalf	My child would be in year* if you were to merge , Would we have to buy a whole new set of uniform just for one year ? Will children with learning difficulties have the same support or extra support put in place for them not to be affected ?
15/04/2023 11:45:42	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	Is there enough spaces in other local Hackney schools for the children affected by the closure? Can we be provided with the facts and figures that show us that this has been thought of and there is enough space?
15/04/2023 21:07:50	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Nightingale Primary School	Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	1)Is this going to effect on uniform too? 2)what about staff ? Is there going to be additional teaching assistant as the number if the students in the class will increase?
15/04/2023 21:08:28	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Baden Powell Primary School	Baden Powell Primary School, Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	What measures are been put in place for pupils with Special needs to make sure that this changes has no effect on their education, what will happen to the staffs at Baden Powell school, will the two schools be given a new name, how will the receiving school accept the students, how will they be made to feel welcome, how will you ensure that they are not going to be bullied and made to feel like an outsider, will the uniform be changed, will there be any support to purchase the uniform if changed, will the pupils size in this merge schools not be too much, what will happen to the Baden Powell School site,
17/04/2023 07:27:30	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	Many children will miss their school and impact their education .
17/04/2023 13:14:09	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	Why isn't De Beauvoir being put forward for closure and not put forward as potential merge with another school at the De Beauvoir site, as it has the space.

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
17/04/2023 19:00:05	Hackney resident		Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	Is there a plan to for the empty school sites? Could alternative provision be looked at to create provision for children who are currently unable to attend school, particularly autistic children with EBSA? What percentage of children at Nightingale school have an EHCP and how many are SEN Support? With SEN in mind, how do you predict the merger will impact on those children whose parents initially chose a small 1 form entry for their child in light of the child's needs? Nightingale is due to receive funding for an ARP. How will staff impact on the space in the school along with a potential 2 form entry? Is there room? Will there be crowding? Is Nightingale built to have 2 forms per year? Will all staff including cleaners and mod day supervisors receive training in SEN especially if the school is to expand?
17/04/2023 19:02:19	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	What are you plan for SEN kids? Which school are you planning to send all the kids at the school because all our local school have no vacancies? What are your plans for siblings at the school? It took my ** good 2 years to settle at the school and still have difficulties sometimes got SEN What support and care are you going to give to settle in a another school? I can't take my ** to a school where I have to travel by bus because it will be to much overwhelming for my ** and car with all the road closure and parking and expenses I can't afford that, I need a walking distance school for my ** not to much walking as they get tired easily and refuses to walk at times how are you going to help me with this situation? To start all over again at a new school it's going to be very hard for them at Randall cremer school they know what to do with them how to handle them how can you reassure me that another school would be able give them the same care? I have ** children at the same school and one more starting in September can you reassure me that I would get place in a school of my choice for all my children? ****
17/04/2023 19:02:59	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Nightingale Primary School	Baden Powell Primary School, Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	Hi could you elaborate on what would happen to the Baden Powell site in the event of a merger. Would it be demolished and used for other purposes and if so what (housing, park etc) or could it still be used as part of the new merged entity?
17/04/2023 19:04:02	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Nightingale Primary School	Baden Powell Primary School, Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	Hi will the newly merged school be run by the current Nightingale head mistress and governors?
17/04/2023 19:11:55	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Nightingale Primary School	Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	How will this affect the leadership team at Nightingale. Will *** continue as head mistress? How will the senior leadership team be impacted? How many children were there be per form entry?
17/04/2023 20:30:51	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Nightingale Primary School	Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	Unfortunately I can't make the meeting tomorrow(18.4.2023) but I have concerns about the merge. My *** attends Nightingale primary school and he is now in reception. I understand that they don't have enough students at the Baden school, thats why they will close/ merge with our school. Which means to enable to have double class in each year our children will be seperated from there friends they have been together since nursery, how will this effect them? Im concernd this will no doubt effect all children even so the sensative ones and special needs children. This in effect will reflect in their development in their studies and mentally, what support will be provided by school/ Hackney council in such case? Will there be a new headteacher or will there be 2? Will the uniform remain the same? Will the children have limited playtime, food at lunchtime or snacks. Hoe w will the,m teaching time be allocated? will there be enough time for teachers to do 1 to 1 to support children? How safe will the outings be? I look forward to receiving some sort of miutes from the meeting for parents that can't attend. Kind regards *****
17/04/2023 22:07:10	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	Me and my child really shocked, shocked and shocked ya
18/04/2023 09:50:23	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	I have * children one of whom is SEN. If the school closes will we be guaranteed a place in our chosen school which is local to our home. Alternatively why can't our school merge with De Beauvoir that way our SEN children will be settled, as it has taken them a long time to settle in to this school.
18/04/2023 15:57:35	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Nightingale Primary School	Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	Would my daughter class year will remain same or would she will be separated from her peers into the new class with new children and staffs? If yes then could you please explain how this will not affect her emotional and mental health well being.

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
19/04/2023 11:27:37	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Baden Powell Primary School	Baden Powell Primary School, Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	<p>1. Do you not feel this is disruptive to children at Baden Powell, Baden Powell is a small school with 1 class per year to move the pupils to such a large school would be extremely unsettling for the students - has this been taken into consideration?</p> <p>2. I sent my child to Baden Powell due to it being a small school my child has additional needs - How are you going to settle these children</p> <p>3. If parents do not want to send there child to Nightingale school will they be given the option of other primary schools? (do you not feel there is a reason parents have not sent there children to Nightingale considering it is so close to Baden Powell)</p> <p>4. Why can it not be considered that children starting from September are put into Nightingale and Baden Powell admission list closed or could consideration not be taken that those children currently in reception and nursely start there 1st curriculum year in Nightingale</p> <p>5. Why can it not be done as secondary schools do, and leave the children currently there without taking new admissions</p>
19/04/2023 14:40:50	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	Parent	<p>How do you accommodate the transition from one school to the next (do we have someone to help with applications)?</p> <p>Do the children from the schools who are closing down, entitled to there the first choice of alternative school (a priority list), due to being uprooted from their education?</p> <p>I am based somewhere else in **, however, my child attends Randal Creamer due to my ** being the secondary care giver who picks and drops my child to school. I would need to have my child attend a school situated near my mother. Would catchment area still play a part?</p>
19/04/2023 18:24:05	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	On my behalf	<p>I am unhappy about this closure. The colvestone community has been through a turbulent time due to the actions of Hackney - and yet again the pupils are being uprooted. The school is in one of the best places it has been. Blossom federation has turned things around for the school and I am sure given time numbers will increase.</p> <p>How are FREE schools allowed to continue to run but state maintained are not? Choice of schools will be massively impacted for local parents - the choice will be free schools or religious schools. Hackney has investigated a significant amount of money into colvestone - federating/defederation/restructure/building works and now this</p> <p>Merging with Princess May is not a viable option for many parents that picked a small one from school for their SEND children. It seems completely unfair given the turmoil these children and families have already been faced with. I would like Hackney to reconsider this proposal.</p>
19/04/2023 18:35:23	Hackney resident		Baden Powell Primary School, Colvestone Primary School, De Beauvoir Primary School, Nightingale Primary School, Princess May Primary School, Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	<p>I find the statement that pupil numbers are decreasing at the said schools interesting, when in fact, Hackney's population has increased.</p> <p>If it is decide to close one or more school, whatwill Hackney Council do with the building? Will Hackney Council use the property for social housing and not sell the buildings/s to property developer who bids the most?</p>
19/04/2023 19:03:28	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Baden Powell Primary School	Baden Powell Primary School	On my behalf	<p>My question to the authorities is that they only take into account the money spent on school, do they harm our children mentally and physically, so how does it happen? If you were your own child, would you have behaved the same way? As a mother, I am against this. The school is closed</p>
19/04/2023 20:13:43	Staff member - at one of the 6 schools in scope	Baden Powell Primary School	Baden Powell Primary School, Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	<p>As pupil numbers in Hackney are going to continue to decrease, what are the chances that schools that get merged now, might have to go through this again in the coming years?</p>
19/04/2023 20:56:25	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Nightingale Primary School	Nightingale Primary School	On my behalf	<p>How will you cater towards kids and their educwtion with less staff</p>
19/04/2023 21:03:47	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	On my behalf	<p>What is going to be done for children with SEN for transition as adaptation issues and for those one that doesn't like crowned environment? As it looks like the children numbers will be done is the teacher and TA going to be enough for children with Special Education? What if we have breakdowns tantrums and what if my child doesn't want to go school because of adaptations issues?</p>
20/04/2023 09:45:13	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	<p>Please we want our school to keep forever</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
20/04/2023 14:40:24	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	Have we considered working with Hackney education to prioritise the placement of children with ASD into specialist schools or ARP schools instead of moving them to another mainstream school if the De Beauvoir does close? Will additional specialist schools be built in Hackney as these facilities are full to capacity while you are considering closing De Beauvoir due to low admissions ?
20/04/2023 16:26:45	Parent / carer - for a child at one of the 6 schools in scope	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	If Randal Cramer is closed, Hackney is going to lose something very special. Are you able, in your heart, to say that you have done/will do everything possible to avoid this awful loss?
20/04/2023 20:46:19	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	Should the school close down, children should be given automatic places in the school of their choice, waiting list or not.
20/04/2023 20:50:14	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	My child starts reception next year, so I had to choose my school for them in January. Why were we not given this information before the deadline for deciding our school applications? I now have to find a place for them as an additional admission when my second and third choice schools have now filled their places. In addition to which you have created a competition for any remaining places at local schools amongst all parents who chose a closing school.
20/04/2023 20:52:00	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	What help will parents of children at closing schools be given in finding a place at another school in time for academic year 2024-5?
20/04/2023 21:38:14	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	You should realise that people are not as stupid as you think but is part of British culture, punch me in the face and I'd say "Sorry". Change is good but not this change, in order to make Hackney "Great" you have to push out the poor class and bring in investors to build fancy flats nobody can afford like Camden and Wembley. This why Hackney council is doing absolutely nothing to help crowded families and not you'll scatter their kids like they're mean nothing, because you take your kids to private schools you don't care how others will adapt to change. You can even make decisions without taking a vote. I wonder if you were in France, you'd be running. So, my question is: Are the other schools better than Randal Cremer and have enough funds to take good care of my kids? Or, I may just relocate. Thinking Switzerland or Sweden.
21/04/2023 09:11:41	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	Why didn't Hackney council merge De Beauvoir primary and Randal Cremer primary school together on Randal Cremer site as a big school. There should be an option of that than closure, Randal Cremer primary school is very good with Autism kids which I have a kid there, when other schools refuse my kids they took me in immediately. On Randal Cremer primary school site we stay. No locking it down please
21/04/2023 09:25:59	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	I'm a parent of * children all of my kids attended Randal Cremer, currently I have * in Yr * remaining in the school who are working extremely hard with the help of the amazing staff. * my siblings also attended the school in the 1990s both of them graduated from Cambridge University who are lawyers and barristers serving the community today due to the foundation of early lives at Randal Cremer was well established, this is the reason I've I choose Randal Cremer for my kids too. My elder daughter one of my * is at university at the moment studying medicine who suffered from panic attacks while at Randal Cremer yet she was supported and overcame her fears and is doing so well in her university life. So when making a decision on closing this school please take these factors into consideration. Thank you.
21/04/2023 11:36:19	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	How definite is the closure of the school? This is very disruptive to the children's learning. Also breaking social bonds with their peers. Ridiculous and unheard of and shameful.
22/04/2023 01:41:48	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	First off all I would like to say thank you. Next I would like to keep our school. I don't know how but sure. Something will be good .
22/04/2023 20:04:59	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	I do not want the council to close Randal Cremer primary school.
26/04/2023 09:50:30	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary School	De Beauvoir Primary School	On my behalf	Please don't close De Beauvoir primary school! it is the best school.
26/04/2023 15:02:43	Hackney resident		Princess May Primary School	On my behalf	I wanted to bring my child to nursery
26/04/2023 16:55:50	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	The timeline for making a decision is too late. December is too long for the children, families and staff to be in limbo. And I don't think it gives much time to find school places to start in Sept 2024

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
27/04/2023 14:12:03	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	We want to keep school Randal cremer primary school
27/04/2023 14:28:31	Staff member - at one of t	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	Why have you proposed to amalgamate Colvestone and Princess May, Baden Powell and Nightingale but not Randal Cremer and De Beauvoir?
27/04/2023 14:43:07	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	Do not close Randal Creamer Primary School, it is an amazing school and the staff and headteacher are so delicate and professional with the children. My daughter is doing amazing and was looking forward to send my other daughter there in a couple years time. Please do not close it.
27/04/2023 15:07:37	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	Please can you guarantee that all staff will be offered new placements in a school for work no matter the age
27/04/2023 15:11:30	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	How can you ensure that our kids will have place on their local schools? Working parents cannot afford kids staying home because of lack of space.
27/04/2023 15:11:35	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	Alot of these schools were not SEND ready or able to offer placements for many Kids with SEND needs but all of a sudden they are supposed to be ready for all these SEND children that they could not support in the beginning
27/04/2023 15:49:28	Hackney resident		Colvestone Primary Scho	Submitted via email to the	<p>Date: Mon, 24 Apr 2023 at 20:30 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council. I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering local children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>Local resident near Colvestone Primary School</p>
27/04/2023 17:21:11	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	We want our kids to get good education and carry on with their peers but economical reasons must be consider as well. After enough research and discussions, I am sure our borough will do the best to not waste our funds and future.
27/04/2023 20:15:09	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	I would not like the school to close on the 2 of May.
27/04/2023 23:48:48	Parent / carer - for a child at another Hackney schoc	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	Why is the school closing?

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 11:20:47	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	Submitted via email to the	<p>Date: Tue, 25 Apr 2023 at 13:48 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School- THE SEN perspective To: Director of Education</p> <p>I hope you are well.</p> <p>Thank you for attending the meeting at Colvestone on Monday, and thank you for giving me your email address so I could write.</p> <p>I wished to write and further express to you what this school means for my * in particular.</p> <p>* is pure joy and sunshine.</p> <p>* owns any room * walks in.</p> <p>* is creative and unique.</p> <p>The greatest superpower is that despite being autistic, * has and is able to show great empathy and a strong ability to express and discuss * emotions.</p> <p>Despite all the struggles * has had to face due to * neurodiversity, * remains self-confident in all aspects of * life.</p> <p>The biggest challenge * is facing is school and access to education, which is due to the fact * struggles with visual and auditory stimuli processing by * environment and has learning difficulties.</p> <p>Attending a school even like Colvestone that is a one form entry is already a hard mission for *.</p> <p>* first year at reception (Sep 2020) was pretty much a write off, as * needed time to climatise and adapt to the new environment.</p> <p>Despite the fact that * then teachers took things really slow with *, found the demands of school extremely challenging and cried every morning when I was dropping * off.</p> <p>At the end of the reception year we could see that academically * was more than a year behind his peers, so we decided to have him repeat reception. This decision was taken in the August before the school year started and the school supported us fully in our decision to keep * back. There was no argument or discussion, they just listened to what * needed and what * parents advocated for * and gave * that.</p> <p>I have no words for how grateful we are that * needs were respected in such an immediate and supportive way.</p> <p>Reception the second time round (Sep 2021) was hard again, * cried a lot at drop offs, but gradually became more accustomed to the school environment.</p> <p>* writing improved and * started writing * name and being able to copy letters.</p> <p>* recognition of letters was much slower, and by the end of the second year at reception * still had not mastered the letters or numbers, however * seemed more comfortable with the school setting and started to make friends.</p> <p>Forming friendships is one of the things we always worried about, so to see * play with other children, request their company and to be included was a wonderful development.</p> <p>When we started year one in (Sep 2022) * was almost fully adapted to the school environment and would only have the occasional cry in the mornings.</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 11:39:15	Hackney resident		Colvestone Primary Scho	Submitted via email to the	<p>Date: Mon, 24 Apr 2023 at 20:30 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council. I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering local children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>Local resident near Colvestone Primary School</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 11:51:14	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	Submitted via email to the	<p>Date: Mon, 24 Apr 2023 at 22:17 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child feels safe, happy and secure at Colvestone. We have been part of the school community for over 8 years. My children have attended the school. Moving my child to another school will be extremely traumatic and disruptive.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school that has offered my children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>My *** with ADHD and ODD went to 5 schools in Hackney, including outstanding schools. *** was facing being out of mainstream education and Colveston showed *** love, acceptance and support which totally changed things around and *** is now at a mainstream secondary. The fact that Colveston accommodates for so many children with additional needs and keeps them in mainstream schools saves Hackney a lot of money. My younger ***, like so many other children, is on a 2-3 year wait list for a diagnosis with CAMHS and therefore is not part of the SEN stats we were discussing at the meeting today which were already higher than other schools in the area.</p> <p>I believe the education department are cherry picking the figures to suit their agenda and are not looking at the bigger picture or the cost of cleaning up the mess that will be left by traumatising the SEN children who will have their fragile world torn apart, including providing for many children who will be left outside of the school system.</p> <p>Our children have been through so much from being scared that they will die due to a terrifying virus, mask wearing whereby they can't read people's facial expressions and emotions accurately, being locked down in their homes without socialising with their peers or teacher's, too returning to school and loosing their TA's and headteachers and now just as things were beginning to become "normal" again the council are taking away their normality. This is horrendous for children's social and emotional well-being.</p> <p>Putting Colvestone up for closure has sabotaged our chance to bring up numbers, who will send their kids now? The council's policies that have reduced affordable housing for families has had a direct result on these dwindling numbers. Proposing to spend millions to make Colveston Crescent into a 21st century Show road while closing the school is a ludicrous proposal that shows how inverse the council's priorities are in this.</p> <p>Please support us and oppose these short sighted proposals that will have detrimental effects on the most vulnerable young people in our community.</p> <p>Parent at Colvestone Primary School</p>
28/04/2023 11:54:32	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary School	Randal Cremer Primary School	On my behalf	Why are you closing the school it's one of the best school

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 11:57:19	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	Submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Mon, 24 Apr 2023 at 12:44 Subject: Opposition to Colvestone Primary school proposal to merge To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council.</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I do not accept that Princess May proposal as a suitable alternative and i am concerned about the future of the building as a community asset.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent of *** at Colvestone Primary School, I know my children feels safe, happy and secure at Colvestone. We have been part of the school community for over 7 years. Moving my child to another school will be upsetting, difficult and disruptive.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>Parent at Colvestone Primary</p>
28/04/2023 12:01:04	Parent / carer - for a child	Princess May Primary Scl	Princess May Primary Scl	On my behalf	Princess may school is the best

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 12:09:15	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Sun, 23 Apr 2023 at 15:35 Subject: Colvestone Primary School (Dalston Hackney) - Consultation to close the school - Disagreement letter to the proposal To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Mr Senior,</p> <p>We are writing to express our disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Dalston (Hackney) by Hackney Council.</p> <p>We believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>We live on *** and have been part of the Dalston community for a long time, we love our diverse community. We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our *** who is *** and autistic because it provides a required quick journey access, a safe and happy environment (that a small school offers) and a wonderful SEN support (**has a experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for *** to access education. It has taken time and great effort for *** to be happy and settled in *** school (3 years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredible difficult impact on *** and it will be very hard for *** to access education, and this will also have an enormous impact on *** mental health.</p> <p>We are very disheartened by this proposal and in the worst case scenario that this is going ahead, in total honesty, this will have a tremendous effect on *** education and subsequently on our life. When *** was in year 1, after a week at school (Sept. 22) *** refused to go to school and leave the house, it took us 7 months to bridge *** back to school and as you can imagine, it was a real isolated work for us as *** didn't want to go out anymore but with great effort, determination and tedious work we thankfully managed for *** to be happy going out and then managed to bridge her back to school, with the School Senco we worked very hard collaboratively to get *** back and *** did for the end of year one. Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support which as you may have heard from other families is not a given, *** has an EHCP and now a level 5 in fundings which goes towards *** SEN and *** needs to be cared by someone all the time.</p> <p>But even though, we have all in place on paper, the tremendous work we have had to do with the school in order to secure *** support has been a real effort, as well as working hard to make sure that *** is happy attending Colvestone and for the duration of Primary to year 6.</p> <p>To be honest I can't believe we have to write this and the idea of this plan going ahead is very difficult for us and we are trying not to think about it!</p> <p>We know our child feels safe and happy at Colvestone. We have been part of the school wonderful community for 3 years. Moving our child to another school will be strongly difficult and disruptive in our child's education and have consequences on her achieving long term education goals.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, which we strongly believe in. We strongly hope that our wonderful Colvestone Primary School can stay open and all is done to support our school and for our *** to keep accessing education.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Parent at Colvestone Primary School</p>
28/04/2023 12:16:32	Parent / carer - for a child	Princess May Primary School	Princess May Primary School	On my behalf	I do not feel comfortable with the two schools to be merged as I am afraid the quality of learning offered might be decreased if too many pupils are in one classroom.

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 12:25:08	Parent / carer - for a child	Princess May Primary Sch	Princess May Primary Sch	On my behalf	Not agree
28/04/2023 12:28:09	Parent / carer - for a child	Princess May Primary Sch	Princess May Primary Sch	On my behalf	When would the merge be happening and how will it affect the children moving forward

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 12:30:03	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Sun, 23 Apr 2023 at 18:30 Subject: Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council.</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child feels happy at Colvestone and is thriving academically. We have been part of the school community for over four years. Moving my child to another school will be upsetting and distributive to her especially given that it took us almost three years for her to settle in and stop crying at drop off every single day.</p> <p>Only days before we were given the news of your plans, you tweeted your commitment to SEND provision in the Borough. Here is your chance to prove that commitment to the SEND children at Colvestone who would find this move particularly distressing.</p> <p>Personally, I'm particularly concerned about the move to Princess May and the children being exposed to further harmful pollution. I think it's quite frankly laughable that you love call yourselves a 'greener' Borough with a 'vision of 'low traffic neighbourhoods' and and yet you clearly see no issue with our children being moved right next to the A10 with constant traffic over the fence at break times. In case you've forgotten this 'vision' please, see below link:</p> <p>https://news.hackney.gov.uk/low-traffic-hackney-at-heart-of-vision-for-greener-healthier-borough/</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. It is very narrow minded to think that closure is the only way forward here and we will fight you every step of the way!! We will not allow you the opportunity to shaft our children and families in order for to make money from the sale of the school site to the highest developer bid to create more multi-million pound 'luxury apartments' that nobody in the community can afford.</p> <p>This is absolutely disgusting behaviour from a Labour Council!!!!</p> <p>I look forward to your response on the above arguments.</p> <p>Parent at Colvestone Primary School</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 12:41:51	Hackney resident		Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Mon, 24 Apr 2023 at 10:28 Subject: Disagreement to recent proposal - Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council.</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering the community's children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>Resident of Colvestone Crescent.</p>
28/04/2023 13:28:53	Parent / carer - for a child	Princess May Primary Sch	Princess May Primary Sch	Mum	<p>Princessmay is very big and good school. Why it is very importon to full the number of the pupils in the school after the school has very big number of pupils there. Is it more worthy when they are 25 pupils in the class then 20? The lessons will be more less than there more pupils in the class ? Thank you</p>
28/04/2023 13:42:32	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>On Wed, 19 Apr 2023 at 12:46, To: Director of Education</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child feels happy at Colvestone. We have been part of the school community for over just two terms, but already we already feel a real part of the school. Which is a testament to the nurturing culture of the school. As I am sure you understand settling a child into a school is a stressful process both for the child and the family. The school made such an effort with our child, who found the whole transition to school particularly difficult and moving *** to another school will be extremely upsetting.</p> <p>Like every parent we thought very carefully when choosing our school. We chose Colvestone because of its unique close-knit community spirit and also because we felt that it reflected the wonderful diversity of Hackney. This diversity was something that we worried was not reflected in some of the more subscribed schools in the borough. It is very important to us that diverse and inclusive schools such as Colvestone should be protected as a valuable asset for the education of Hackney's children.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>Signed</p> <p>Parents at Colvestone Primary School</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 13:45:37	Hackney resident		Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to the	<p>Date: Thu, 20 Apr 2023 at 14:13 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council.</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As neighbour of Colvestone Primary School since 1980, I know children feel happy at the school. The new leadership team has made a positive impact on the school and I have also noticed the improvements to the facilities and the redecoration work carried out.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p>
28/04/2023 13:47:11	Hackney resident		Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Fri, 21 Apr 2023 at 15:58 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council.</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>Local Resident</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 13:50:20	Hackney resident		Colvestone Primary Scho	Submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Fri, 21 Apr 2023 at 16:11 Subject: Closure of Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council.</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and neighbours in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>With best wishes,</p>
28/04/2023 14:10:58	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Fri, 21 Apr 2023 at 15:27 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents, and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a former parent/carer of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child felt secure at Colvestone as it was close to home and continues to be part of the school community over 20 years later. I know that children to another school will be upsetting and disruptive.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>Please do not close this lovely school.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p>Former parent at Colvestone Primary School and current resident of Colvestone Crescent.</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 14:30:51	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Thu, 20 Apr 2023 at 12:53 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Director of Education,</p> <p>I hope this finds you well. I'm writing to express my objection to the recent proposals to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney. Aside from the damage this would do to the children of the school, it would destroy a close-knit community of pupils, parents and carers that have Colvestone Primary School at the heart of their community.</p> <p>As a parent I explicitly chose to send my child to Colvestone because it is a small, academically-strong, single form intake, non-religious, non-academy/free community school run by the local authority in Dalston. To close it would be to remove that parental choice, whilst simultaneously destroying a socially-minded community school that has been in the heart of Dalston for 161 years (the school was one of the original Birkbeck schools and opened in 1862). The 'pre-informal' consultation period has been rather brief and, contrary to statutory best practice (p.29, Statutory Guidance for Opening and Closing Maintained Schools, Jan 2023), imposed over a school holiday rather than during term time, I have attempted to draw together the reasons for my objection to this proposal below. I also note that the message received by parents in the school as well as parents applying to the school have made it sound like the decision is already taken, further aggravating intake for the following year.</p> <p>I appreciate the Council's difficult position regarding falling enrolment, but I also note the Council's assurance that this pre-informal consultation is in good faith and that these arguments (and those of fellow parents, teachers, management, the local community etc.) will be integral and weight-bearing in the decision-making process.</p> <p>I do not believe that history or contemporary research supports the idea of a one-size-fits-all ideal model for education – indeed the Council itself consistently emphasizes parental choice. On a more personal level, as a parent and an educator (university professor) I have seen the positive difference a small, close-knit and diverse community school has on the quality of education for our child and expressly chose that they would go to a single-intake non-faith community school to experience the advantage of being a member of a school and local community rather than to become one of a larger year-group in a larger school. I am aware that the smaller scale of the school and its directly-related capacity to foster such a community across year groups has particular advantage for its SEND pupils, of which (at 17.6%) Colvestone has a particularly high proportion compared to other local schools. Similarly Colvestone's percentage of 7% of students with an EHCP is well above the borough average (7% vs. 4.4%). This is in addition to the positive advantages for the school cohort in general of a small school size. I see this on a daily basis as our child establishes friendship groups across school years and through their development of a particularly strong attachment to the school itself – a sense of pride and investment fostered (rather than disciplinarily-imposed) because he sees himself as an integral part of the wider school community. Closing the school would have a dire impact both on the pupil (and parent) community in general, and specifically on the unusually high proportion of vulnerable children that form an integral part of the Colvestone student body.</p> <p>I am aware as a parent that the school has been in consultation with the Council over its structure in recent years and the new leadership team and partnership with the Blossom Foundation, agreed as I understand with the Council, has injected real impetus to the school – an impetus that has been supported by the improvements and repairs to facilities supported by the Council and finished in recent months. It is my understanding that these arrangements have also made the school more financially secure, running a budget surplus, and assured for the forthcoming academic year. In light of all this hard work recently completed, it seems bizarre that that school finds itself at risk of this consultation- one launched, it might be added, at a particularly damaging time in the reception offer/acceptance schedule (the May Council meeting occurring after the acceptance deadline).</p> <p>The consultation suggests a merger with Princess May School. In addition to being a two-form intake school Princess May sits directly on the A10 main road that runs through Dalston. According to Council pollution data (hackney.gov.uk/air-quality) the Princess May site has concentration levels of NO2 (nitrous oxide) at an astonishing 40% higher level than the Colvestone site. With LTNs this disparity will at least remain the same if not rise. Princess May's position on the A10 was an explicit reason why we did not apply to the school. It is unclear how (indeed why)</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 14:33:57	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	submitted via email to Dir	<p>On Wed, 19 Apr 2023 at 15:02, **** wrote: Director of Education</p> <p>I am attaching my letter (in PDF, also in-line text below) of opposition to the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>Dear Director of Education,</p> <p>I hope this finds you well. I'm writing to express my objection to the recent proposals to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney. Aside from the damage this would do to the children of the school, it would destroy a close-knit community of pupils, parents and carers that have Colvestone Primary School at the heart of their community.</p> <p>As a parent I explicitly chose to send my child to Colvestone because it is a small, academically-strong, single form intake, non-religious, non-academy/free community school run by the local authority in Dalston. To close it would be to remove that parental choice, whilst simultaneously destroying a socially-minded community school that has been in the heart of Dalston for 161 years (the school was one of the original Birkbeck schools and opened in 1862). Though the 'pre-informal' consultation period has been rather brief and, contrary to statutory best practice (p.29, Statutory Guidance for Opening and Closing Maintained Schools, Jan 2023), imposed over a school holiday rather than during term time, I have attempted to draw together the reasons for my objection to this proposal below. I appreciate the Council's difficult position regarding falling enrolment, but I also note the Council's assurance that this pre-informal consultation is in good faith and that these arguments (and those of fellow parents, teachers, management, the local community etc.) will be integral and weight-bearing in the decision-making process.</p> <p>I do not believe that history or contemporary research supports the idea of a one-size-fits-all ideal model for education – indeed the Council itself consistently emphasizes parental choice. On a more personal level, as a parent and an educator (university lecturer) I have seen the positive difference a small, close-knit and diverse community school has on the quality of education for our child and expressly chose that they would go to a single-intake non-faith community school to experience the advantage of being a member of a school and local community rather than to become one of a larger year-group in a larger school. I am aware that the smaller scale of the school and its directly-related capacity to foster such a community across year groups has particular advantage for its SEND pupils, of which (at 17.6%) Colvestone has a particularly high proportion compared to other local schools. Similarly Colvestone's percentage of 7% of students with an EHCP is well above the borough average (7% vs. 4.4%). This is in addition to the positive advantages for the school cohort in general of a small school size. I see this on a daily basis as our child establishes friendship groups across school years and through their development of a particularly strong attachment to the school itself – a sense of pride and investment fostered (rather than disciplinarily-imposed) because he sees himself as an integral part of the wider school community. Closing the school would have a dire impact both on the pupil (and parent) community in general, and specifically on the unusually high proportion of vulnerable children that form an integral part of the Colvestone student body.</p> <p>I am aware as a parent that the school has been in consultation with the Council over its structure in recent years and the new leadership team and partnership with the Blossom Foundation, agreed as I understand with the Council, has injected real impetus to the school – an impetus that has been supported by the improvements and repairs to facilities supported by the Council and finished in recent months. It is my understanding that these arrangements have also made the school more financially secure, running a budget surplus, and assured for the forthcoming academic year. In light of all this hard work recently completed, it seems bizarre that that school finds itself at risk of this consultation- one launched, it might be added, at a particularly damaging time in the reception offer/acceptance schedule (the May Council meeting occurring after the acceptance deadline).</p> <p>The consultation suggests a merger with Princess May School. In addition to being a two-form intake school Princess May sits directly on the A10 main road that runs through Dalston. According to Council pollution data (hackney.gov.uk/air-quality) the Princess May site has concentration levels of NO2 (nitrous oxide) at an astonishing 40% higher level than the Colvestone site. With LTNs this disparity will at least remain the same if not rise. Princess May's position on the A10 was an explicit reason why we did not apply to the school. It is unclear how (indeed why) Hackney Council could encourage students to transfer to this site given the known detrimental conditions the site proposes to their health, or how this would not open them to challenge on the basis of duty of care. Colvestone Crescent is currently a 'school street' which is in effect a no-through street with limited traffic on all sides, protected</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 14:42:12	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Tue, 18 Apr 2023 at 13:49 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council,</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should - I believe - remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school - run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent of two children at Colvestone Primary School, I know my children feel safe, very happy, secure and stimulated at Colvestone - it is a wonderful environment for them to grow and learn in. We have been part of the school community since 2020. Being forced to move my children to another school will be upsetting, difficult, disruptive and harmful to them, and us.</p> <p>The school you propose merging Colvestone with - Princess May, next to the A10 - has almost 50% higher air pollution than Colvestone (according to Hackney Council's own figures), a more dangerous environment for children.</p> <p>Additionally, 17% of Colvestone' total pupils receive some form of SEN support, this proposed closure will be particularly harmful and cruel to those children and their parents and carers.</p> <p>Significantly, too, built in 1852, Colvestone is a Grade 2 listed building. It was one of six Birkbeck Schools founded by businessman and educational philosopher and philanthropist William Ellis. The schools were named for George Birkbeck, founder of Birkbeck, University of London, and pioneer in adult education. Colvestone is the last remaining Birkbeck School. Closing it as a school would mean shutting the last surviving example of an important 19th century radical education movement. This would be a significant educational and historical loss - not just to Dalston and Hackney - but the whole country.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made an incredibly positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, please do not close it.</p> <p>Parent at Colvestone Primary School</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 14:46:33	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Tue, 18 Apr 2023 at 14:16 Subject: PROPOSED MERGER OF COLVESTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PRINCESS MAY To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear All</p> <p>I am writing to strongly urge you to either reconsider your intended proposals re consultation on the merger of the above two schools, or help us rally against them, depending on your role. I have tried to include a variety of important stakeholders in the contact list of this email and I look forward to reading all of your responses.</p> <p>I am writing to you both as a parent of a child currently at Colvestone Primary School (as well as of one we were planning to send there), and as a resident of Colvestone Crescent itself, a strong and vibrant community street.</p> <p>As a parent I strongly object on many grounds, not least because Colvestone and Princess May are two completely opposing schools in style. Princess May didn't even feature anywhere on our list when making choices. It is on a main road, with much higher levels of pollution.. It has a completely different feel to it, in style and size. It does not have the community feel that is so present at Colvestone. We would need to cross a main road. I could go on. Needless to say if you go ahead with this merger I will be seeking to send my child to a different school. We have absolutely zero interest in her attending Princess May now, in the same way as we had zero interest in it when we were first making choices.</p> <p>Colvestone primary school is an integral part of the Colvestone Community. Parents old and new talk to each other. I remember before even sending my child there how we were invited to the fete as residents. Because of the size of the school and because of being very active on the FSA I know most of the children by name. The families all say hi to each other on the way to and from school. The lollipop ladies know everyone. This is so special and so completely different to my own experiences of going to school. Just because numbers are low for a few years, you need to keep the bigger picture in sight and hold on to this gem for the future.</p> <p>Which brings me to the future: ONS data shows very strongly that in just a few years 4 or 500 more spaces will be needed in reception again in Hackney. Why close schools for a few years if we are to need them again in the future? What about the Dalston plan and the new flats planned - won't those families need a primary school?</p> <p>As residents of Colvestone do we want a boarded up school in an area where drug use and antisocial behaviour are once again rife? Absolutely not! and what about the plans for the 21st century street?</p> <p>As a Labour council, why on earth would you want to be associated with this very Conservative led direction for London. Help keep families in Dalston rather than take even more steps to kick them out.</p> <p>A further note of objection: this year our *** year 3 was merged with year 4 due to low numbers. When this decision was being made, Annie Gammon (Director of education at the time) sat in the school and 100% reassured us that Colvestone was under no threat of closure. How do you explain this reverse in ideology less than a year later. Smacks of a change of director of education wanting to put their stamp on things... Also how on earth can you justify the investment that has been put into renovating the school's interior and upgrading its IT system (around £200,000 I believe) if you are to close the school a year later...</p> <p>I could go on but you can probably tell already how passionately we care about keeping the primary school that we cherish, open, and about giving the new partnership leadership team an actual proper go at reversing its fortunes.</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 14:50:07	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Tue, 18 Apr 2023 at 13:49 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Hackney Council,</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should - I believe - remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school - run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent *** at Colvestone Primary School, I know my children feel safe, very happy, secure and stimulated at Colvestone - it is a wonderful environment for them to grow and learn in. We have been part of the school community since 2020. Being forced to move my children to another school will be upsetting, difficult, disruptive and harmful to them, and us.</p> <p>The school you propose merging Colvestone with - Princess May, next to the A10 - has almost 50% higher air pollution than Colvestone (according to Hackney Council's own figures), a more dangerous environment for children.</p> <p>Additionally, 17% of Colvestone' total pupils receive some form of SEN support, this proposed closure will be particularly harmful and cruel to those children and their parents and carers.</p> <p>Significantly, too, built in 1852, Colvestone is a Grade 2 listed building. It was one of six Birkbeck Schools founded by businessman and educational philosopher and philanthropist William Ellis. The schools were named for George Birkbeck, founder of Birkbeck, University of London, and pioneer in adult education. Colvestone is the last remaining Birkbeck School. Closing it as a school would mean shutting the last surviving example of an important 19th century radical education movement. This would be a significant educational and historical loss - not just to Dalston and Hackney - but the whole country.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made an incredibly positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, please do not close it.</p> <p>Parent at Colvestone Primary School</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 14:54:45	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Mon, 17 Apr 2023, 21:26 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone Primary School To: Director of Education</p> <p>Dear Mr Senior,</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>*** has been at Colvestone Primary School for 3 years and has benefitted hugely from the small single form entry setup of the school.</p> <p>*** sometimes struggles with social situations and 'joining in' with organised clubs and activities and the small size of the classes, closeness of the teachers and supportive community around the school have been a massive benefit to her development. I feel that in a larger school with larger classes and larger demands on teaching staff she may not have received the attention needed to encourage her development. This is why I feel Colvestone is such a unique and vital option for parents looking for a school in the Borough of Hackney.</p> <p>Also, as one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. I believe merging the children from Colvestone Primary into a larger, arguably less suitable school, would be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area.</p> <p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child feels safe, happy and secure at Colvestone. We have been part of the school community for 3 years and moving my child to another school will be difficult, disruptive and possibly damaging to her development.</p> <p>The school has already suffered the loss of a much-loved Head teacher and although the teaching team at Colvestone Primary proved to be exemplary when dealing with the challenges of home schooling during COVID, this was also a very disruptive time. To now propose the closure of the school will undoubtedly be devastating for both the children and the teachers.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school. I fully believe the Blossom Federation will make Colvestone Primary School a stand-out and much desired School within the Borough.</p> <p>The location of Colvestone Primary School also contributes positively to the character and exuberance of the surrounding area. The school has a positive relationship with Ridley Road Market and I feel that if the closed School ended up being sold to a private developer, the lack of children arriving and leaving school every day would leave a gaping hole in the exciting, bustling community surrounding the market.</p> <p>Finally, Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Parent at Colvestone Primary School</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 15:00:25	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	submitted via email to Dir	<p>On Mon, 17 Apr 2023, 13:48 S To the addressed: Director of Education</p> <p>I am writing to express my dismay regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area.</p> <p>When I was applying for a reception place for ***, our nearest school was Holy Trinity, but this was never an option I was able to consider owing to the religious focus of the school. Colvestone was our next closest school and I was delighted to have the opportunity to send my son there. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child feels safe, happy and secure at Colvestone. We have been part of the school community for over 5 years, and I am at a loss to understand how Hackney can seriously consider moving children from Colvestone to Princess May, whose playground is right next to the A10.</p> <p>The Council's own air quality monitoring system shows Princess May had 40 percent higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO2) in 2021 than Colvestone. Adding more students to a school closer to the A10 with higher pollution levels is a backwards step in the effort to reduce children's exposure to air pollution, and I'm really upset and disappointed to see it even considered.</p> <p>As a Dalston resident, I am also aware of the proposals in the Dalston Development Plan to build c600 new homes on the site of the current Sainsbury's car park. Colvestone would be the closest school for any children living in this development. Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children like mine an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, and community-focussed environment.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding received from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>I look forward to discussing these points, amongst others, with you at the public meeting on the 24th April 2023.</p>
28/04/2023 15:03:14	Parent / carer - for a child	Princess May Primary School	Princess May Primary School	On my behalf	<p>My ** is a special needs child with Autism. If Princess May is to merge with another school, I suspect there will be more children in the class along with more children with additional needs. I worry about the pressure being put on teachers which, as a result, can impact my child's education.</p>

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28/04/2023 15:10:03	Governor - at one of the 6 Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Sun, 23 Apr 2023 at 11:29 Subject: Colvestone community questions To: <school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk></p> <p>Hi, These are the questions (attached) that have been amalgamated from the Colvestone community. In addition we have one question added:</p> <p>Are the proposal for consultation and consultation processes intended to inform your decision about whether to close these schools? In other words, have you already decided to close these schools or is there an opportunity for schools to be removed from the list? If schools can be removed from the list, what would you need to hear from parents/staff that would persuade you to do that?</p> <p>The governors (chair) was not copied into the email regarding communication so these have been collated in a PDF. In addition the information about the engagement event in the same email came in the school holidays and the chair was not copied in. During the holidays the engagement session has been shared with the wider community and there may be attendees at the event who are not parents/carers. We have asked the parents that priority be given to the questions of parents/carers.</p> <p>Questions for Hackney Education/Hackney Council from</p> <p>Colvestone Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the deadline for sending Paul Senior's team information for their report to the cabinet about school closures? ● Will the individual votes of cabinet members on 22 May be made public? ● Why are religious schools or free schools not being considered for closure? What conversations is Hackney having with religious schools that have low enrollment? ● How does the council reconcile the closure of two non-denominational schools, leaving only three religious schools and Princess May in the vicinity of the new development with its consultation showing 83 percent of people prefer Hackney schools to be non-denominational? ● How does the council justify sending more children to a school with higher levels of air pollution? ● What plans does the council have for decreasing air pollution at Princess May? ● What impact would closing Colvestone have on the plans for the first 21st Century Street? ● Given the plans for a significant development near Colvestone, what impact will closing the closest school and one of the few non-religious options in the area have on your ability to sell these flats to families? ● What would happen to Colvestone's historic debt if the school was to amalgamate with Princess May? ● What would happen to Colvestone's historic debt if the school was to close? ● Why is Colvestone being considered for amalgamation rather than closure? ● What would happen to the Colvestone building if the school is closed? ● What assurances can Hackney council give the community about what will not happen to the building? ● What assurances can you offer parents who go to Princess May that that school will not close within the next five to six years? ● To what extent has Hackney council considered the large proportion of SEN students at Colvestone and the potential impact of closure on them in making a decision about whether to close the school? ● How will staff be deployed - will this be another restructure? Who pays for this? Redunances? ● Colvestone has had a large amount of building work - this has meant a large financial investment? Where is the joined up thinking around the spending of money if the school is to be used for another purpose? ● Does the lease/historic documentation allow for the school to be used for another purpose? ● It is mentioned in LP33 "Protect and enhance the value of Dalston Quarter as a concentrated area of community, creative and cultural activity". How do you explain in that case the closure of its prime primary school that is colvestone. ● In your decision making of closing Colvestone, why no consideration has been given to the school's SEN children in identifying their needs in order to access school and

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 15:48:24	Governor - at one of the 6	Nightingale Primary Scho	Nightingale Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Nightingale currently has one form per year. What was the decision at the time to not go ahead with two-form year groups when there was space?</p> <p>When were the predictions for falling class sizes first made? Brexit was a while ago; was closure/merger not considered earlier? I'm a reception mum and chose this school due to one form entry.</p> <p>Why weren't prospective Nightingale and Baden Powell parents informed when they applied for reception places? When you apply for schools there is a deadline, we didn't see the enrollment figures when we applied.</p> <p>Why don't you outgrow the schools/classes over time and start transitioning pupils in reception? Importance of this forum for parents. Would have preferred an online way to join.</p> <p>Parent shared their child's experience of moving to Nightingale from Baden Powell. Resistant to merger because of reasons for moving their child to Nightingale. Concerned about how the merger and impact on children would be managed. E.g. behaviour and interaction of children. Concerned merger could be traumatic for children who moved from BP.</p> <p>Any change, good or bad, can have a negative impact; what are your predictions?</p> <p>What extra help will school be given to support with the transition? What is the impact if the merger does not take place? SEND: this school is purpose built for children with SEND. What is the current percentage of children with EHC plan and SEND support at Nightingale? And how might that number rise with merger? How would the transition be managed for children with SEND? Is there enough teaching support now at Nightingale, and will there be if the school gets bigger? Scared about impact on children who might or currently fall through the net. Concerned about the exclusion of Black children in particular.</p> <p>What will happen with old school sites? Hackney needs more specialist needs?</p> <p>Also raised concern about "ghost children" and EBSA pupils. Parent chose Nightingale because of its size and community. Timeline: What processes and systems will be put in place to support us through to the merger? It feels out of our hands due to the financial reasons you have set out. What additional measures will be in place to manage the long term processes and staff merger? There will be no more all school play, use of space at Nightingale will change.</p> <p>Govt funding is a big issue. My child has been with the children in her class since nursery. Will they stay together? For that class to be halved, it would be traumatic. Moved child to Nightingale from BP due to lack of structure, child was "lost in the group" and has SEND. What support will be provided to support children's anxieties? How will my child's needs be met in class of 30?</p> <p>Are staff from Baden Powell going to be trained so that we don't experience previous issues here? What stops it going ahead?</p> <p>The financial situation seems like the proposal has to go ahead.</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 15:51:38	Governor - at one of the 6	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Has the decision been made/will the closure happen? Comment/ response related to combining year groups: this would not be good for the children.</p> <p>What will happen to the school site?</p> <p>Following site question and response: It seems like the decision has been made. Why close this school, it's a good school?</p> <p>Are there enough spaces in other local hackney schools for children affected by closures? Why can't RC merge with the other school proposed for closure? In response: children will still have to travel a distance to go to another school. That justification isn't viable</p> <p>How will you accommodate families with more than one child? Will the children go to the same school? You say "we're going to" but this should be happening at this stage; if the closure does happen that will be too late to start working with parents on placing children. My child is in year 2, he has anxiety about where he will be / belong and whether his friends will come with him. The emotional impact is important.</p> <p>If I move my child to another school, will we potentially face another closure in two years? If we could go to other schools across Hackney you cannot assure us that we will not go through a closure process again.</p> <p>Will the larger class size affect education?</p> <p>In front of RC, there is the adventure playground children can go to afterschool if parents need to collect their children late. Has the council looked at playgrounds close to school or looked into closing schools that don't have a playground?</p> <p>What will you do for the kids with SEND? Stress impact on parents and kids. I have a child with SEND, RC was the only school that accepted my child. He will not understand that the school is closing. Other local schools did not accept my child.</p> <p>Family recently moved and our daughter settled quickly due to the staff. I want staff to hear how grateful I am. If RC closes, Hackney will lose somewhere very special. Why is RC still taking children? We moved to the area in November, we applied here after a really difficult time and my child loves it here. I would rather RC have not taken her rather than risk disrupting her again.</p> <p>What are the reasons that RC should be kept open? Right now it sounds like it's closing. There are many reasons why school should stay open. There are positives like the adventure playground. It's free, the staff are amazing and work with the school.</p> <p>Will we compete with all other families applying in September? Will there be a priority list?</p> <p>RC is the only school that accepted my child based on catchment, my mother lives locally and supports with childcare.</p> <p>My child's education is going to be uprooted. How will we be supported? Multiple comments raising concerns that flats could be built on the RC site in the future.</p> <p>Will you make a commitment to not build flats on the site?</p> <p>What about the adventure playground? New buildings are not given to people like us. View that flats would be built.</p> <p>Parent applied for child to go to secondary school outside of Hackney, but not given a choice. Can they not bring children in from other schools?</p> <p>RC not just a school, we are a family. Headteacher has supported lots of families.</p> <p>Disruption to children, parents and staff working with children. It is traumatic for children. Echoing parent question of where will we go?</p> <p>How will this announcement affect RC enrollment? Are you sealing our fate with the announcement?</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
28/04/2023 17:59:40	Staff member - at one of t	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal cremer parents	It is worth noting that Randal Cremer Primary School is open for breakfast club for children from 7.30 even 7.15 if parents need to drop children off earlier
28/04/2023 19:46:27	Staff member - at one of t	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	Why out of the schools' was Randal Cremer the one to be close. A School who love and care for the children and parein the community. The only school that welcome any children in regardless of their needs.
28/04/2023 23:42:58	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	On my behalf	Please don't close the school specially parents with * or more kids who lives around it's going to be more stressful.
29/04/2023 00:57:29	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	On my behalf	Why De Beauvoir
29/04/2023 01:35:05	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	On my behalf	I have previously commented and aired my views at a community engagement meeting however I wanted to make another comment as something is not sitting right with me. Neighbouring schools to De Beauvoir South of Dalston Lane are all almost full according to the latest figures on the gov.uk website, while not at capacity they are still only in the region of 15-20 pupils down across the whole school, if that, and percentage wise under 10% down to 15% down roughly and in the case of Queensbridge school that is with no reduction made in the maximum intake. Meanwhile De Beauvoir has gone from having two large classes in each year group and still being oversubscribed in some year groups and the nursery in 2016 and 2017 when my ** first joined to drastically undersubscribed now forcing sets of two year groups to merge into one, and it is in the same area as those other schools. My older ** had to wait a full term after application before a place was available for them to start at De Beauvoir and a nursery place was only available for my ** 7 weeks from the end of the school year, that is how oversubscribed the school was. I do not believe this has just happened to happen to De Beauvoir so quickly organically while other local schools very close by have got off lightly in comparison. There is more social housing around De Beauvoir than some of the other schools in the immediate vicinity too. I think there should be at least an informal inquiry into why De Beauvoir has been so badly affected as other factors seem to be at play.
30/04/2023 14:25:26	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	On my behalf	If the council close De Beauvoir, how will they ensure that all children are placed in a school of their choice within walking distance when many of these schools are already saying they are full?
01/05/2023 11:40:05	Staff member - at one of t	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	Randal Cremer has excellent links for children to travel across the borough of Hackney to fill up our school with spaces. We are between Hackney Road and Kingsland Road, close to Queensbridge Road as well as very close to Hoxton Overground Station.
01/05/2023 11:44:05	Staff member - at one of t	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	Parents	In year **, we have autistic and vulnerable children, that parents have highlighted, who would find it very difficult in a new school as well as be wanted by other schools. We have many autistic and vulnerable children throughout our school,
01/05/2023 20:07:53	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	The school mast remain open.

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01/05/2023 23:14:15	Staff member at Randal Cremer School and Hackne	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	<p>I am a ** at Randal Cremer School. I have been a resident of Hackney for 35 years and was fortunate enough to attend a fantastic comprehensive secondary school in the Borough.*** I decided to embark on teacher training, because I feel passionately about supporting young people in my local area. When I visited Randal Cremer School, I knew straight away that I had found an exceptional school, who's motto: 'Belonging, believing, becoming' reflected the genuinely inclusive ethos of its staff and pupils.</p> <p>A higher percentage of our pupils have Special Educational Needs than at many neighbouring schools, and this is no accident: Scandalously, some of these vulnerable children have previously been refused admission by one or more local schools, who knew that they would require additional time, energy and resources to support. At Randal Cremer, these children have found a family who celebrate difference and who never give up on them – a place where they feel they belong. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 23.3 obliges signature states to: "ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education... and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development." If our children with disabilities are forced to look elsewhere in Hackney for school places, I am in little doubt that their right to education will be affected. It has been heartbreaking to hear the anguished pleas of parents, who fear starting over to secure a school place, knowing that their child may once again be turned away.</p> <p>Children with Special Educational Needs are by no means the only ones suffering at the news that our school may close. Teachers were unable to teach lessons on the day children were told, as whole classes of students broke down in tears, worried that they would be torn away from friends and trusted adults. Despite the wealth that surrounds them, most of our pupils are socially disadvantaged: Many live in poor housing, sharing rooms with siblings due to overcrowding. Many families rely on the vital lifeline of our school foodbank to prevent their children from going hungry. Working parents also depend on the adjacent adventure playground, where children can play safely after school, supervised and free of charge. If, as proposed, Randal Cremer School is closed down in July 2024, our pupils currently in year 5 will face the further setback of starting a new school in year 6, when they should be focusing on their crucial SAT's. It is already evident that some of our children are traumatised by the impact of this news, and it is highly likely that the upheaval caused by the school's closure would have long-term consequences for them and their families.</p> <p>Staff were equally overwhelmed by emotion when we learned the news; tears were shed privately, as we did our best to teach children with smiles on our faces. Some staff have literally given a lifetime of service, taught two generations of the same family and are visited daily by ex-students who cherish their memories of the school. These loyal and dedicated teachers simply cannot imagine being anywhere else. Some are in a state of shock. Others ***, at the start of teaching careers, have had our futures snatched away. Despite being advised in stark terms that our jobs are at risk, many staff are reluctant to abandon the children who depend on us for so much more than education and a Headteacher who's hard-work, passion and commitment to the children have inspired us all.</p> <p>If Randal Cremer School is closed, our children will be separated from lifelong friends, trusted teachers and support staff. They will lose the vital sense of identity and belonging that the school provides. Their rights to education and to play with their friends will be affected – especially those children who have already experienced discrimination at other schools, with dire consequences for them and their families. Our school is not just a piece of real estate that can be bought and sold – it is a living community, with a heart and a soul. I strongly urge anyone reading this to consider in detail all options, including mergers, special school status, or financial assistance from central government, to enable the school to remain open for a minimum of five years, so that all children currently in year 1 can complete their primary education without being unfairly disadvantaged.</p>
02/05/2023 05:00:50	Parent / carer - for a child	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	Why are they closing the school? This will have impact on the pupils. Going to another school can be distracting them from their learning and be too stressed for the kids and the parents.
02/05/2023 07:00:03	Staff member - at one of t	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	On my behalf	Why has the council suggested that the school may close earlier than the end of the year? This has created a huge level of stress on staff and parents.
02/05/2023 07:24:48	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	On behalf of a parent	Why has the council not considered the fact that there are no other maintained non-denominational schools nearby when considering closing De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer?
02/05/2023 07:27:30	Staff member - at one of t	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	Baden Powell Primary Sc	On behalf of staff member	Have the council considered the impact it places on teachers who are still in their early stages of their career/how devastating it is for so many of us to know the first school they have ever worked at will be gone?
02/05/2023 07:30:35	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	On behalf of a parent	I went to De Beauvoir Primary School myself and now my child is going there. It is devastating that you want to close the school before she is finished. Why would you do that?

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02/05/2023 07:36:45	Parent / carer - for a child	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	De Beauvoir Primary Sch	On behalf of a parent	<p>Has the council considered the massive impact on children who would be going into Year 6 / Year 5 in September next year? Transition would be very hard for them.</p> <p>Does the council have a plan to enable children to go to their first choice of school after the one they are in?</p> <p>Is the council going to guarantee that the schools that close aren't going to be turned into flats for rich people?</p> <p>Does the council care about working class children and understand the disadvantage that closing their school places on them?</p> <p>Does the council have any plan to support the mental health of vulnerable children and their parents in schools that are closing?</p>
02/05/2023 07:47:49	Staff member - at one of t	Randal Cremer Primary S	Randal Cremer Primary S	On my behalf	<p>I would like to say that I have worked at Randal Cremer for **. I have loved every class I have taught there. When we broke up in July, I felt that that year group was the best yet and the next year, the new class topped that. Our children are exceptional and deserve to be looked after and loved.</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
05/05/2023 10:04:30	other - Dalston Conservat	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Sun, 30 Apr 2023 at 21:48 Subject: Fwd: Objection to the Closure of Colvestone Primary School from Dalston Conservation Area Advisory Committee To: Director of Education</p> <p>Director of Education (Interim), Hackney Council</p> <p>Objection from Dalston Conservation Area Advisory Committee to the closure of Colvestone Primary School on its historic site in Colvestone Crescent, London E8 2LJ</p> <p>Dalston Conservation Area Advisory Committee (DCAAC) is one of 6 committees in Hackney made up of local residents, businesses and representatives of local amenity societies. DCAAC represents Dalston's conservation areas which include St Mark's Conservation Area located on the east side of Kingsland High Street. DCAAC provides advice to the Council on planning and conservation issues, and meets once a month to comment on planning applications which affect Dalston's conservation areas.</p> <p>DCAAC strongly opposes the Council's planned closure of Colvestone Primary School on its site in Colvestone Crescent, arising from a planned merger in 2024 with Princess May Primary School on its site in Princess May Road.</p> <p>Whilst it is not DCAAC's role to comment on the educational and social implications of the Council's proposals, DCAAC has major concerns about the negative impacts the school's closure will have on the historic school building and surrounding area.</p> <p>The school is housed in one of Hackney's oldest and most intact school buildings, completed in 1862 in a Gothic Revival style to the designs of Thomas Knightly. The building opened as the Kingsland Birkbeck School, one of six schools for boys and girls founded by businessman and educational philosopher William Ellis, and named after George Birkbeck, founder of Birkbeck, University of London. Ellis' progressive educational beliefs were reflected by the incorporation in the design of individual classrooms together with high levels of lighting and ventilation. Later, the school was extended to the rear, in the style of the London Board schools which were built in large numbers from 1870 onwards.</p> <p>The school building and its front boundary railings were statutorily listed grade II in 1975 for their outstanding historic and architectural interest. This means there is a duty under the Planning Acts to preserve their special interest and protect their setting for future generations. The school site is also located adjacent to the western entrance to the St Mark's Conservation Area, which was designated in 2008 by Hackney Council as a well-preserved Victorian residential development centred around St Mark's Parish Church. As such, it is considered desirable to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>DCAAC asserts that the optimum viable use for a listed building is its original use, which in this case is as a school. If Colvestone Primary School is to close, the building will lose the vital use for which it was originally designed. If in the event the site is sold to a private developer, it may never return to use as a Hackney-run primary school. Although the school is not currently an opportunity site in the Council's draft Dalston Plan, it lies midway between sites D6 (Ridley Road) and D7 (Birkbeck Mews). Undoubtedly it will be attractive to housing developers due to its location next to the sought-after residential streets of the St Mark's Conservation Area. The site is also adjacent to Dalston Town Centre with its excellent transport links, including two Overground stations and numerous bus routes; a Crossrail 2 station entrance is also proposed only metres away from the school.</p> <p>DCAAC is concerned that if the school site were to be sold on, it may be considered untenable to retain an educational or communal use, so a change of use may be sought for the listed building, requiring physical changes which may detract from its special historic and architectural interest. Furthermore, development pressures may</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
05/05/2023 12:17:47	Hackney resident		Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Mon, 1 May 2023 at 12:38 Subject: Fwd: Colvestone Primary School - Threatened Closure To: Director of Education</p> <p>I write to strongly protest against the planned closure of Colvestone Primary School in Dalston and the potential merge with Princess May Primary School in Stoke Newington.</p> <p>Planned Closure of Colvestone Primary School</p> <p>I am a Dalston resident and parent of *** children, now teenagers, who all attended Colvestone Primary School from the Nursery Class to Year 6.</p> <p>We chose Colvestone for our children due to its small size and caring family atmosphere. Also for its strong connections with the local community as a well-established non-denominational school which had been educating local children for over 150 years. Back in 2008, we had to fight to get our oldest child a place in the Reception Class as the school was so popular and oversubscribed.</p> <p>All our children were very happy and excelled both socially and academically at Colvestone. Major influences were the one-class entry and small year groups, which other local schools did not offer. Everybody at Colvestone knows each child's name, and every child feels highly valued. Our *** has ADHD and one of our *** is autistic, so the family feel of the school and high level of teaching support were especially important for their well-being, learning and sense of security. The small-scale and intimate character of the building provided a friendly home-from-home, which is critical for SEN children who are easily overwhelmed and confused by large-scale educational environments.</p> <p>Living at the far end of Colvestone Crescent in Montague Road, we also chose the school because of the safe and less-polluted walk to school along the quiet residential streets on the east side of Kingsland High Street. We never considered sending our children as far away as Princess May School on Stoke Newington Road, and even Shacklewel School involved a more circuitous route involving busier roads. Such schools belong to quite separate communities from the neighbourhood served by Colvestone. Like many others, being a Colvestone family has meant we continue to be deeply rooted in our community even though our children are now almost grown-up.</p> <p>I attended the public meeting on Monday 24 April. I was amazed and reassured to see the high turn-out and huge support for the school, both from current and former parents and other members of the community. People genuinely care about Colvestone: I met one mother of a ***, who now lives in Leyton, who returned specially to support the school.</p> <p>Having watched the school being run down by the previous headteacher as part of the ill-fated Soaring Skies Federation with Thomas Fairchild Primary School, it was wonderful to see how the new management team and Blossom Federation have pulled up the school in just two terms. How uplifting the newly decorated interiors look, together with the introduction of long-awaited IT and AV equipment, and finally a fabulous new website. But above all, to see the pupils thriving because of the dedicated teachers and support staff, many of whom taught our children. It is clear to all they are truly committed to educating children on the Colvestone site.</p> <p>Mention was made at the meeting of families who transferred their children to other schools in the last couple of years under the previous headteacher. A friend of mine did just that. Her *** had done very well at Colvestone in her earlier years, but when she entered Year 5 the school had been so deprived of its teaching resources that she very reluctantly moved her elsewhere. This was because she no longer had a class teacher or head of year and shockingly several teaching assistants had been made redundant. My friend was genuinely concerned that her ***</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
05/05/2023 12:49:32	Hackney resident		Colvestone Primary Scho	submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Mon, 1 May 2023, 18:36 Subject: Opposition to closing Colvestone school To: Director of Education</p> <p>To Hackney Councillors, Member of Parliament</p> <p>Colvestone school- ***</p> <p>Colvestone School</p> <p>I am writing to express my disagreement and disappointment regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. It is essential that you retain as wide a choice as possible.</p> <p>As a grandparent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know that he feels safe and secure at Colvestone. He and his family have been part of the school community for several years. It is a shame that his final year at the school will be overshadowed by concerns shared by both families and staff about the future.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school. The railings are an improvement to the appearance of the school and I gather a new roof has also been installed.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>I attended the meeting for families with local authority representatives on 24th April. Unfortunately the meeting raised more questions and, in my opinion, did not answer the questions raised by the families. Their concerns were expressed coherently and with considerable patience in respect of a very difficult situation.</p> <p>I would like to raise the following questions and make some comments which arise from the meeting.</p> <p>If a possible closure is now being considered</p> <p>Why have plans for the future use of the school site not been included in the preparatory work? I understand that Colveston is a Grade II listed building. The answer was that there were no plans as of now and that the question would only be addressed much further down the process. I would have thought that in an analysis of which school to close, the value of the site and its possible future use would be a significant consideration. It would be easier to change the purpose of some sites or to demolish and rebuild perhaps as housing or a commercial development. I don't know if there is a covenant on the site but shouldn't you enquire as to the possibilities before making a proposal? I suggest the families make enquiries regarding a covenant or any other restrictions before we end up with an empty site with limited possibilities.</p> <p>There seems to be some lack of future planning and expenditure plus a somewhat 'silo' approach. Many of the families present were of the opinion that the decision to close Colveston had already been made and that his was just a public relations exercise. More effort needs to be made to involve and consult with families and staff.</p> <p>Why a reorganisation a year ago?. Why introduce change (and the inevitable disruption) if 12 months later a possible closure is being considered? A promise that the school would not close was ill advised.</p> <p>I've already mentioned the roof and the railings but why was that work done if closure was being examined.</p> <p>We heard about the changes to the road outside the school. Why is this work going ahead if the school may close and the local authority is short of money. Is this an unnecessary use of public funds?</p> <p>Families were rightly concerned about the pollution in the area. It was said that the pollution at Princess May school had improved. That may be so, but the pollution at a school close to a major road will never be as good as or better</p>

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
05/05/2023 12:52:16	Parent / carer - for a child	Colvestone Primary School	Colvestone Primary School	Submitted via email to Dir	<p>Process - decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the deadline for sending Director of Education's team information for their report to the cabinet about school closures? • Will the individual votes of cabinet members on 22 May be made public? • What would happen to Colvestone's historic debt if the school was to amalgamate with Princess May? • What would happen to Colvestone's historic debt if the school was to close? • What message is the Council giving to every single children of Colvestone that the future of their school is based on past figures and that they have no chance in having their school open in a year time even though the school has a year to work on attracting more children and thrive to perform. Are we repressing forward thinking. • Are the proposal for consultation and consultation processes intended to inform your decision about whether to close these schools? In other words, have you already decided to close these schools or is there an opportunity for schools to be removed from the list? If schools can be removed from the list, what would you need to hear from parents/staff that would persuade you to do that? <p>Process - options - Amalgamation option with PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is Colvestone being considered for amalgamation rather than closure? • What assurances can you offer parents who go to Princess May that that school will not close within the next five to six years? • Why it hasn't been considered to bring all the children from De Beauvoir to Colvestone • Why is the Council considering closing Colvestone and not Benthall, which has similarly falling pupil numbers? • Why are religious schools or free schools not being considered for closure? What conversations is Hackney having with religious schools that have low enrollment? • How does the council reconcile the closure of two non-denominational schools, leaving only three religious schools and Princess May in the vicinity of the new development with its consultation showing 83 percent of people prefer Hackney schools to be non-denominational? <p>Environment // area planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the council justify sending more children to a school with higher levels of air pollution? • What plans does the council have for decreasing air pollution at Princess May? • Why is the Council not considering closing Princess May, given the dangerously polluted location of its playground right alongside the busy High Road, and distributing its pupils to Colvestone and the other schools with spare capacity? • What impact would closing Colvestone have on the plans for the first 21st Century Street? > This scheme is not dependent on the school being there. The concept of 21st Century streets more broadly was not limited to sites outside of schools. it is not necessarily the case that the scheme is dependent on the school being there. The concept of 21st Century streets more broadly was not limited to sites outside of schools. • Given the plans for a significant development near Colvestone, what impact will closing the closest school and one of the few non-religious options in the area have on your ability to sell these flats to families? • In your choice of planning to move our children to Princess May, have you considered that the journey via Kingsland high street to school will provide a great level of noise and high risk • It is mentioned in LP33 "Protect and enhance the value of Dalston Quarter as a concentrated area of community, creative and cultural activity". How do you explain in that case the closure of its prime primary school that is colvestone. <p>Building use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assurances can Hackney council give the community about what will not happen to the building? • Colvestone has had a large amount of building work - this has meant a large financial investment? Where is the joined up thinking around the spending of money if the school is to be used for another purpose? • Does the lease/historic documentation allow for the school to be used for another purpose?

Timestamp	Who are you?	Which school are you associated with?	My question/comment is about	I am asking/commenting ...	My question/comment is
05/05/2023 10:10	Hackney resident	Colvestone Primary Scho	Colvestone Primary Scho	Submitted via email to Dir	<p>Date: Mon, 1 May 2023 at 12:38 Subject: Fwd: Colvestone Primary School - Threatened Closure To: Director of Education</p> <p>I write to strongly protest against the planned closure of Colvestone Primary School in Dalston and the potential merge with Princess May Primary School in Stoke Newington.</p> <p>Planned Closure of Colvestone Primary School</p> <p>I am a Dalston resident and parent of three children, now teenagers, who all attended Colvestone Primary School from the Nursery Class to Year 6.</p> <p>We chose Colvestone for our children due to its small size and caring family atmosphere. Also for its strong connections with the local community as a well-established non-denominational school which had been educating local children for over 150 years. Back in 2008, we had to fight to get our oldest child a place in the Reception Class as the school was so popular and oversubscribed.</p> <p>All our children were very happy and excelled both socially and academically at Colvestone. Major influences were the one-class entry and small year groups, which other local schools did not offer. Everybody at Colvestone knows each child's name, and every child feels highly valued. Our *** has ADHD and one of our *** is autistic, so the family feel of the school and high level of teaching support were especially important for their well-being, learning and sense of security. The small-scale and intimate character of the building provided a friendly home-from-home, which is critical for SEN children who are easily overwhelmed and confused by large-scale educational environments.</p> <p>Living at the far end of Colvestone Crescent in Montague Road, we also chose the school because of the safe and less-polluted walk to school along the quiet residential streets on the east side of Kingsland High Street. We never considered sending our children as far away as Princess May School on Stoke Newington Road, and even Shacklewell School involved a more circuitous route involving busier roads. Such schools belong to quite separate communities from the neighbourhood served by Colvestone. Like many others, being a Colvestone family has meant we continue to be deeply rooted in our community even though our children are now almost grown-up.</p> <p>I attended the public meeting on Monday 24 April. I was amazed and reassured to see the high turn-out and huge support for the school, both from current and former parents and other members of the community. People genuinely care about Colvestone: I met one mother of a *** who now lives in Leyton, who returned specially to support the school.</p> <p>Having watched the school being run down by the previous headteacher as part of the ill-fated Soaring Skies Federation with Thomas Fairchild Primary School, it was wonderful to see how the new management team and Blossom Federation have pulled up the school in just two terms. How uplifting the newly decorated interiors look, together with the introduction of long-awaited IT and AV equipment, and finally a fabulous new website. But above all, to see the pupils thriving because of the dedicated teachers and support staff, many of whom taught our children. It is clear to all they are truly committed to educating children on the Colvestone site.</p> <p>Mention was made at the meeting of families who transferred their children to other schools in the last couple of years under the previous headteacher. A friend of mine did just that. Her *** had done very well at Colvestone in her earlier years, but when she entered *** the school had been so deprived of its teaching resources that she very reluctantly moved her elsewhere. This was because she no longer had a class teacher or head of year and shockingly several teaching assistants had been made redundant. My friend was genuinely concerned that her daughter's education had come to a standstill. She has told me that she would willingly re-enrol her *** at Colvestone now that the school is fully resourced again, but for the fact that she is now at secondary school. As we can see, due to Colvestone's small size and excellent teaching team it has the resilience and capability of returning</p>

Schools Estates Engagement Feedback Template

Please make a copy of this document before use

Session / School	De Beauvoir Primary School - Staff	
Date	Friday 21 st April	
Est. number of attendees	15 (including presenters)	
Question asked	Response	Additional comments
How does the red line trajectory incorporate the covid baby boom in terms of future numbers of children?	The GLA uses many methods in their monitoring and predictions. Data in 2017 showed reception children inclining gradually, but each year the projection is revised. In fact we expect it to be more pronounced in the next few months.	<i>If applicable. E.g. Question asked by parent or member of staff</i>
Is Hackney doing anything to manage that data? The concern is that in managing the situation for current children, in future it might need to be reversed.	There is sufficient provision of nursery placements in Hackney. There is a lag between the time that children are born and enter school so data has been collected around this, but there are too many children's centres also and a similar exercise will have to take place in relation to this.	
If the school is costing money, could the school not use half of the school and half of the school be used for generating income - e.g. transform part of the school into a special provision?	The school already rents out the apex. There has not been an opportunity to bid for extra resource provision. The building does not lend itself to this, as independent access is not possible to the top floors. Therefore, children with specific needs being placed at the top of the building ruled out that consideration for this school. This would not have prevented an	

	amalgamation with another school which was considered but rejected.	
Is it local or central government policy in terms of dispersal policies that house families out of the borough? Can local government impact this?	Housing for Hackney residents is managed locally. There are 3000 homeless families and about 1000 of them are housed elsewhere due to housing capacity in Hackney.	It is national and local. Nationally the government has capped rent. Prior to this the government paid all the rent. The rent cap now does not cover the price of rent. When Hackney places families outside the borough, this is because the amount the government pays for housing does not meet the challenge.
How is this fed back in terms of the impact on schools in Hackney?	Through letter writing and when speaking to ministers, so the government is aware but ministers are not taking a decision about this. **** are fierce advocates for Hackney residents, in terms of expressing concerns about shortcomings in policy.	
There is not this huge deficit in other boroughs - Lewisham is a school short.	30 out of 32 boroughs are affected currently and all will be in terms of the London picture. Only three schools have had an increase in reception numbers.	
Why was it rejected to merge with another school?	There are a number of schools with vacancies and it was about finding a geographically close enough partner. Following the merger, the school should become strengthened enough to be self-sufficient.	
For children with severe needs placed in other schools, what happens to those schools if they cannot meet the need of those	If the decision is made for a closure of the school, there will be a transition plan for the children, particularly those with SEND, to ensure effective and smooth transition. Each will need an individual transition plan. *** has attended a number of these events as an advocate for SEND.	

<p>joining? Won't they feel a strain and pressure having this influx, with more educational health care plans (EHCPs), more support and more outreach teams?</p>		
<p>What consideration was given to the wellbeing of families and staff within a timeline which is a long time to wait for things to happen?</p>	<p>Early engagement was decided, in terms of information sharing.</p>	
<p>What about the impact on the school community and individual pupils and staff, as there is movement already in terms of parents making decisions?</p>	<p>There are variables outside of the control. It is impactful. Hackney Education HR will work with families and staff, and there will be additional education psychology support available. HR will link in with the school to understand general concerns and what would happen if closure was decided in terms of support staff with finding new jobs, and there will be a variety of workshops, feedback from unions and leaders etc</p>	
<p>Schools get a budget on pupil roll and if De Beauvoir continues to lose students up until July 2023, in terms of the impact on staff, will there be really low numbers of children in a class due to those leaving?</p>	<p>The situation will be monitored in terms of risk, numbers and the budget implication. If numbers are very low, management of risk will be considered. It is recognised that during this time there will be financial concerns but we will manage these supportively.</p>	

Are there any restructuring plans for De Beauvoir for the year 2023-2024?	No.	
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Additional event notes / comments:

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Session / School	De Beauvoir Primary School - Parents
Date	Friday 21 st April
Est. number of attendees	40 parents
Question asked	Response
What will happen to the nursery?	Nursery is directly attached to school and would close as well.
Why is Hackney focused on community schools rather than faith schools?	There is an ongoing dialogue with church schools but the decision to close is by the Diocese. Hackney has direct jurisdiction over community schools. Church schools are going through a process of evaluation but are not as advanced as Hackney.
Why can we not merge the other school that is closest to De Beauvoir?	There are a number of schools in De Beauvoir's situation. The geographical location might create big journeys. If two schools merged, the challenge would be how to make a strong school. If De Beauvoir school students were added to, for example, Colvestone, if both schools' children were brought together, it still would not make enough children to make the school viable going forward. This option was considered but is not the best recommendation for the school. There has been postcode mapping and the intention is to keep disruption to a minimum in terms of travel distance. The LA has a statutory obligation to provide school places for all children and this is discharged by trying to provide a place as close to home, for convenience, as possible.
This seems like it has already been finalised, like the school is going to be closed, that whilst this is an informal talk, it will be going to Cabinet. You won't look at keeping school open or amalgamation,	You are clearly being an advocate for your child and those children at the school, thank you for sharing this. We have to go through formal due process for decision making. It is not confirmed that the school will close. There is no pre determination, this process is a legal requirement. Rest assured, no decision has yet been made.

<p>you have made your final decision which makes parents feel disgruntled. If you are closing De Beauvoir, are our children going on the waiting list or being prioritised? If your business is closing and you have to move to another school, you are guaranteed a place and likewise we want to know our child is going to be prioritised at the new school of their choice. There are children with SEND who will get further with their EHCPs. Children who have social, emotional needs also need to be taken into consideration - where there is a unit and family circle it is being crushed by this situation [round of applause from other parents].</p>	<p>For vulnerable children and those with SEND, if a decision is made to proceed with the proposal, then transition planning will begin early to ensure potential disruption is minimised, so that the risk is managed. Those children will be prioritised. There are no easy answers, every different child and parent has a different situation and it is a different process for them, but as yet no decision has been made.</p>
<p>What about the children without those needs?</p>	<p>In terms of children having priorities to other school places, school admissions have strict rules and regulations. At present any application will be made and treated as such. Things change and after the final decision is made to close a school, the parents who then apply, and will be supported to do this, will be given extra priority to jump to the top of the list which will be done once the final decision is taken, but until then the same rules apply. After we know a school is closing, we will work closely with families to ensure that multiple year group children go to the same schools.</p>
<p>To contextualise this, are you recommending that parents who are offered a place now wait until that point or accept places offered to them?</p>	<p>If you are offered, you have to accept within 10 days. If you list a school that has a waiting list, you can wait and see what happens in terms of this process.</p>
<p>My preference is for my child to attend this school. She doesn't want to go to another school but she is being forced to go to another school. Why are you not suggesting that she should wait and see? You</p>	<p>Thanks for sharing your feelings about the school. This is not easy. You have made some strong points and the strength of feeling is coming across. I can't give you the answers you want. We are no different from any other London authorities and when numbers get to a certain point there is a process of evaluation, following many, many</p>

<p>don't care about children in Hackney. You close schools and profit out of them. This school has been around for many years. I have lived in Hackney for 40 years. This should be a landmark school. I don't care about the numbers dropping. The numbers could change. You can't tell us that there won't be more children in ten years. You just want us to move out of Hackney. We don't care about your numbers. Our children have friends in Hackney. Noone knows what is going to happen. Where is our reassurance? I don't want my child put back because she can't get into a school in September. What about the education of our children? We are here because of the education of our children.</p>	<p>restructures, if there are insufficient numbers of children in the local area. Fundamentally, you care about the experiences of your children, having the school of their choice, which is understandable. This is not easy. If a decision is made to close the school in September 2024 we will work closely to fully support those affected.</p>
<p>My children have moved numerous times within Hackney and have struggled with the transition. I would rather not move them, I would prefer to home school them. What is being done to increase the numbers, to promote and market the school? What is being done to support parents with the process of how to bring their children to the school?</p>	<p>We don't have enough children to utilise all the school places. Free schools is one of those reasons too as Hackney doesn't have autonomy or jurisdiction over them. Free schools are a government initiative and under the jurisdiction of the DfE.</p>
<p>I chose De Beauvoir because I wanted a small school that would meet my children's individual needs. I am so happy to bring my children to this school every single day. I know they are looked after, and the teachers are personable. I don't want to move again. We have been to *** and *** which</p>	<p>It is an excellent school with outstanding staff, which is why you want your children to come here. Hackney has not closed schools for a number of years but neighbouring authorities have had to. Hackney has delayed this to try alternative processes. We cannot stop families moving out of the borough or out of London. If there are over 600 empty seats, this is the challenge. 58 primary schools with over 600 empty spaces. As a local authority we have to make some tough decisions looking at the data and</p>

<p>were overwhelmed and my children's needs were missed. I don't want to worry about putting them in another school like that again. How are we supposed to get into a full school when we have a school here?</p>	<p>trajectory. Schools running with this level of empty seats are not sustainable and this cannot be ignored.</p>
<p>A parent of a child with an EHCP wants her child to stay at school and doesn't know what is going to happen, so this school is the most suitable. Other suitable schools are full. They want to stay here until the end. What is going to happen in September?</p>	<p>We will work very closely with the parents and school. Children with EHCPs will have dedicated people to support them as they are the most traumatised and vulnerable to the changes to school and the transition. Head teachers will liaise to understand the incoming child's needs. There will also be support for other children with SEN who do not have EHCPs.</p>
<p>When this school is closed, my *** will be in year 6. *** does not have an EHCP plan. I want to know what support my *** is going to receive. *** is already crying about leaving her friends, and *** will go somewhere for one year and then have to go on to secondary school. My *** went to this school. Support received here for SEN is amazing. I want to know why this school is being closed down. I don't know how my *** is going to cope with this. What support will my *** receive to cope with losing friends, SATs, going to a new school and the social and mental impact? What about all the children that are leaving ahead of September 2024? In the end there will be no children left in the school if they are all leaving.</p>	<p>It is coming across very clearly how passionate parents and carers are for the school, and the history of the school in the community. There are a lot of risks around this.</p>

<p>Children want to come to De Beauvoir. Queensbridge has too many children so why can't those children come here? What about free schools? Other schools are oversubscribed. There are so many different ways to do this.</p>	<p>It is frustrating, because unfortunately there is no jurisdiction in free schools - anyone can set up a free school. They don't have to tell the LA they are going to have a school or work with the LA. This is very frustrating for us. Any child that has a Hackney child will be fully supported but it is frustrating because it has created even more spaces we don't need and we have no control over it. We can't say to academies or free schools that we think they should close, because ministers in government make this decision as free schools are accountable to the DfE. Frustration is absolutely understandable but we also are up against challenges. We don't want to be here, this is a fantastic school. We don't need a free school in this area.</p>
<p>We would need to get all parents in Hackney involved to get free schools closed, then we could take it to the LA who could take it to the government. If it wasn't for this school my child would not want to go to school. It's those schools that are killing the community schools. Free schools do not invite parental communication directly with the head teacher, they cut you out. In order for this to change we need to get together with other schools. I would suggest a meeting for all parents to come to a consensus about free schools.</p>	<p>*** have written to the Secretary of State on the free school issue as the education secretary was proposing another 33 free schools which means Hackney would have got one. We don't have enough children as it is and don't need any more competition from free schools. **** are aware of that and are fierce advocates of education in Hackney.</p>
<p>You said a few times that SEN children would get priority in other schools, but the process currently is very long winded, everywhere is full to capacity, when would parents get concrete guarantees of closure? For working parents, they cannot have children on the waiting list. Do children need to go to another school in the interim? My *** is quite</p>	<p>We will accommodate every child and will make a provision for every child. In terms of general responsibility, we won't close a school and not provide a space elsewhere. This case has been raised with us separately to look into a suitable provision and this will be followed up outside this meeting. It has been flagged and it is due for consideration.</p>

<p>comfortable in this school and won't get this anywhere else. This child has been waiting for specialist provision since nursery. *** has an EHCP and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis.</p>	
<p>If closure is decided, do my children get priority to get into other schools? What if the option my child wants is full, does she have to go to a school she doesn't like?</p>	<p>If you apply now and there are no spaces available, we cannot force schools to take children if there are no spaces. There are spaces in other Hackney schools. If your child waits until De Beauvoir closure then we will work closely with families to ensure children get a school place. There are spaces in lots of schools in Hackney.</p>
<p>If we have already applied for other schools and are on the waiting list, what should we do?</p>	<p>If you apply for a school and get a space and there are lots of vacancies, you can wait until the school closes but for a school with few places and if you wait until later, the space may not be available. If you apply for a school and there are five children waiting and only one space available we would advise you to accept that space when it is available, if this is conditional due to the waiting list.</p>
<p>How is the quality of what is happening captured? There is complexity around children with complex needs and in terms of scrutinising the closures which is about numbers and viability, is it quantifiable and how is this captured? What process is there for parents to engage in around metrics and how will the closure process be captured to enhance the next provision to ensure the minimum is lost, for example experienced staff and teachers? Unfortunately the process is missing impartiality.</p>	<p>One of the offers is to senior leadership teams, to meet in smaller groups to actually hear about that experience and the relationships within the school, with pupils, families and staff members, to ensure continuity and hear the case for the school. You can also discuss with your local councillor in terms of unpacking data.</p>
<p>Why is the school closing when Hackney New School doesn't have adequate play space for play</p>	<p>The LA has no jurisdiction for free schools. Whilst children are at free schools they are still Hackney children and every Hackney child's education experience needs to be as good as it can be.</p>

and they use local parks for break time? Why did Hackney agree to them using local parks for this?	
What will happen for practising muslims as most local schools are Christian schools and why is it non religious schools are in scope and religious ones are not? There isn't another school within walking distance that isn't religious.	These are Diocese led in terms of being Church of England and Catholic.
What is the position of church schools, is it not the LA's decision to close?	The Diocese has to be linked with.
How will parents be supported to buy new uniforms?	There will be a number of listening events and parent engagement activities in coming months about what is needed on the ground, so that these kinds of issues can be addressed.
Additional event notes / comments:	

Schools Estates Engagement Feedback Template

Session / School	Princess May	
Date	27/04/23	
Est. number of attendees	11	
Question asked	Response	Additional comments
When is the merge likely to finish?	If the proposals go ahead, they will be in effect from September 2024, Colvestone pupils will move on site at this time	
How large will the classes be in terms of pupil numbers?	We don't know how large year groups will be after any merger, this will be based on a number of different factors	
How will this impact current staff at both schools?	If proposals go ahead, Princess May would remain in existence, Colvestone would close. At this stage we cannot say what would happen to staff at Colvestone.	
and will the current Princess May staff including head stay or change?	<p>All staff at Princess May have a contract and would remain in school.</p> <p>From the schools perspective, the leadership/staff team would stay the same. The governing body wants to protect the good work leadership/ staff have done in improving outcomes for children at the school.</p> <p>The merger should be seen as an exciting and positive new phase for Princess May - it will be the chance to mix and interact with different children.</p>	
What will happen to the Colvestone school building, sold / used for other purposes?	<p>The council has no plans to sell any of the school sites that are potentially in scope as a decision hasn't been made on the future of the schools.</p> <p>We want to have schools for children to come back to if birth rates increase</p> <p>If schools are left vacant the property team will do an assessment for the best use for the property</p> <p>Cabinet haven't made a decision yet so we cannot say what the sites will be used for</p>	

<p>You mentioned Princess May is highly ranked in London, where can I find further information on this ranking, criteria etc?</p>	<p>Information on attainment can be found on the Princess May website</p> <p>Princess May results are significantly higher than national standards.</p> <p>We aren't proposing closing/merging schools due schools having poor attainment, all schools in Hackney have good attainment. These decisions are being made due to the fact that all schools across London have less pupils</p>	
<p>Additional event notes / comments:</p>		
<p>This will not be the only session that you can have with Cllrs and officers - there will be further in person sessions, information will be shared, if you have queries please email directly and please use the form</p>		

Schools Estates Engagement Feedback Template

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Session / School	Colvestone Primary School - Parents	
Date	Monday 24th April	
Est. number of attendees	110 (including presenters)	
Question asked	Response	Additional comments
What would happen to Colvestone's historic debt if the school was to close?	The debt falls within the jurisdiction of the LA. Some of the deficit has been successfully addressed.	
Why is Hackney focused on community schools rather than faith schools?	Hackney is not focused on community schools alone. There is dialogue with the Diocese of the Church of England and Catholicism, as there is a process of consultation required. There are a number of schools that could be in scope. Announcements will be made in the not too distant future.	
What would happen to the Colvestone building if the school is closed?	There will be an asset review process. No decision has been made as yet. A range of evaluations will be made at Cabinet meetings, which are public. The needs of the community will be considered.	
Is the new road going here?	This is still ongoing. There is confirmation of funding for the change of infrastructure of the street and there will be discussion with ward members.	In terms of air pollution figures, the baseline is 40% and the local number is 23%, at Princess May one playground is 23% and

		the other is 32%, numbers have gone down but this process is ongoing.
Why has health not been factored in? We would like it added to the list for consideration.	It will be part of the Cabinet deliberation.	
What is the deadline for sharing information ahead of Cabinet on 22 May?	If shared by the end of this week it will get in, if it is shared next week we will try. The intention is to include as much information as possible.	
What is the criteria?	We are happy to have more meetings around the drivers and timeline of decision making. Although the meeting is today, parents have had information before and had the opportunity to submit questions beforehand. We can take away that parents would prefer to meet and ask questions afterwards.	
The timeline does not give enough time.	We want to make sure that the process is as comprehensive as possible. We will share the criteria with all parents.	
This time last year parents of years 3 and 4 sat with *** with real concerns about this. *** told us in no uncertain terms that the school was not at risk of closure. What has changed the process?	The census date landed in December and showed projections for the next few years for Hackney schools and we looked at admission numbers for September. It has become a school in scope for a process.	

<p>I have seen birth rates that have increased with 400-500 nursery places needed. It is confusing why a year ago we were told the opposite of what we are told today. What happens if there are 70 families told that the children have to go to Princess May and we don't want to go.</p>	<p>The LA has a responsibility to find an education place for all children which includes children with additional needs. It is incumbent on sufficient use of resources. Unless we go through this process, next year it could be 9-10 schools. Numbers have continued to incline. Our LAs have been through this - namely Camden, Islington and Newham.</p>	
<p>There is a problem, in terms of the merger of Colvestone and Princess May as they are both very different, very few parents want their children to go there. What are you going to do?</p>	<p>We have to work with families to find a solution. If the numbers do not make a school viable, we have to do something different.</p>	<p>I wouldn't send my child to a school that was going to close, it is being sabotaged in terms of September's intake.</p> <p>We specifically came to Colvestone to find a small school and this involved travelling from Canning Town to Newham, this school is really friendly and inclusive and my children love it here. Everyone knows each other and says hello to each other.</p>
<p>Have you thought about proposed closure and the numbers and impact on schools that will have to take the additional children?</p>	<p>Yes, there have been evaluations and modelling.</p>	<p>In your process of evaluation, please consider that some children won't be able to learn in a big school and primary school is their foundation.</p> <p>This is real life and facts, not just emotion.</p>

<p>Do you now understand that it is not numbers versus emotion?</p>	<p>It is much broader than that, but future viability is about numbers.</p>	
<p>Do you accept that there are numbers you haven't considered? Our children are not just numbers. There are factors buried under the factors. The numbers mean nothing if they don't work for us. When you say you hear the passion you're not hearing a parent talking about their child.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>	

<p>We don't understand the timeline, e.g. Brexit and pandemic - numbers show that in 2019 massively decreased, pandemic had a huge effect, lots of parents moved out, what will change because numbers will change, there are big decisions that could go catastrophically wrong. Pupil numbers will increase with residents coming to live in building projects. It seems really short sighted.</p>	<p>We are restructuring to ensure that every Hackney child has as good an experience as possible, and the school has to still be viable. Other schools will come into scope. You're asking why go into a process? Because it has reached a threshold for strategy and criteria. There are so many compelling arguments. It is not just about numbers, much broader. That is why these sessions are important. Other areas did not go through a process like this - Hackney prides itself on child and parent voices to capture views. At Cabinet in May, it is about permission sought to go to the next stage, which is still informal. This is the beginning of the process. It is due to the census data and efficient use of resources which equals 22% empty seats and this is not efficient use of resources.</p>	
<p>This is about a sea of lost revenue rather than viability figures. We have seen what might be perceived as losses but not about whether the school is viable. There is an inference that they are both the same in terms of loss of income and not being viable, which is not the case. I would like to see the financial viability</p>	<p>We can make this information available to the Full Governing Body [action] if they haven't received it already. They have made a surplus but it would not have been achieved without the support by the LA whilst it has made good inroads.</p>	<p>This school is unique, and this is a one off opportunity to save the street. You can't build a beautiful street outside and close the school beside it. We need support. Take us off the list. We need a chance to see what the reception roll is in a two or three years time, first.</p> <p>I have heard stories of children thriving in this small school environment that it is such a wonderful school. Hackney should be fighting for this school.</p>

<p>report, rather than an obsession with lost revenue.</p>		<p>***: We cannot close faith, despite free schools or academies. Maintained schools are the only ones we have scope for. We have written to the government and asked for us to be able to consider all schools in scope, and also we requested for pausing of free schools being set up. Any schools that house Hackney children are all our children. We don't need free schools in the borough and it is frustrating.</p>
<p>Why does LA allocate non faith children to religious schools?</p>	<p>The procedure is to offer the nearest school to home, but they don't have to accept it.</p>	
<p>Why not change the process?</p>	<p>It's about parental choice.</p>	
<p>Why doesn't Princess May come to Colveston instead?</p>	<p>There isn't enough capacity in the building.</p>	
<p>Can the school's own financial projections in terms of deficit be submitted to the Cabinet for the next four to five years to come?</p>	<p>Yes that can.</p>	<p>This is a great experience for children to come here. *** left here four years ago for secondary school and it was a great place to come to as a primary school. The community is like a big family. Ridley Road market is such a great mix of diversity. There is academic success and records of children when they go on from here to secondary school and university.</p>

		The teachers are really dedicated, the students are thriving and this includes SEND kids. In Colvestone is it different from other schools? Schools like this need to be supported instead of closing it.
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Additional event notes / comments:

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Schools Estates Engagement Feedback Template

Session / School	Baden Powell Primary School	
Date	Wednesday 20th April 2023	
Est. number of attendees	30	
Question asked	Response	Additional comments
<i>E.g. How were the schools selected?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capture key elements of the response</i> 	<i>If applicable. E.g. Question asked by parent or member of staff</i>
The government has cut funding so there was already a lack of funding before all the other issues described in the powerpoint took place?	<p>This question has been asked at another engagement event. Schools have not been given money they need to match with rising inflation. Costs are rising but funding per child is not. It has not risen enough to cover all the things that schools need to do for children</p> <p>The Government has not taken into consideration that the money given is not enough to meet current costs. We ask for more but they say they have already given funding Because schools are not full, funding is being cut also</p>	Parent
Regarding the stats from around 10 years ago, if birth rates were going down, then why was Nightingale school built?	<p>When the school was built, it was because school places were needed. The information given to predict the future at the time showed there would be more children and therefore additional schools would be needed</p> <p>GLA predicted these figures. All issues raised in the powerpoint (inflation, brexit, etc) when predictions were made the GLA did not foresee these issues and</p>	

	could not counteract all the issues that we're currently experiencing	
Are Nightingale in the same position as us? Why does our school have to merge with them on their site?	There are not enough children coming to this school to keep the school open. Nightingale are in a similar predicament, they just about have enough children to work as a one form entry. Nightingale have enough space to work as a 2 form entry school	
This decision is being made based on Nightingale having the capacity. But this change would destabilise families- Will there be any help to lessen destabilisation that is going to be experienced ?	We are at the early stages of the process and these questions will be monitored and considered very closely	
Are teachers from this school going to be present in Nightingale schools?	No one school would have all the staff in the merged school. Some staff from both schools would be present- there are some decisions that cannot be discussed in full detail until a final decision has been made. There will be staff from both schools to help with transition. There are opportunities to make the transition exciting and bring the merger alive to make children excited about the merger. Parents and carers are essential in helping with the transition	
Is the decline in numbers similar for Nightingale?	There is a similar pattern of decline for most of the schools. Nightingale are only taking 30 children instead of 60 Nightingale classes are filling up to 30 and have a waiting list	
At the last meeting, there were many issues that came up. It is being made to seem	No final decisions have been made, the final decision will not happen until May	Parent- in a parent carer forum

<p>as if parents are just anxious.</p> <p>It has been mentioned that a final decision has not been made, but from powerpoint it seems as if a definitive decision has been made?</p> <p>Is there anything that could be done to stop this from happening?</p>	<p>We are talking to schools about how to accommodate the changes that may happen. We are not just saying that parents are anxious, we understand that there is a lot of uncertainty, but no final decisions have been made</p>	
<p>Will any of these questions/information be fed back?</p>	<p>There is someone here taking notes of all questions/queries, for it to be looked and fed back to the cabinet report</p> <p>A merger with Nightingale is one of the alternatives if Baden Powell does close. This engagement session is a genuine opportunity to hear from parents should this be the decision made</p>	
<p>What can parents do to stop this from happening? Parents have had the option to comment on changes in the area in the past. E.g. a majority of parents were against boxes being put in the road and they were still put there</p> <p>This does not feel like an open discussion</p>	<p>Anything said today is being captured and will be fed into the cabinet report.</p> <p>No final decisions have been made as of yet</p>	
<p>Baden Powell is a unique school, it is an established school with a unique teaching style, that has been running for years Nightingale is a new school with a new teaching style, they are still looking for a unique style to teach their kids</p>	<p>*** is not a new headteacher, she is an experienced headteacher. No definite decisions have been made regarding who will be the headteacher of the new school if the closure/ amalgamation goes ahead, it could be *** or *** .</p> <p>Any school would and should have staff from both schools due to the number of children migrating across to a new school.</p> <p>Just because Nightingale</p>	

	<p>may not be as old as Baden Powell, it does not mean that the teachers or the head teacher do not have leadership or experience. A new building/ teaching style does not mean that the staff will be new to teaching</p>	
<p>This will be happening for a child, this is a big change- the effects will be massive for children- they will not cope. What is the plan to make sure her children will be okay?</p>	<p>As a teacher, she understands the effect of this. Understand that this is an awful process, but measures will be taken to ensure children will be okay and are transitioned well</p> <p>This decision is not being taken lightly. There will be detailed plans about what will happen for all staff and children, the transition and what that looks like. There will be support in terms of health and well being. Plans will be put in place, no final decisions have been made yet so there are no definitive plans as of yet.</p> <p>If different solutions and different funding come into this process, they will ensure that no changes will happen regarding the closure/amalgamation It will be difficult for staff at Baden Powell to keep high standards due to funding.</p>	<p>Parent- child with Autism</p>
<p>What is the plan for children that have SEN? There needs to be a plan</p>	<p>A plan will be put in place. The children are a priority. Parents can come and talk to SS at anytime, will sit down and assure that her children will not be fully impacted</p>	<p>Headteacher</p>
<p>If there was an influx of children before september- what would happen?</p>	<p>We do not see this happening, but if we saw an influx then this would be a different conversation, but unfortunately there is a further decline</p>	

<p>Why is it not possible for all teachers from Baden Powell to move to Nightingale if all the children can be moved? It will be difficult for the children to move, it will be easier for teachers to move if there is that much space at Nightingale</p>	<p>There will be a transition plan, which will work out what the best decision will be for the teachers, both schools would work together to see which decisions would be best</p> <p>We need to have the right number of staff at any merged site, that is a legal process</p> <p>If we do move forward with the amalgamation more reassurances can be made closer to the time</p> <p>Hackney Education will be with parents on this journey</p>	
<p>Based on the statistics, it is either we merge or we close</p> <p>The council needs to be straightforward with parents</p>	<p>The first decision proposed if we go ahead with the amalgamation will be 22nd May, more information will be provided going forward</p>	
<p>Uniform is an issue. Will there be something put in place for parents regarding the costs of new uniforms?</p>	<p>Questions such as these are being fed into the process and will be considered in the report to Cabinet</p>	
<p>There are other children on a waiting list for Nightingale, For those that are in favour of the merger- will they take up possible places for children coming from Baden Powell?</p>	<p>With the merging of schools, parents from the merging school usually get the first offers</p>	
<p>Question asked on if there is a way to address the funding, perhaps raising money/ charity donations- has this been discussed/raising a fund?</p>	<p>Question has been asked, but there is a shortfall of money from the Government and a shortfall of children</p> <p>Even if there were any generous benefactors, we would need to raise £3 million down payment for the school- this has not been given any further thought</p> <p>Even if funds were changed, it would be hard to predict if this would make any change. If the number of children kept</p>	

<p>Would it be legal to raise funds for the school?</p>	<p>declining more funds would still need to be raised</p> <p>If the money was there, legally, raising funds would be allowed</p> <p>When asking for more money, the Government's response was that money had already been given to Councils</p>	
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Additional event notes / comments:

From a parent- It does not feel like there is a chance for change. Is there any point in saying we do not want the merger to happen? It all feels very finalised. We all understand the reasons why it has to happen, but it is a difficult situation. It feels like parents' voices are not going to be heard. This is a major change, not a tiny shift. The new Nightingale building is big, this is a close community which will see a change of teachers and a new big building, it is a lot to take in

From a parent- She knows many families that put their children in the nursery with hope of them going to the primary school.

Parent commented that she wanted a small school for her children, not a school in which there are two year groups in one class. With the way Baden Powell is currently, teachers can look after students, it is more intimate

From a parent- The teaching at this school is of excellent quality, it must be matched if we are going to be put through this change. The provisions and measures need to be matched. Parent demands teachers from this school are present in Nightingale if they want parents to go through/support this merger

From a parent with an autistic child- We all have personal reasons why we do not want the schools being merged. It is about the school, it is not about the space, we love this school. From nursery parents to Year 6 parents, everyone knows each other. It is a close school in which children are learning happily.

If this merger happens and everyone has to move, her child will go through change twice and this will affect him hugely in future. *** will already make a move from Year 6 to secondary school. We are unable to cope with that much change

From a parent- We do not want the lovely little school to be closed, this is a lovely school with lovely staff and teaching system.

From a parent- Walks *** mins from her house for her children to attend Baden Powell. There is another school close to her house, but Baden Powell is a small school, it is very good for her children and this is why she brings her children here. Does not want to send her children to a big school like Nightingale

From a parent- HE seems as if they are coming from an academic perspective, coming across as condescending. The council is coming from a numbers perspective. The audience are parents, not academics. This is why HE is receiving hostility from parents. The parents worry comes from their passions/love for the school but the council's priorities are funding and numbers, but they are not discussing the damage that's going to be

caused

*** in attendance and announced that he was the local ward councillor for where the school is located. Commented that Baden Powell is a wonderful school. He would be available to speak to parents and listen to their concerns at the end of the engagement event

Schools Estates Engagement Feedback Template

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Session / School	Nightingale Primary School	
Date	Tuesday 18 th April	
Est. number of attendees	30	
Question asked	Response	Additional comments
<i>E.g. How were the schools selected?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capture key elements of the response</i> 	<i>If applicable. E.g. Question asked by parent or member of staff</i>
Nightingale currently has one form per year. What was the decision at the time to not go ahead with two-form year groups when there was space?	<p>Nightingale school was built with two classes per year group; it has always been the intention to move from one to two forms.</p> <p>The decision to build the school had been made previously, prior to merger conversation. The school wants to expand to two-forms. Currently there are empty classrooms. Financial reasons for this. Moving to two-form year groups will enable Nightingale to be able to continue with extra curricular programme. Heating and caretaking costs associated with a school with empty classrooms.</p>	
<p>When were the predictions for falling class sizes first made? Brexit was a while ago; was closure/merger not considered earlier?</p> <p>I'm a reception mum and chose this school due to one form entry.</p> <p>Why weren't prospective Nightingale and Baden Powell parents informed when they applied for reception places?</p>	<p>Full year lag; downturn. Exacerbated by the pandemic.</p> <p>Dilemma of when you do this.</p>	<i>[Note: struggled to hear response with background noise.]</i>

<p>When you apply for schools there is a deadline, we didn't see the enrollment figures when we applied.</p> <p>Why don't you outgrow the schools/classes over time and start transitioning pupils in reception?</p>		
<p>Importance of this forum for parents. Would have preferred an online way to join.</p> <p>Parent shared their child's experience of moving to Nightingale from ***. Resistant to merger because of reasons for moving their child to Nightingale. Concerned about how the merger and impact on children would be managed. E.g. behaviour and interaction of children. Concerned merger could be traumatic for children who moved from BP.</p>	<p>Valid concern. Mindful that BP children will need to have some systems preserved to ease the transition to a new school but aim would be to become a cohesive school. Managed process with programme of introduction and long-lead in period. Informal merging prior to full merging, staff induction. Familiarity for BP children.</p> <p>Learning from Nightingale's building move can be applied. Rebranding, revision of the curriculum, tools to ease transition. Shared ethos and culture. Create a new funded Nightingale while retaining the school's culture.</p>	
<p>Comment on the presentation: BP stats have been shared but what is the impact [of falling enrollment] on Nightingale?</p> <p>Any change, good or bad, can have a negative impact; what are your predictions?</p> <p>What extra help will school be given to support with the transition? What is the impact if the merger does not take place?</p>	<p>A two form entry school will be financially stronger. We are concerned about falling enrollment across all schools; merger is a strengthening step.</p> <p>The long lead in time will allow Hackney Education to work together with both schools SLT. If the proposal goes to informal consultation we will look into detail of the impact.</p> <p>We are learning from other London boroughs that are merging/closing schools. This includes having a long time period and open engagement with parents. There may be unintended consequences but we</p>	

	<p>applying learning with the aim of reducing unintended consequences.</p> <p>Key voices in the community will be consulted with, including children will be included if we go to consultation.</p> <p>We will need to show the financial impact of not using a two-form entry school. Small classes are great in principle, but the challenge is reduced funding as a result. There are also benefits of two-form year groups: shared expertise, cross-teaching.</p> <p>There are risks and benefits. Over the next five years, building costs would impact Nightingale's historical surplus. We hope to expand ARP and SEND, even with two-forms. And expanding reception will mean more parents getting their first choice school.</p>	
<p>SEND: this school is purpose built for children with SEND. What is the current percentage of children with EHC plan and SEND support at Nightingale? And how might that number rise with merger? How would the transition be managed for children with SEND? Is there enough teaching support now at Nightingale, and will there be if the school gets bigger? Scared about impact on children who might or currently fall through the net. Concerned about the exclusion of Black children in particular.</p>	<p>Since 2018 no primary school has permanently excluded a child from Hackney school system. The proposed merger is not expected to impact this. Young Hackney would work with school leaders to work with children who might need more support. Any child with a plan will be supported through the transition.</p> <p>For SEND provision, question of how can we reduce the number of children with SEND being sent out of the borough? Identified schools that can have additional resource provision. Increased SEND</p>	

<p>What will happen with old school sites? Hackney needs more specialist needs?</p> <p>Also raised concern about “ghost children” and EBSA pupils.</p>	<p>provision in 2022 and 2023. Building capacity to meet needs. Holistic approach, systems lead, parent carer forums, communication and consultation with parents.</p> <p>No plans for buildings, no plans to sell the school site. The property/building team are aware of the proposals, but no work has been done to assess properties yet. Decision has not been made. We are not closing schools to sell to private developers.</p>	
<p>Parent chose Nightingale because of its size and community. Timeline: What processes and systems will be put in place to support us through to the merger? It feels out of our hands due to the financial reasons you have set out. What additional measures will be in place to manage the long term processes and staff merger?</p> <p>There will be no more all school play, use of space at Nightingale will change.</p> <p>Govt funding is a big issue.</p>	<p>Merging of schools can be exciting, co-creation of a new school together. The next step is informal consultation, which would address these questions.</p>	
<p>My child has been with the children in her class since nursery. Will they stay together?</p> <p>For that class to be halved, it would be traumatic.</p>	<p>The aim is to avoid “them and us” view among children. Long lead-in time to work with children from both schools. Informal opportunities, sports and activities. It will be pitched to children as gaining friends.</p> <p>We know the friendship groups in our classes well and will work with that. It will not be a sudden change. But I want to avoid talking</p>	

	<p>with children until the merger is certain.</p> <p>The school space is generously designed for two forms; each classroom over 30% of standard size.</p>	
<p>Moved child to Nightingale from ** due to lack of structure, child was “lost in the group” and has SEND. What support will be provided to support children’s anxieties? How will my child’s needs be met in class of 30?</p> <p>Are staff from Baden Powell going to be trained so that we don’t experience previous issues here?</p>	<p>Nightingale knows our children really well. Support will be given to children; that process in hand and being planned.</p>	
<p>What stops it going ahead?</p> <p>The financial situation seems like the proposal has to go ahead.</p>	<p>This meeting and all responses will feed into the Cabinet decision.</p>	<p>Meeting ended at this point. Further questions addressed 1:1.</p>
Additional event notes / comments:		

Schools Estates Engagement Feedback Template

Session / School	Randal Cremer	
Date	20th April	
Est. number of attendees	55-60	
Question asked	Response	Additional comments
Has the decision been made/will the closure happen?	Cabinet decision 22nd May on whether to informally consult. The final cabinet decision would be in December, if we get to that point.	
Comment/ response related to combining year groups: this would not be good for the children.		
What will happen to the school site?	<p>If a decision is made to close the school, an asset review process will be undertaken assessing local needs and options. The ideal scenario would be that the building would have a future educational use. We cannot say at this stage; no decision has been made.</p> <p>Addressing the rumour that the site will be used for housing: the school as it stands is the priority. We cannot make a pre-emptive decision. Asset review process will be transparent.</p>	
Following site question and response: It seems like the decision has been made.	The decision has not been made.	
Why close this school, it's a good school?	Most schools in Hackney are good or better. Any school suggested for closure or merger will be a good school.	
Are there enough spaces in other local hackney schools	Yes, there are vacancies across the borough in all	

<p>for children affected by closures?</p>	<p>areas. We would not close a school unless there are enough spaces for students after closure.</p>	
<p>Why can't RC merge with the other school proposed for closure?</p>	<p>We did look at this, but felt that all the schools were too far away for a viable merger.</p> <p>For a merger, we looked at whether a school could take all students from another school. No school near this school could have accommodated all the children together.</p>	
<p>In response: children will still have to travel a distance to go to another school. That justification isn't viable</p>	<p>We will look at all families affected if a decision is made to assess where best for children to go to school.</p>	
<p>How will you accommodate families with more than one child? Will the children go to the same school?</p>	<p>That will be considered. A dedicated officer in the Council will assist and work closely with each family for best outcome.</p>	
<p>You say "we're going to" but this should be happening at this stage; if the closure does happen that will be too late to start working with parents on placing children.</p> <p>My child is in year **, he has anxiety about where ** will be / belong and whether ** friends will come with **. The emotional impact is important.</p> <p>If I move my child to another</p>	<p>It's a very difficult situation. It's about the best possible learning experience for children, as articulated. The proposal is that if we get to a December decision, then parents would have 9 months notice. Officers will look at addresses and proximity to schools, working with parents. This won't happen before the cabinet decision as the cabinet may decide it won't go ahead. If a decision is made, it will be a 9 month process. The team is currently doing some modelling. We will be working with families.</p> <p>Working on a family by family basis to minimise the impact.</p> <p>The realistic answer is yes,</p>	

<p>school, will we potentially face another closure in two years?</p>	<p>634 reception places remain open. The proposal now isn't enough to solve the problem long term. We would make efforts to avoid that situation if you move your child to another school.</p>	
<p>If we could go to other schools across Hackney you cannot assure us that we will not go through a closure process again.</p>	<p>We understand how disruptive that would be. The council would forward plan to minimise that.</p> <p>There are 58 primary schools in Hackney, without intervention can't keep</p>	
<p>Will the larger class size affect education?</p>	<p>In Hackney class size tends not to go above 30.</p> <p>A lot of schools don't have 30 in their classes yet, moving children can strengthen schools overall. It is traumatic and difficult, but there are spaces across schools.</p>	
<p>In front of RC, there is the adventure playground children can go to afterschool if parents need to collect their children late. Has the council looked at playgrounds close to school or looked into closing schools that don't have a playground?</p>	<p>The adventure playground is a wonderful asset. We will have to evaluate all the information before the cabinet decision is made. But we can't go further down the line without taking action, lots of empty spaces are projected here, the current situation is not financially viable. Right to look beyond financial decisions, but other local authorities are doing this too. Hackney has deferred this decision and has tried to find another way.</p>	
<p>What will you do for the kids with SEND? Stress impact on parents and kids.</p>	<p>First question I (headteacher) asked, promised to personally oversee placement of children with SEND.</p> <p>There will be a process of transition.</p>	

<p>I have a child with SEND, RC was the only school that accepted my child. He will not understand that the school is closing. Other local schools did not accept my child.</p>	<p>Important to hear about the relationship with the Adventure playground. For children with SEND there are champions at this school and in the Council. It is distressing to hear your experience of being turned away from another school. We will work with you, including on how to speak to your child and will work with you to make sure that friendships are retained.</p> <p>Note to liaise with RC re separate meeting for SEND parents.</p>	
<p>Family recently moved and our *** settled quickly due to the staff. I want staff to hear how grateful I am. If RC closes, Hackney will lose somewhere very special.</p>	<p>RC is a very good school. We understand why parents are upset.</p>	
<p>Why is RC still taking children? We moved to the area in ***, we applied here after a really difficult time and my child loves it here. I would rather RC have not taken ** rather than risk disrupting ** again.</p> <p>What are the reasons that RC should be kept open? Right now it sounds like it's closing. There are many reasons why school should stay open. There are positives like the adventure playground. It's free, the staff are amazing and work with the school.</p>	<p>Difficult period when the school was not allowed to go public with information. Prospective parents are now being informed.</p> <p>Parent opinions shared here will be taken forward to the decision makers. All questions and comments are being captured. Clear strength of feeling is being recorded and will enter the report.</p>	
<p>Will we compete with all other families applying in September? Will there be a priority list?</p>	<p>Admissions rules are strict, a school may not have taken you in past because they may have been full. After a decision is made,</p>	

<p>RC is the only school that accepted my child based on catchment, my ** lives locally and supports with childcare.</p> <p>My child's education is going to be uprooted. How will we be supported?</p>	<p>displaced parents will be given priority at that point. We can't apply that priority until a decision has been made.</p>	
<p>Multiple comments raising concerns that flats could be built on the RC site in the future.</p> <p>Will you make a commitment to not build flats on the site?</p> <p>What about the adventure playground?</p>	<p>That is outside of our jurisdiction. The priority is suitable alternatives for children. Community assets, alternative use, educational use – there are a range of options but our planning department will look into that in due course.</p> <p>Local schools have a walking bus to the playground. The Adventure playground is so good that RC play centre has a loss of revenue as it is less utilised.</p>	
<p>New buildings are not given to people like us. View that flats would be built.</p> <p>Parent applied for child to go to secondary school outside of Hackney, but not given a choice. Can they not bring children in from other schools?</p> <p>RC not just a school, we are a family. Headteacher has supported lots of families.</p>	<p>Clear strength of feeling and unhappiness about housing for lots of families. Want to work with parents to make sure parents voices are heard on important matters.</p> <p>Response to housing comments: cllrs get frustrated when we see property development at times, we don't have the power to limit but are trying to build as much social housing. The Council does not own all of the land, if a private owner owns the land it is their choice. And issue is falling birth rate in London.</p>	
<p>Disruption to children, parents and staff working with children. It is traumatic for children. Echoing parent question of where will we</p>	<p>There will be more opportunities for your voices to be heard.</p>	<p>Staff question</p>

<p>go?</p> <p>How will this announcement affect RC enrollment? Are you sealing our fate with the announcement?</p> <p>As residents, we have seen reduction of social housing. Why isn't more social housing being built?</p> <p>The school is a family. No good reason to break apart.</p>		
<p>Member of staff at RC, parent of former pupil, and a former pupil. I work in RC **, I know that there are problems with schools that are outstanding but don't accept challenging children. Please consider challenging children as they will find it hard.</p>	<p>Many key takeaways from this conversation including loyalty and community around this school. Children are at the heart and this listening event is to give opportunity to parents to share their views. Statutory duty to provide school place for every child in Hackney. Will look to minimise disruption. First of a series of conversations.</p>	
<p>Is closing a school going to solve the problem, as you said this is only the start. If we move the children, there's no guarantee that it won't happen again. Same with high school.</p> <p>If the school closes, it won't continue as a school so will it be demolished and flats built?</p> <p>Closure is not a solution. Impact on my child needing to resettle after a year.</p>	<p>The local authority has not been quick to consider closure. Neighbouring and other local authorities have made similar decisions. We wanted to explore other options. With 22% vacancies, we have too many schools for the number of students. We can't say what will happen, but there is a reluctance in Hackney to close schools.</p> <p>(Headteacher) The community at RC is because of staff, families and children. My fear, as numbers reduce we won't do it as well, and vulnerable children may lose out. May lose that community that we have now. Impact on teachers with one-form entry and impact on</p>	

	<p>extracurriculars. Whatever the decision, staffing levels have been hard to maintain. Lack of funding.</p>	
<p>How will you support the staff and the children, especially older children? I mean in terms of emotion, regardless of whether it will happen. What are you doing now to support children?</p> <p>The school needs support from Council.</p> <p>Worry boxes at the school are full.</p>	<p>The HR department will work closely with the school if the closure takes place. Head of Wellbeing in Hackney, we will be asking for extra staff in school to have those conversations with children.</p> <p>We have discussed immediate support for staff, and the Head of HR is speaking to the team about support now. That support is being put in place now, it is very emotional. We understand the impact on staff, children, and parents. All of those discussions are happening.</p> <p>Additional support and resources available to schools.</p>	
<p>Additional event notes / comments:</p>		

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Title of Report	Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy - falling rolls	
Key Decision No	CE S190	
For Consideration By	Cabinet	
Meeting Date	22 May 2023	
Cabinet Member	Councillor Anntoinette Bramble, Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care	
Classification	Open Report and Appendices A-N with Exempt Appendix O and P	
Ward(s) Affected	All	
Key Decision & Reason	Yes	Significant effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Implementation Date if Not Called In	29 May 2022	
Group Director	Jacquie Burke, Group Director Children & Education	

1. CABINET MEMBER'S INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. As an Administration, and as Deputy Mayor, we are pleased with the improvement of Hackney's education system. Just 20 years ago the Borough's schools were some of the worst performing in the country; now they are among the very best, not just in terms of school performance, but also in the outcomes for our children and young people. This transformation of education in Hackney is one of the greatest success stories in the country. We are proud of our children and young people who are among the top in the country for Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 1. Their results are particularly impressive considering they were achieved after the difficulties of the pandemic. This is a credit to our children, families, and schools, and we will continue to work in partnership with all our schools.

In recent years, as widely reported, Hackney, like other inner and greater London local authority (LA) areas, has been experiencing a significant decrease in pupil numbers, which has caused some schools to face serious and irreversible financial and sustainability pressures. The critical London wide factors are; lower birth rates; the cap on rent benefits; families leaving the capital as a result of the housing crisis; Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic. Our local context includes competition from free schools and academies (agreed and championed by the DfE) which has added four additional schools without reference or having any regard to the Council's pupil place planning arrangements, or the local authority's evidenced based needs. All of these factors have resulted in a reduction in demand for primary school places in the borough. This is no fault of the Council or our schools, and we remain committed to delivering over a thousand new council homes and more family housing across the borough.

School leaders and the Council in recent years have been doing everything possible to manage the risk of falling rolls. Hackney officers have been working with schools locally to progress a number of approaches, with a focus on preventing the escalation of risk to those in scope for potential closure or amalgamation. The approaches used so far include measures such as restructuring school staffing levels, reducing the amount of available support staff, limiting extra curricular activity such as school trips, 'vertical grouping' by combining different year groups in some schools, formally reducing and capping reception places, and for some schools the need to agree deficit recovery plans with Hackney Education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in Hackney's educational system for their often challenging work, as we have worked through these existing decisions and started to explore the even more difficult decisions outlined in this paper.

Most, if not all, of these 'graduated approaches' have been deployed by local schools to address the issue of falling rolls. However, this has not sufficiently solved the problem and the level of risk for some in terms of sustainability and enabling the schools to continue to provide their children with the very best possible teaching and learning experience on a daily basis that all schools would wish to provide. This high quality educational environment is what the people of Hackney expect, and individual school communities deeply value, and we see this whenever the Mayor, Cllr Woodley, and I visit schools.

We have been lobbying the national Government to look at how funding is allocated, as part of our wider commitments to working towards a stronger and fairer school system more generally. We have also repeatedly asked the Government for greater powers to manage places in free schools and academies, which are independent of the Council, in order to pool place-planning resources. The Mayor and I recently wrote to the Education Secretary of State (letter attached at Appendix N of this paper) to formally express our concerns with regards to the issue of falling rolls for the Borough and other LA areas, expressing concern that government policy in areas such

as free schools, have compounded the problem, by bringing more school places into the system, in areas where there may already have been surplus places and therefore putting at risk locally maintained schools due to unnecessary competition at a time of system pressure for the aforementioned reasons.

We know schools are more than just places for children to receive education, and that they play an important part in their local community. This is why having to now consider potentially closing or merging schools is very difficult, and not something we would propose if we had any other choice. We do not underestimate the impact that such changes would have on the community, parents, staff and pupils. However, the impact of falling rolls is being felt widely across many schools, and over time it is becoming increasingly more difficult for them to continue doing all the fantastic things that families, children, staff and the community love them for.

I know some concerns have also been raised that the Council might sell off vacant school sites for private housing development, but please be assured that this is not the case. The Mayor and I have been clear. We know how important that assurance is, given the unique location of our schools, their wider role, and close ties to our wider local communities. Throughout our time leading the Council and through now many years of austerity, while others across the country may have sold assets, we have taken other routes, stopping to think about what Hackney needed at the time and what it might need in the future - and this approach is front and centre of our thinking when it comes to education land and the future needs of the borough for schools and specialist provision. We still take this approach in every situation and we are committed to doing that right now.

This means we need to work through the potential for each site in their local context and we will do our best to steer these sites into locally relevant and valuable uses. We also know from our visits to these schools, and our knowledge of Dalston, De Beauvoir, Haggerston and Hackney Downs the depth of feeling in these places about their respective schools, how they sit in that wider community context and the need to work with communities to defend what makes these communities and places special including Ridley Road. That's why the Council has invested so much in protecting and enhancing Dalston and has plans in De Beauvoir, Haggerston and Hackney Downs to build more Council housing and invest in community infrastructure.

We know that during this process there will be concerns raised about the potential risk to our children with protected characteristics, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As referenced in a range of recent communications to the local schools, that may be in scope for evaluation as part of the work of the school estates strategy, and we will work with them and provide targeted support where appropriate. The associated equality impact assessment, at Appendix L, provides further commentary on this. My colleague, Cllr Woodley, the Cabinet Member for SEND, has been

working closely with me and the officers progressing this programme and in association with schools where necessary, and will continue to do so for the duration of this programme in seeking to be an advocate for children with SEND, to ensure these children are supported as much as possible, along with their families. That work sits within the wider context of delivering at least 300 new SEND places in the borough in new settings and existing schools.

We know this process will also be unsettling for the whole school community, including Governing Bodies, school leadership teams, teachers, support staff and others who work in our schools. We are committed to having a proactive approach with all those involved, including the trade unions, to ensure that all staff are involved in these discussions and supported if or when changes are made to retain, upskill, or find new employment. We also recognise that where we might merge schools we will have to work with those schools to ensure they have the right facilities and investment on the new sites to meet the aspirations of their respective schools and communities. During the engagement with the school communities, we also met with local members of parliament, ward Councillors, and invited all elected members to briefing sessions to discuss the consequences of falling rolls and the impact on schools.

No one goes into public life, or a leadership position, to close or merge schools, but it is our responsibility, as a local authority, to create life-improving opportunities for those in the borough who most need them - this starts with access to first-class education. And we must continue to ensure that every single child has access to an excellent education that allows them to fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions. This is why we must now begin to consider the difficult options outlined in this report.

2. GROUP DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.** This report addresses the second priority of the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy (adopted by Hackney Council in February 2022); to seek viable sustainable solutions and work with existing Primary schools with falling rolls. Falling rolls lead to a reduction in funding to deliver education across the borough, as the number of pupils on roll directly affects the amount of money received from central government. Surplus places impact disproportionately on schools across the borough; schools with unfilled places receive less income, while attempting to maintain the same physical space, staffing and education offer.

In 2014, there were fewer than 1% unfilled reception places in Hackney. The January 2023 school census shows 616 surplus reception places (21%), the equivalent of over 20 empty reception classes. Without taking action, surplus reception places are forecast to rise above 25% by 2029, bringing sustained and increasing financial strain on affected schools.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient high quality school places for our children, and that places are planned effectively. This school year alone, Hackney schools are seeing £30m less funding compared to what they would be entitled to if their classrooms were full. This financial pressure has a significant impact on our schools, and threatens the stability and quality of our education system.

3. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Cabinet approve that informal consultations are carried out on the:

- 1. Proposed closure of De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024.**
- 2. Proposed closure of Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.**
- 3. Proposed merger/amalgamation of Colvestone Primary School and Princess May Primary School, onto the Princess May site from September 2024.**
- 4. Proposed merger/amalgamation of Baden Powell Primary School and Nightingale Primary School, onto the Nightingale site from September 2024.**

REASONS FOR DECISION

3.1. Summary

Following years of growth, the number of primary aged children joining Hackney primary schools has been in steady decline since 2014/15, a trend observed across London, and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Pupil numbers are forecast to continue falling until at least 2028.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equates to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource per school/child.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. Published Admission Numbers (PANs) reflect the maximum number of pupils schools can accommodate in each year group: this is derived from dividing the whole school PAN by the number of years within the school. Reductions to PANs have been implemented across several schools in recent years, however, they have not kept pace with falling numbers, leaving the surplus well above viable levels.

The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools. In

2023, the reception vacancy rate in Hackney was 21%. Without taking action, surplus reception places are forecast to rise above 25% by 2029.

Allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which will have an impact on education. This is because schools with less income have less money for staff salaries, for extra curricular activities, for equipment, to pay bills and carry out maintenance work. The quality of education and classroom support offered for children in these schools would deteriorate in time, as the affected schools would have to deplete surplus funds or go into deficit to maintain their current education offer.

The proposals outlined in this report begin to address the issue of falling rolls. The Hackney Education team will continue to work together with our schools to review and adjust future plans in line with the priorities outlined in the Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy to bring surplus places to within a sustainable range.

3.2. Demand for reception places

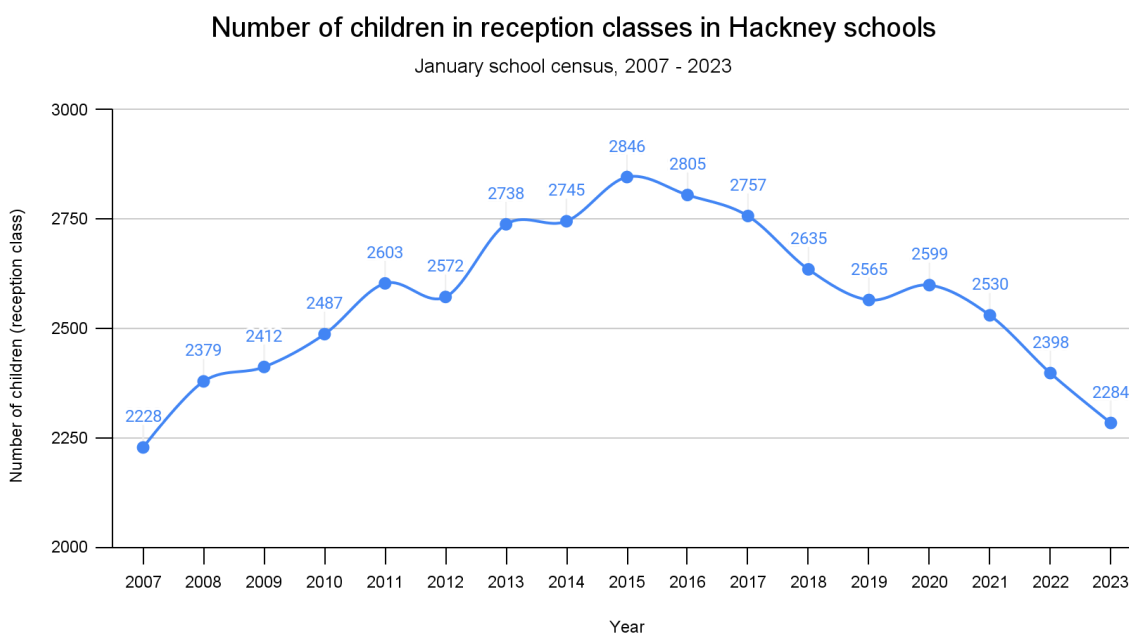
3.2.1. Historical and current demand

In 2007 a surge in demand for reception places began to occur in Hackney, a trend replicated across other London boroughs. In response to this, LAs created additional places, at speed, either through new provision or by implementing bulge classes in existing schools.

In addition, outside of Hackney Council's control, the Department for Education (DfE) approved the opening of four new free schools/academies, creating a further 290 unplanned reception places: The Olive School (Sep 2013), Hackney New Primary School (2015), Halley House School (Sep 2015), and Mossbourne Riverside Academy (2015). The current number and type of Hackney schools can be viewed in appendix A.

After the surge in demand for reception places between 2007/08 and 2014/15, demand has decreased, with the most recent years seeing drops of over 100 children each year. (Figure 1)

Figure 1.



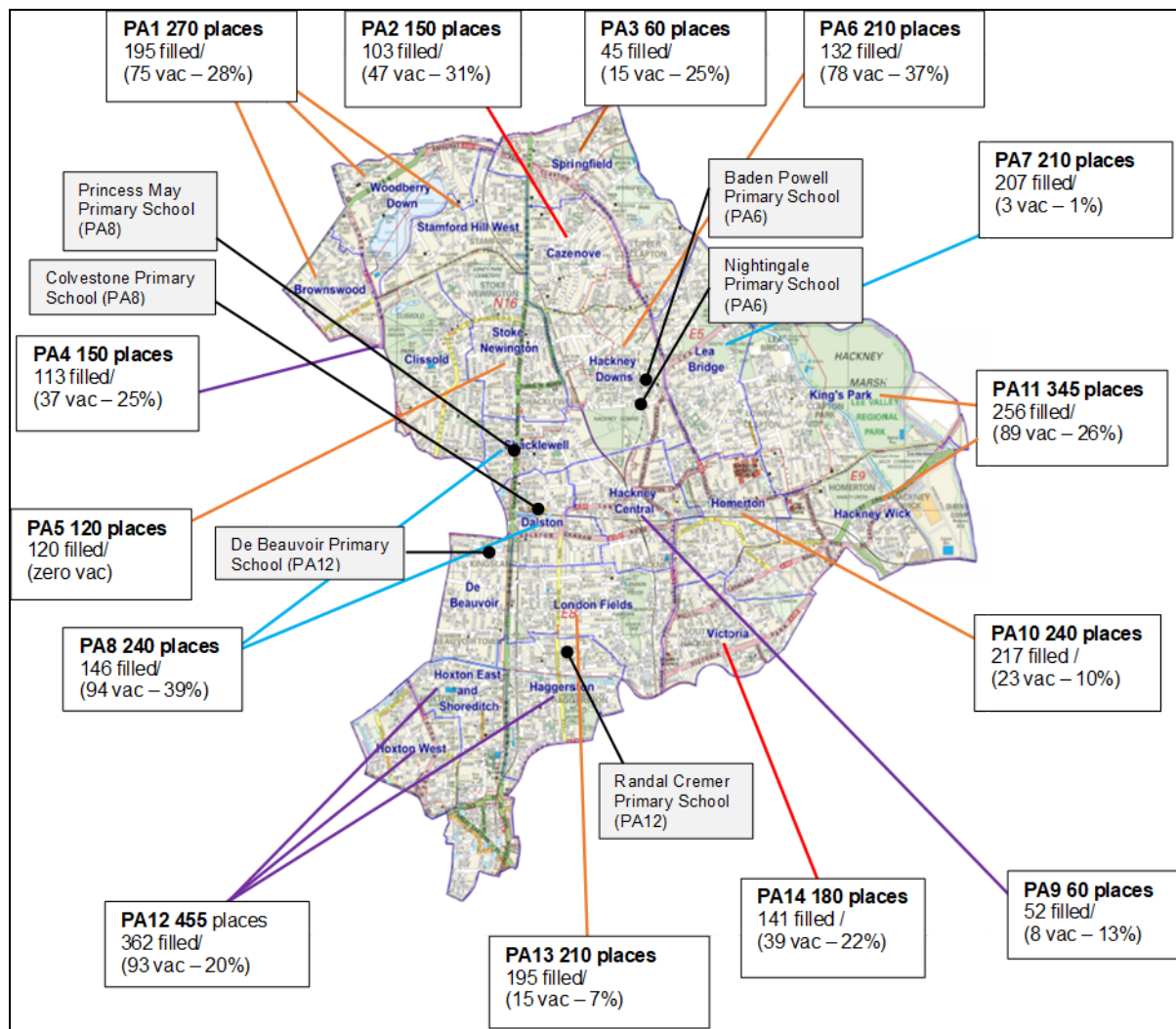
This London-wide decrease in the demand for reception places has resulted in LAs (including Hackney) having to take action to reduce the high levels of surplus reception places to more manageable levels.

Historically, LAs have sought to maintain a level of 5% - 10% surplus reception places against the total number of places available to accommodate in-year arrivals. However, as rolls have reduced, surplus reception rates have far exceeded the target level.

Figure 2 below shows the high level of surplus reception places throughout the borough at the latest school place census (January 2023), ranging from no vacancies to 39% vacant reception places in the individual planning areas (PAs).

Nine out of the fourteen planning areas (PAs) had a reception place surplus of 20% or more. Four of the fourteen planning areas had a surplus of 10% or below, covering the areas of Stoke Newington, Lower Clapton, Hackney Central and London Fields.

Figure 2. Surplus reception places by planning area (PA) - January 2023 census



Note: The location of the six primary schools proposed for amalgamation and/or closure are represented by the grey boxes.

3.2.2. Projected demand for reception places

Hackney commissions the Greater London Authority¹ to provide an annual school rolls projection output based on January school census data in the year that the projections are produced.²

¹ The Greater London Authority's (GLA) school roll projections service is commissioned by Hackney and the majority of London LAs. The GLA's model is extensive and utilises a range of data sets such as population, births, migration, fertility rates, GP registrations, school rolls and housing data to generate annual school roll projections.

² Every school in England has a statutory duty to complete the DfE School Census every term

For the 2024/25 academic year, the projected number of surplus places is predicted to fall to 18% as a result of the PAN reductions scheduled to come into effect from September 2023.

However, the projections go on to show a year on year rise in surplus places until 2027 due to fewer projected children and no further school organisation changes being proposed. Between 2027 and the end of the projection period (2031), the surplus is projected to stagnate at 25-26%.

Table 1. GLA projected number of reception children compared to the number of places available

Academic Year	Reception projections based on January 2022 census	Number of places available based on PANs	Projected surplus places based on PANs	% surplus places based on PANs
2024/25	2274	2780	506	18%
2025/26	2202	2780	578	21%
2026/27	2130	2780	650	23%
2027/28	2097	2780	683	25%
2028/29	2072	2780	708	25%
2029/30	2059	2780	721	26%
2030/31	2060	2780	720	26%
2031/32	2060	2780	720	26%

Projections become less robust the further forward the data projects. This risk is mitigated by ensuring that the number of reception applications are routinely monitored against current projections data. It is clear that further action must be taken to reduce surplus places. The next set of projections based on January 2023 census data is expected by the end of May 2023 and is likely to reflect a further decline in demand for reception places.

3.2.3. Factors driving the reduction in reception demand

Demand for reception places depends upon a range of factors including parental perceptions of schools in a given area, parental choice, birth rates, migration and the ability to afford to live in an area.

The reasons for Hackney's declining numbers are multifaceted, but include a combination of falling birth rates, changes to welfare benefits, the housing crisis, increases in the cost of living, the withdrawal of the right of entry and freedom of movement from EU nationals (Brexit) and as a result of families leaving London during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many of these factors remain outside the Council's control and are no fault of the schools or their current leadership.

A report on [Managing Surplus School Places in London \(2023\)](#) published by London Councils in January 2023 provides some wider context and independent analysis of the issue.

3.3. Reducing the surplus through managing published admissions numbers (PANs)

For the reception intakes in 2019, 2022 and 2023 a total of 375 reception places were removed through reducing PANs, with the result that the projected surplus is likely to reduce to 18% in the 2024/25 academic year.

Hackney Council has the authority to reduce school [PANs](#) at all community schools (ie. 38 out of 58 primary schools), and to recommend PAN reductions at the remaining 20 academies, free or faith schools. The final decision to reduce PAN at these schools rests with their governing body or academy trust.

Reducing a school's PAN (e.g. from 60 to 30) allows governors and school leaders to plan for and employ fewer staff knowing they will only need one teacher for each year group.

However, while PAN reductions directly reduce the number of surplus places, they are not a long term solution because the size of the school building remains unchanged. The unused space (eg. empty classrooms) that PAN reductions create in schools must still be maintained, heated etc, and this draws on resources that could be more directly used to educate and support children.

The Council continues to consider reducing PANs wherever possible at schools significantly affected by falling rolls. Further details of PAN reductions are available in appendix B.

Diocese

Of the 58 primary schools in Hackney, 11 are faith based Roman Catholic or Church of England primaries (19%). The 2021 Census data found that 30.7% of Hackney residents identify as Christian. It is important that we retain an appropriate mix of faith-based schools to reflect the needs and beliefs of our communities.

While the Council is not the decision maker regarding PAN reductions at faith schools, it should be noted that the relevant dioceses have taken steps to reduce their combined published admission numbers to reflect changes in Hackney's population.

Each Roman Catholic primary school has moved to one form of entry, thereby reducing their total PAN by 60, from 180 to 120. For September 2023 starters, there were 157 applications for 120 places.

In spite of most Church schools being one form of entry, the Church of England primary schools have reduced their overall PAN by 15, with a further 30 places removed temporarily via an informal cap. This reduces places from 285 to 240. For September 2023 starters, there were 284 applications for 240 places.

The Council will continue to work within a collaborative process and take a graduated approach in partnership with both dioceses.

3.4. The impact of falling rolls and surplus places

The impact of fewer children starting reception in individual schools creates challenges for school leaders and needs to be managed both individually and collectively.

This impacts disproportionately with oversubscribed schools being unaffected while others are now facing serious financial pressure after year-on-year declines to their roll. This impacts on the efficient running of schools, financial stability and education outcomes as outlined below.

3.4.1. School income and deficit

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll and falling rolls equates to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools in Hackney remains unchanged, there are effectively less financial resources per school/child.

Figure 3

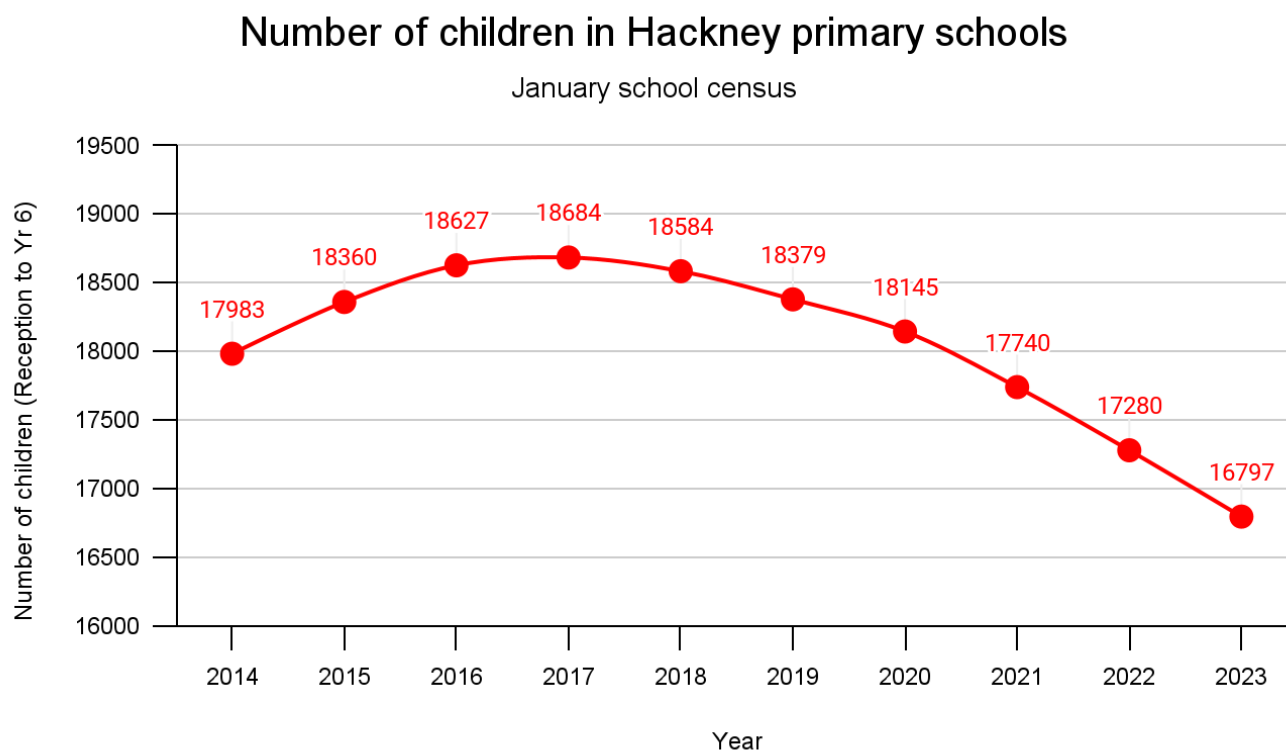


Figure 3 shows the falling number of children in Hackney primary schools, down by 1,776 between 2018 and 2023. This reduced borough-wide roll means that in 2022/23, Hackney receives circa £11.5m less Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)³ Schools Block funding based on 2022/23 per pupil funding rates, compared with 2018/19.

In accordance with DfE funding regulations, the majority of school funding must be allocated on the basis of pupil numbers. The impact of surplus places can be significant to a school's overall budget and financial viability.

In the 2022/23 academic year, for every surplus place that a maintained primary school carries, it loses on average £6,484 per pupil, meaning that a 33% surplus equates to approximately £64,840 in lost potential income per class while there is no change to the number of year groups or class teachers.

High levels of surplus places results directly in a reduction in income, which can lead to deficit budgets. Falling rolls is a major theme that runs through the

³ The dedicated schools grant (DSG) is payable to local authorities under section 14 of the Education Act 2002. Local authorities are responsible for determining the split of the grant between central expenditure and the individual schools budget (ISB) in conjunction with local schools forums. Local authorities are responsible for allocating the ISB to individual schools in accordance with the local schools' funding formula.

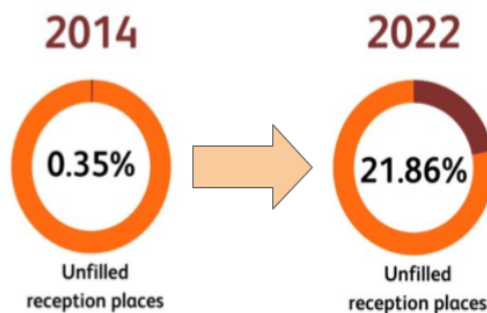
budget planning considerations of many schools in financial difficulty. A number of schools are currently managing small year group sizes that prove to be uneconomical and require adopting a more flexible approach to resourcing i.e. vertical grouping (children from different years groups taught together) and capping of PAN.

To manage and balance budgets, many Hackney school leaders have had to make efficiencies and innovations, which include reducing costs and exploring opportunities to increase income, for example, by hiring out facilities. However, in many cases these options have already been taken and budgets are still under pressure before they must deal with the financial impact of surplus school places.

What is the impact for Hackney schools?

School funding is based on the number of children on roll. Every empty space means less money comes into school budgets.

Unfilled **reception** places in Hackney schools



634 unfilled reception places in 2022/23

£4.11 million less funding for schools

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Whilst federations can provide some financial support through economies of scale, our current data in relation to budget deficits suggests that it does not protect schools sufficiently. Deficit budgets of course directly contribute to a school's lack of viability.

It is key that schools experiencing falling rolls produce realistic 3-year budget plans (in accordance with DfE requirements for all schools) and deficit recovery plans (if necessary), and consider their options regarding future financial viability. These options could include staffing restructures, reducing costs, amalgamating with (an)other school(s) and potentially closure.



What is the impact for Hackney schools?

4,685 unfilled places in Hackney schools
(all year groups, all schools, October 2022)



more than **£30 million less funding** for schools in Hackney
every year !

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3.4.2. School performance and outcomes

While school performance and Ofsted grading often helps to strengthen demand and protects a school from falling rolls, this isn't the case for Hackney, as 94.7% of primary schools in the borough are rated good or outstanding.

Managing school performance in the context of falling rolls requires governors and school leaders to make difficult decisions affecting changes to provision for existing pupils. eg. around restructuring the staffing complement or the removal of important enrichment provision or wrap-around provision such as after school clubs to balance reducing budgets.

What has been done already?

Further detail provided within the report. In summary, the Council and school leaders have:

- reduced the admission number at schools that don't fill up.
- combined different year groups to keep schools financially viable.
- reduced their staffing resources to balance budgets.

The Council has no control over the factors causing a reduction in school aged children.

The Council must now start looking at schools that have been hardest-hit by falling pupil numbers and budget pressures and consider school closures or mergers.

3.4.3. Schools with excess physical space and large sites

Reduced budgets impact on schools' ability to set aside sufficient budget to deal with day to day repair and maintenance issues as resources must be prioritised to deal with staffing and delivery of education.

This can have a significant impact on larger school buildings and sites with fewer pupils which will have higher premises costs. Underinvestment in the premises will create longer term issues and increased need for capital funding to deal with a lack of maintenance.

Many schools who have had their PANs reduced or capped still have larger buildings and sites to maintain, while having a significantly smaller budget.

3.4.4. Roll instability

Surplus places make it easier for families to move their children from school to school, as so many have vacancies. These unplanned transfers between schools present significant challenges for schools, as high levels of mobility can be unsettling for schools, and may require significant additional resources to properly induct and support new starters.

School admissions regulations protect parental preference, meaning that regardless of whether the new school is in a position financially to meet the joining child's needs, they are obliged to admit.

3.4.5. Quality of education offer

Schools with reduced budgets have less income for support staff such as teaching assistants and learning mentors, who provide important support for pupils through academic and pastoral interventions. Specialist teachers with expertise in physical education, languages or art become too expensive, meaning primary class teachers who may not be skilled or trained in these areas have to teach these subjects themselves. It is also common in small schools to see leaders double up on roles, such as headteachers taking on the SENCO responsibility.

As budget pressure becomes greater, and class sizes drop below 50%, schools must also consider the option of vertically grouped classes to avoid going into deficit. This involves a sufficiently experienced and able teacher being employed to teach children from across two year groups in the same classroom. Vertical grouping brings increased complexity in day to day management and organisation and increased workload for the teacher. The challenges of recruiting and retaining skilled and experienced teachers in London can make schools under grave financial pressure less attractive.

In addition, limited budgets mean that occasional but important work to maintain the quality of experience at school is not taken forward in a timely manner e.g. the computers used by staff and children become increasingly

obsolete and need replacement, sometimes across the whole school at once due to their original purchase being made in bulk.

3.5. Impact of new housing and regeneration

There are proposed areas for regeneration and new housing across the borough and in some of the areas close to the schools covered in this report. However, despite the extensive council and family housing planned, the expected initial child yield is low and thus would not impact on school place demand in the short to medium term, and there would remain enough school places to accommodate need. Projections obtained annually from the Greater London Authority take into account proposed new developments that have attained planning permission.

Adopted in July 2020, the Hackney Local Plan 2033 (LP33), requires that all new development in the borough have regard to existing social infrastructure, which includes the provision of education facilities. Within LP33, policy LP8 states that *'where proposed development is expected to place pressure on existing social infrastructure by increasing demand, these developments will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional social infrastructure to meet needs, either through on-site provision or through contributions towards providing additional capacity off-site.'*

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which informed the policies within LP33, notes that while the borough's population is expected to increase to 321,000 by 2033 (42,000 higher than in 2018), that the age mix of the borough is anticipated to shift towards the older community with the growth in over 65s being four times greater than the growth in the school age population, ages 0-15.

Since 2011, the Council's in-house building programme has delivered more than 1,000 new homes, prioritising homes for Council social rent. Between 2018 and 2022, we started, completed or received planning permission for 1,984 homes – more than half being genuinely affordable. Over the next few years, we'll also complete 1,146 homes, including 255 social rent homes and 136 shared ownership homes, on the existing programmes of council homes.

This means that between 2022 to 2026, we'll start building, and support partners to build, 1,000 new homes for social rent through a mix of methods. In this context, the Mayor and Cabinet agreed, in December 2022, a direct programme of 400 additional new homes on sites we've identified via our HRA asset base; 75% of which are proposed for Council social rent.

While there are variances across the different housing tenures, across the Councils programme as a whole, just over 70% of the homes delivered have been 1 and 2 bed homes; with just under 30% comprising a mix of 3 and 4 bed family sized homes. This is broadly consistent with policy LP14 as outlined in LP33, which, depending on the tenure of housing, requires all new developments to comprise a mix of family sized homes, ranging from 15 to 36%. Despite Hackney building new homes the numbers will be insufficient to

have any significant impact on the proposals in this report for schools in scope for closure or amalgamation.

Options for reducing surplus places

A review of schools with falling rolls has been undertaken to identify how excess places can be removed from Hackney's school estate from September 2024. A range of options, outlined below can be implemented to achieve this in addition to the PAN reductions already outlined in this report.

3.5.1. Merger / Amalgamation

An amalgamation can only be achieved by closing one or more schools and providing spaces for displaced children in another 'host' school. This option would involve the host school retaining its original DfE school number as it is not technically considered a new school. However, following the amalgamation process, governors have the option to rename the school to create a new identity for the merged schools.

Historically, an amalgamation would have involved the closure of multiple schools and the creation of one new school. However, under current legislation, this option would fall under the 'free school presumption' meaning that the Local Authority is unable to open a new school, but instead are placed under a duty to seek proposers for a free school/academy.

3.5.2. Closure

The DfE advises that school closure decisions should be taken when there is no demand for the school in the medium to long term and there are sufficient places elsewhere to accommodate displaced children.

A school closure would see a school cease to exist as a statutory entity with all displaced children taking places in other local schools. School closures can take the form of a full and immediate closure, whereby all children on roll are supported to find places in other local schools, or the closure can be 'staggered'. Full and immediate closures are recommended in this report.

A staggered closure option would cease the admission of children into reception each year until all remaining children have worked their way through to year 6, at which time the school would close. While this may be a less disruptive option for some families, it significantly increases the financial burden and further damages the quality of education at the school as pupils do not benefit from the mixing of year groups they would usually experience.

3.6. Options review process to identify schools at risk

Following approval of the School Estates Strategy by Cabinet in February 2022, the Council developed the framework outlined below to include objective measures impacting on a school's viability, using available key data to identify the schools most at risk from falling rolls.

Criterion A - was the starting point for review:

Schools were reviewed based on meeting one of the following three criteria:

- 25% or greater surplus reception places;
- 25% or greater surplus physical capacity;
- budget deficit in the top 10 schools raising most financial concern.

Criterion B - The list created from the above criteria A was then refined to include:

- schools meeting more than one of the initial three criteria, or
- schools with greater than 45% surplus reception places.
- Additional schools falling outside these criteria were also considered where they are located geographically near a shortlisted school and identified as a potential partner for amalgamation.

Criterion C - The list created from the above B criteria was further refined:

- The list of schools derived from the above quantitative data driven criteria were then reviewed for further data and qualitative considerations.
- The community schools were reviewed based on: locality and geographic partnership options [walking distances], suitability of site to host an amalgamation and finally overall school effectiveness and quality of education, as indicated by current Ofsted grading, trajectory of pupil outcome data and local reporting.

Finally, a feasibility review of the options created from the above criteria was completed, this included:

- Number check on projected school pupil numbers and check if all pupils would fit in the proposed amalgamated school for September 2024.
- If closures were proposed, a review of nearby schools with surplus places was completed to ensure alternative options were available nearby.
- Community impact and children centre locations.
- The impact of local area plans, such as whether new neighbourhoods and new-build estates will create significantly more need for school places in that area in the future.

The proposals that have been included in this report are a direct result of the application of that options review process.

Proposals	Number of Places removed [per year]
1. De Beauvoir - closure	30
2. Colvestone & Princess May - amalgamate on Princess May site	30
3. Baden Powell & Nightingale - amalgamate on Nightingale site	30
4. Randal Cremer - closure	45
Total	135

3.7. Individual school data for the 6 school proposed for closure/merger

3.7.1. De Beauvoir Primary school - Closure proposal

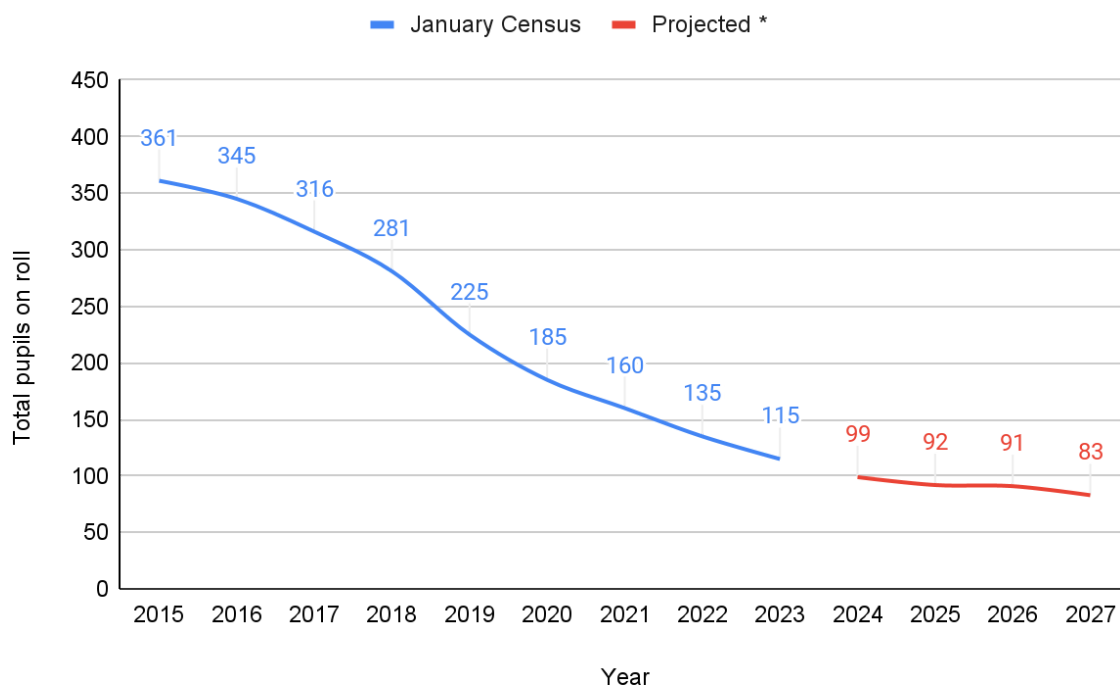
3.7.1.1. Background

De Beauvoir Primary School is a 1 form entry school in the south-west of Hackney. The school was graded good when inspected in January 2022. The school sees positive outcomes in primary assessments 2022.

Prior to 2018, the school had a PAN of 60. This was reduced to 30 from September 2019. From September 2021, the school has been operating a capped PAN of 15, which is unprecedented for Hackney.

The January 2023 census recorded 13 reception children on roll for a capped PAN of 15 places (official PAN is 30). There were a total of 10 offers made on national offer day for children to join the school in September 2023.

De Beauvoir - Pupils on roll



* assumes 10 children join reception each year and that no children leave or join the school in other year groups. Based on reception to year 6 primary phase only.

3.7.1.2. Financial position

Financial Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Brought Forward Balance	-73,473.57	-212,875.50	-125,557	82,566 *	140,418

*De Beauvoir school received the sum of £154,132, in support of the directed PAN reduction in the financial year 2021-22.

3.7.1.3. Reason for proposed closure

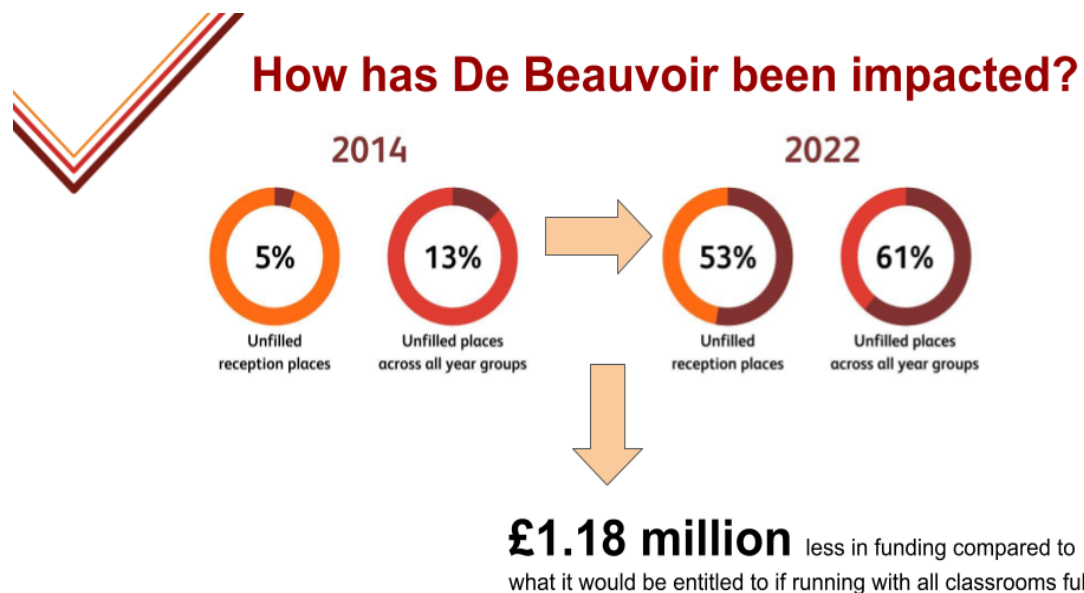
Due to sustained falling rolls over several years, the school will not be financially viable in the future. Despite a capped PAN of 15, the school has been unable to fill all the places. A total of 10 children were offered places to join reception in September 2023 on national offer day.

At the January 2023 census, De Beauvoir recorded 13 children in Reception (a surplus of 17 places, or 57%) and 115 children across all year groups (a surplus of 185 places, or 62%).

Based on the number of children on roll, 73% of the intended capacity of the school building is unused.

The school remains financially viable through vertically grouping of all year groups. This is not a model of school organisation that is encouraged or sustainable as it brings increased complexity in day to day management and organisation and brings increased workload for teachers and leaders who often need to pick up multiple roles.

Should De Beauvoir close, there are several nearby schools (all of which have been graded 'Good' or Outstanding' by Ofsted) that also have low rolls that children can transfer to. These schools include Holy Trinity, Princess May and St Matthias - all 16 minutes or less walk away and 0.52 miles and under. If a decision is made to progress with a closure, further information and support for families affected will be provided from the admissions team throughout the process.



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3.7.1.4. Impact and equalities

If the proposal is agreed, by September 2024, De Beauvoir Primary School is projected to have approximately 95 pupils who will need to find an alternative school. There is a high incidence of need at the school with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) numbers at De Beauvoir of 10 [which is 9%], and pupils on [free school meals](#) (FSM) [67%], both above the Hackney average [Spring 2023 Census, reception to year 6]. The school has 20 staff members [including classroom teachers, head teacher, other support staff, teaching assistants]. Additional support to enable a smooth transition will be offered to affected pupils who have EHCPs.

3.7.2. Colvestone Primary School & Princess May Primary School - Amalgamation proposal

3.7.2.1. Background

Princess May School is currently graded good by Ofsted (October 2017) and has strong Year 2 and 6 outcomes. The school is continuously improving.

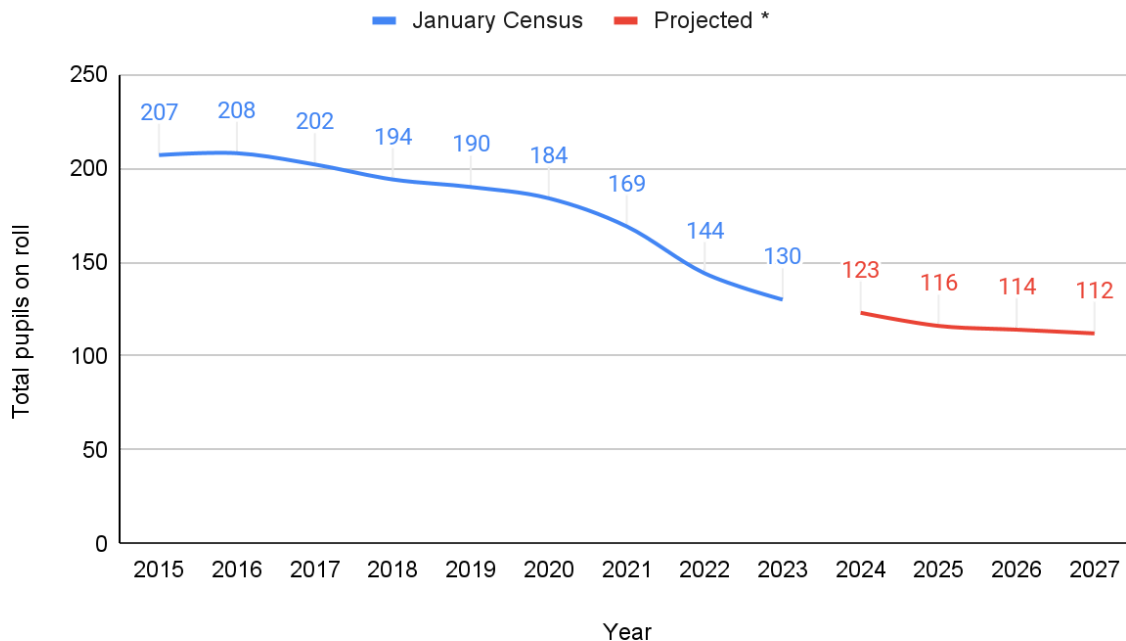
Colvestone School is also graded good (March 2018) and has strong Year 2 and 6 outcomes. The school was part of the Soaring Skies Federation with Thomas Fairchild school. This was dissolved by its governors in 2021 because, as reported by Ofsted after a monitoring inspection in May 2021, ‘...Thomas Fairchild has not improved quickly enough following the previous inspection in 2020’.

Both the executive headteacher and head of school left in August 2022.

Subsequently, the school is in a soft partnership with the Blossom Federation until July 2024 to receive leadership and business support. Colvestone is also receiving intensive level support which brings additional school improvement adviser time and funding for curriculum development from Hackney Education as part of its [Good to Great Policy](#) due to the changes in leadership.

At Colvestone, the January 2023 census recorded 18 reception children on roll for a PAN of 30 places. There were a total of 12 offers made on national offer day for children to join the school in September 2023.

Colvestone - Pupils on roll

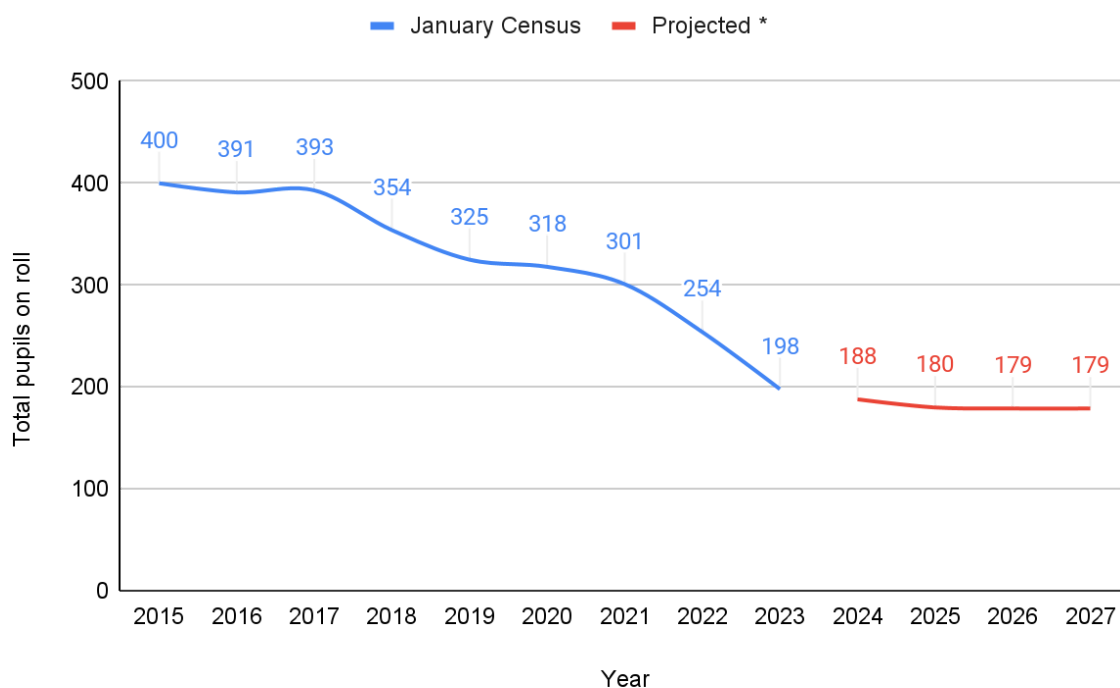


* assumes 12 children join reception each year and that no children leave or join the school in other year groups.

Based on reception to year 6 primary phase only.

At Princess May, the January 2023 census recorded 19 reception children on roll for a PAN of 60 places. There were a total of 29 offers made on national offer day for children to join the school in September 2023.

Princess May - Pupils on roll



* assumes 29 children join reception each year and that no children leave or join the school in other year groups. Based on reception to year 6 primary phase only.

3.7.2.2. Financial position

Colvestone

Financial Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Brought Forward Balance	-300,669.36	-475,486.70	-664,807	-589,966	-561,646*

*Colvestone was granted £50k from contingency in the financial year 2022-23 to aid the stabilisation of the school post de-federation.

Princess May

Financial Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Brought Forward Balance	361,302.83	88,584.70	48,454	24,947	29,630

3.7.2.3. Reason for proposed amalgamation

At Colvestone, in 2014 Reception was full with no unfilled places and there were 3% unfilled places across all year groups (6 places out of 210). By January 2023 there were 40% unfilled Reception places (12 places out of 30) and 38% unfilled places (80 places out of 210, or nearly 3 classes) across all year groups.

At Princess May, in 2014 there were 2% unfilled Reception places (1 place out of 60) and 6% unfilled places across all year groups (24 places out of 420). By 2022 this had increased to 68% unfilled Reception places (41 places out of 60) and 53% unfilled places (222 places out of 420, or more than 7 classes) across all year groups. This downward trend is forecast to continue. There is a temporary PAN of 30 in operation for Reception, Yr 1, Yr 3, Yr 4 and Yr 5.

Other schools within the Blossom Federation were not considered for amalgamation with Colvestone due to the distance between them.

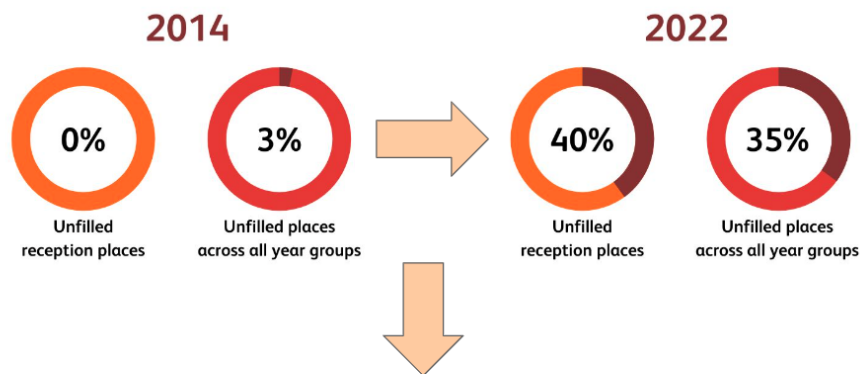
Princess May and Colvestone both featured on the list of schools derived from applying the criteria and are both facing the issue of falling rolls. The proposal to amalgamate with Princess May is due to the close proximity of the schools, minimising disruption, but also due to both schools having a high surplus as well as high unused capacity in their buildings. Princess May is 0.3 miles away from Colvestone, which is a 6-minute walk between the two schools. The process of amalgamating the two schools would create a stronger educational establishment.

The decision to propose an amalgamation on the Princess May site takes into account the capacity to host the merger. Princess May school is a 2 form entry building with a current net capacity of 420. Based on the number of children on roll, 53% of the intended capacity of the Princess May school building is unused.

Colvestone is a 1 form entry school, the capacity of the school is 243 at the latest net capacity assessment (the number of pupils that could be accommodated at the school). Based on the number of children on roll, 47% of the intended capacity of the Colvestone school building is unused. The existing buildings at Colvestone do not have the physical capacity to accommodate pupils from Princess May.



How has Colvestone been impacted?



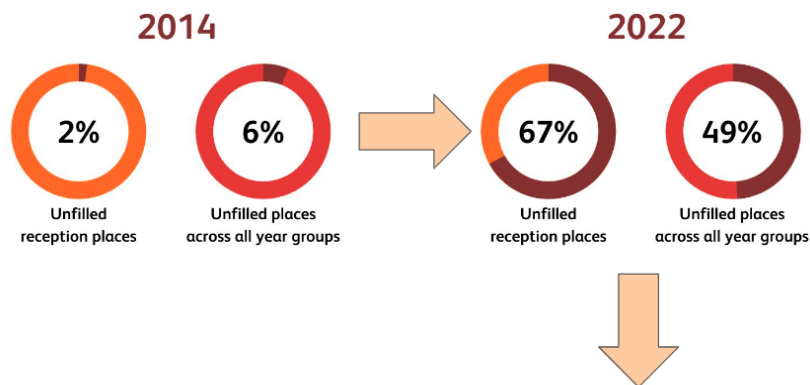
£470,000 less in funding compared to what it would be entitled to if running with all classrooms full

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How has Princess May been impacted?



£1.3 million less in funding compared to what it would be entitled to if running with all classrooms full

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3.7.2.4. Impact and equalities

If the proposal is agreed, by September 2024, Colvestone is projected to have approximately 120 pupils who would move to the Princess May site. There is a high incidence of need with EHCP numbers at Colvestone of 10 [which is 8%] and Princess May of 10 [5%], and pupils on FSM at Colvestone of 35% and of 46% at Princess May [Spring 2023 census, reception to year 6]. Additional support to enable a smooth transition will be offered to affected pupils who have EHCPs.

Colvestone has 18 staff members and there are 29 staff members at Princess May [including classroom teachers, head teacher, other support staff, teaching assistants].

Postcode analysis on average time parents travel to school shows that Colvestone parents travel on average 10 minutes by walking, and travelling to Princess May would make the average travel time 13 minutes to get to school. By comparison, current Princess May families on average travel 14 minutes walking to get to school.

3.7.2.5. Travel to school routes for merger proposals - Impact assessment

An analysis of key journeys based on clusters of Colvestone pupil postcodes was completed and mapped on Google Maps to highlight key desire lines for travel to Princess May. These key routes have been used to identify potential impacts on active travel to Princess May Primary School. They include:

- A proportion of pupils will need to cross the A10 to get to Princess May, with most Colvestone pupils living east of the A10. Approximately half of current Princess May pupils live east of the A10 and already make a similar journey.
- A10 is a much less child friendly walking route to school than surrounding quiet residential roads that pupils may have previously used.
- Dunn Street may become more heavily used for active travel to school, to avoid walking along the A10, this road has narrow and inconsistent pavements.
- Downs Park Road between Amhurst Road and St Mark's Rise may become more heavily used for active travel to school.

The following measures are proposed to mitigate the above impacts:

- An assessment of safe crossing points with which we engage Transport for London, as the strategic transport authority with responsibility for the A10. TfL are planning a new crossing across the A10 at Sandringham Road as part of the Cycleway 23 route, along with restrictions to vehicle movements from Sandringham Road onto the A10 that will make it easier to cross Sandringham Road as well.
- Completion of the Cycleway 23 route connecting Lea Bridge to Dalston
- The Council has committed to implement a low traffic neighbourhood east of the A10, which will reduce traffic, and improve walking and cycling routes in the area.
- Monitor footfall on Dunn Street and conduct a footway inspection to consider pavement improvements if needed.
- Monitor recent traffic scheme at the junction of Downs Park Road and St Mark's Rise, which improved the westbound cycle lane.

- Additional public realm improvements on Princess May Road and Barrett's Grove considering the higher number of children using them following the amalgamation.

In addition to the mitigations outlined above, pupils of Princess May Primary school already benefit from a School Streets scheme, which was permanently implemented in 2022 to reduce traffic congestion around the school estate at the beginning and end of the school day, thereby improving road safety. Additionally, as a matter of course, the Council will continue to undertake a rolling programme of traffic monitoring in the area, to ensure that any existing and new measures remain appropriate.

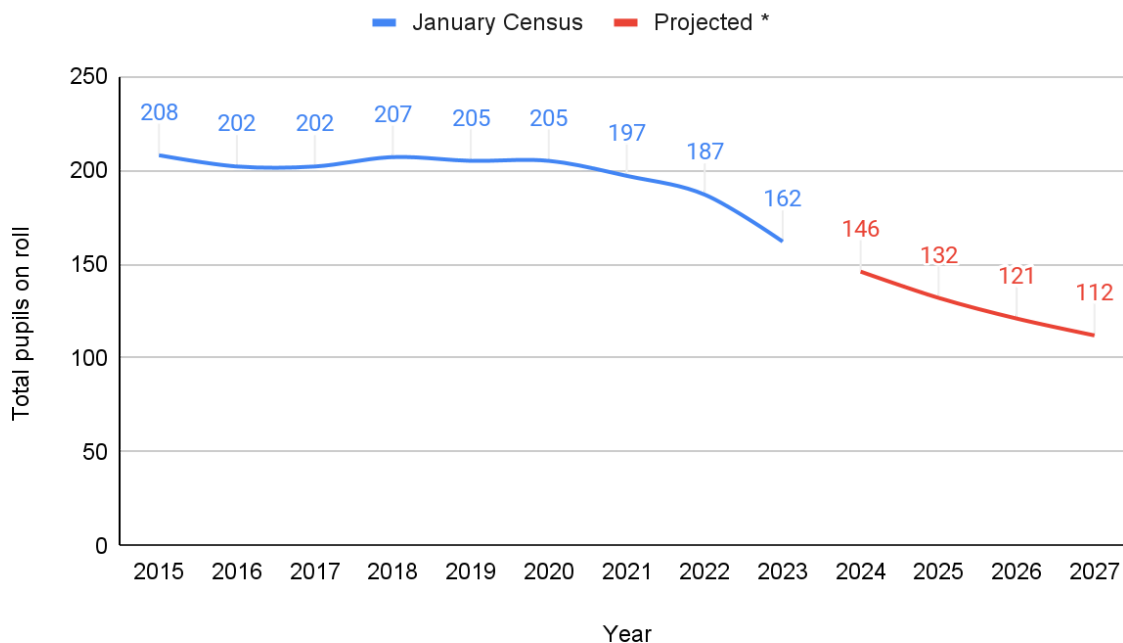
3.7.3. Baden Powell Primary School & Nightingale Primary School - Amalgamation proposal

3.7.3.1. Background

Nightingale Primary School is currently graded Good by Ofsted (November 2017). It has strong 2022 Year 6 outcomes and has a good curriculum model in place. The school is on an upward trajectory. The January 2023 census recorded 30 reception children on roll for a PAN of 30 places. There were a total of 30 offers made on national offer day for children to join the school in September 2023. The school is not currently impacted by falling rolls consistently, maintaining less than 10% surplus places in recent years.

Baden Powell is graded good by Ofsted (October 2018). Its Year 6 outcomes are higher than the national average and it is performing well. The January 2023 census recorded 15 reception children on roll for a PAN of 30 places. There were a total of 13 offers made on national offer day for children to join the school in September 2023.

Baden Powell - Pupils on roll



* assumes 13 children join reception each year and that no children leave or join the school in other year groups. Based on reception to year 6 primary phase only.

3.7.3.2. Financial Position (Baden Powell)

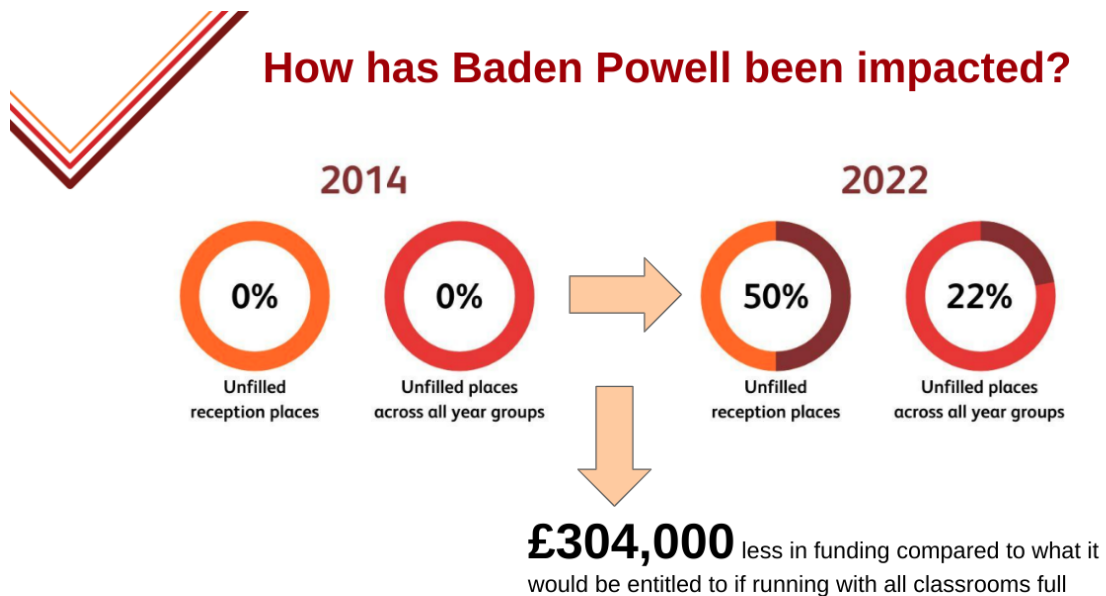
Financial Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Brought Forward Balance	313,664	257,386	274,666	111,747	31,768

3.7.3.3. Reason for proposed amalgamation

Baden Powell Primary School has been affected by falling rolls. In 2014 the school was full to capacity in every year group. By January 2023 there were 50% unfilled Reception places (15 places out of 30) and 23% unfilled places (48 places out of 210, or more than one class) across all year groups. This downward trend is forecast to continue. Baden Powell school was selected for a proposed amalgamation after applying the selection criteria, as one of the schools most affected by the falling rolls.

Nightingale has a net capacity of 420 which is the actual physical capacity of the building. With 198 pupils on roll there currently is 53% unused capacity in the building. There is sufficient capacity on the Nightingale site to accommodate the children from Baden Powell. Nightingale school was

selected to host an amalgamation because this school is in a new building which was built for 2FE, and currently operating at 1FE due to the low pupil numbers in the area.



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3.7.3.4. Impact and equalities

If the proposal is agreed, by September 2024, an estimate of 140 children would move from Baden Powell to Nightingale. There is a high incidence of need at the schools, with the pupils with an EHCP at Baden Powell at 8, [this is 5%], and at Nightingale 22, [this is 11%]. The percentage of pupils on FSM is 51% at Baden Powell and 44% at Nightingale [Spring 2023 census, reception to year 6]. Additional support to enable a smooth transition will be offered to affected pupils who have EHCPs. Staff numbers at Baden Powell are 34 and at Nightingale are 33 [including classroom teachers, head teacher, other support staff, teaching assistants].

Postcode analysis on average travel time to school shows that Baden Powell parents travel on average 8 minutes by walking, and travelling to Nightingale would keep the same average walking travel time. By comparison, current Nightingale families on average travel 9 minutes walking to get to school.

3.7.3.5. Travel to school routes for merger proposals - Impact assessment

An analysis of key journeys based on clusters of Baden Powell pupil postcodes was completed and mapped on Google Maps to highlight key desire lines for travel to Nightingale. These key routes have been used to identify potential impacts on active travel to Nightingale Primary School. They include:

- In terms of travel, overall, there appears to be very limited impact, as Nightingale is very close to Baden Powell. It is a 2 minute walk between schools.
- For those living south of Hackney Downs the journey will be shorter, and pupils can continue to travel through Hackney Downs to lower exposure to traffic on their journey to school.
- The cut-throughs from Charnock Road and Heyworth Road will become increasingly important and utilised (connect Baden Powell to Nightingale).

Mitigation measures:

- Potentially child focused improvements to the cut-throughs from Charnock Road and Heyworth Road.
- There would be more children using Tiger Way in case of an amalgamation, so additional public realm improvements may be beneficial, including school focused planters, or planters to indicate School Street.

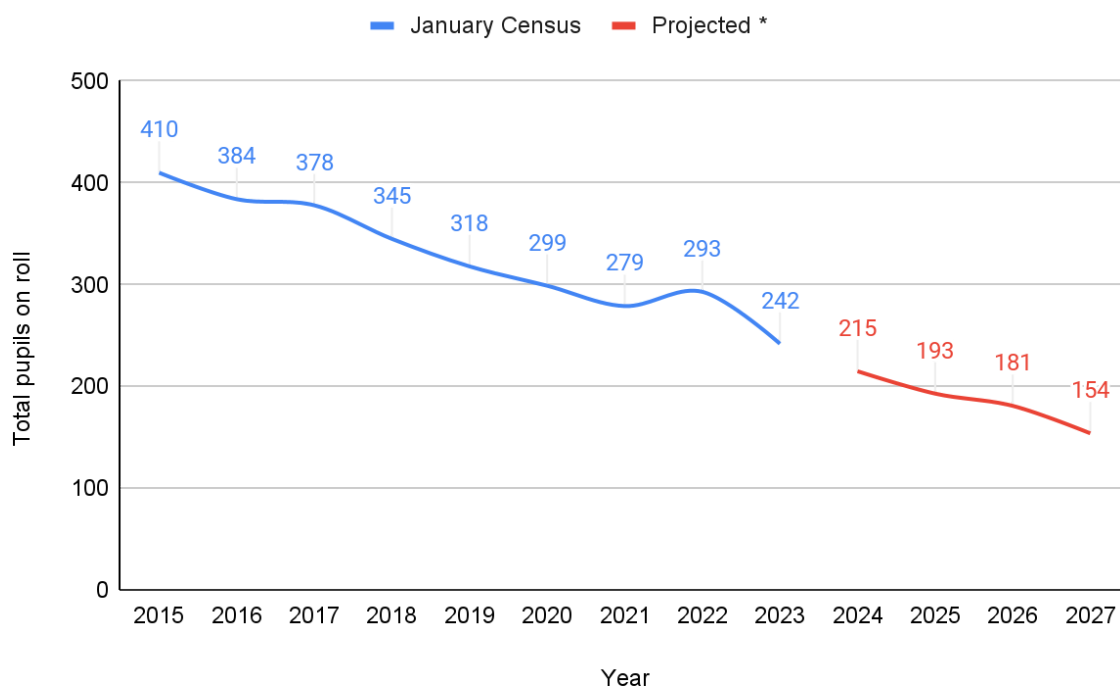
3.7.4. Randal Cremer - Closure proposal

3.7.4.1. Background

Randal Cremer is currently graded good by Ofsted (March 2020). The school has managed well despite the impact falling rolls has had on leadership capacity. Assessment data in 2022 was low. The school is currently receiving focussed support from Hackney Education as part of the Good to Great policy.

The January 2023 census recorded 29 reception children on roll for a PAN of 45 places. There were a total of 16 offers made on national offer day for children to join the school in September 2023.

Randal Cremer - Pupils on roll



* assumes 16 children join reception each year and that no children leave or join the school in other year groups. Based on reception to year 6 primary phase only.

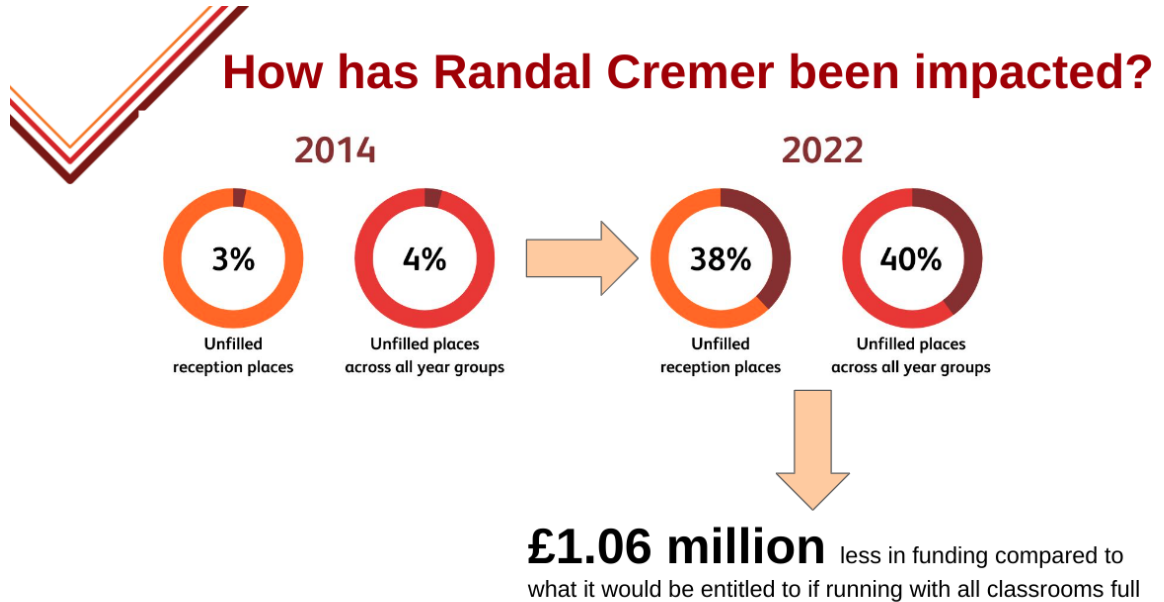
3.7.4.2. Financial Position (Randal Cremer)

Financial Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Brought Forward Balance	37,601	42,574	179,035	273,791	310,032

3.7.4.3. Reason for closure proposal

Randal Cremer Primary School has been severely affected by falling rolls. In 2014 there were 3% unfilled Reception places (2 places out of 60) and 4%

unfilled places (15 places out of 420) across all year groups. By January 2023 the surplus had increased to 36% unfilled Reception places (16 places out of 45) and 40% unfilled places (163 places out of 405, or more than 5 classes) across all year groups. Based on the number of children on roll, 41% of the intended capacity of the Randal Cremer school building is unused.



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3.7.4.4. Consideration of an amalgamation with other nearby schools

Options were considered for amalgamation, but there was no local school located close enough [walking distance] with the required surplus to take all of the pupils. However, there are sufficient schools nearby with surplus places that could accommodate the pupils from Randal Cremer. Hoxton Garden, Sebright, St Monica's and St John the Baptist are likely destination schools - they are all under 0.45 miles away from Randal Cremer as the crow flies [all under 13 minutes walking] and all Ofsted rated Good or Outstanding.

If a decision is made to progress with a closure, further information and support for families affected will be provided from the admissions team throughout the process

3.7.4.5. Impact and equalities

If the proposal is agreed, by September 2024, Randal Cremer Primary School is projected to have around 200 pupils who will need to find an alternative school. The school has 56 staff members [including classroom teachers, head teachers, other support staff, teaching assistants]. There is a high incidence of need at the school with EHCP numbers at Randal Cremer of 14 [6%], and the percentage of pupils on FSM at 51% [Spring 2023 Census, reception to year 6]. Additional support to enable a smooth transition will be offered to affected pupils who have EHCPs.

4.7.5 Air Quality review

Air quality as measured by average Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) at the six school sites in Hackney was reviewed. For 2021 all of the diffusion tubes located near these schools were well below the Hackney air quality objective of 40 (µg/m³), as seen in table below.

Site name	2021 NO ₂ annual concentration (µg/m ³)	Pollutants monitored
Randal Cremer Primary School	20	NO ₂
Nightingale Primary School	19	NO ₂
Baden-Powell Primary School	18	NO ₂
De Beavior primary school	20	NO ₂
Colvestone Primary School	23	NO ₂
Princess May 1	23	NO ₂
Princess May 2	32	NO ₂

[Source: Hackney Air Quality Annual Status report/](#)

<https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality>

4. DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

4.1. Option 1 - No action

If the Council takes no action to remove places from the system in 2024, and the fall in pupil numbers continues as projected, the increasing impact of empty reception places will escalate from a projected 18% (506 reception places) in 2024, rising steadily each year to a surplus reception rate of 25% (708 places) by 2028. This projection takes into account the reduction in reception published admission number (PAN) of 120 places from September 2023.

A school with falling rolls will have significantly less funding and this directly affects staffing numbers (both teaching and support staff), resources, equipment, expenditure, maintenance work and extracurricular activities for children. While Hackney schools have achieved excellent results for their students, those experiencing falling rolls will find it increasingly challenging to operate in the long run.

In time, a school affected by income loss will almost inevitably see performance and standards fall. It is the duty of the Council to ensure that the

quality of education for children, and stability for teaching and support staff, take priority.

The operational challenges affecting schools with falling rolls will continue to increase with a negative impact on pupils and no systemic solution. Taking no action to the issues affecting schools with falling rolls is not an acceptable option available to the Council.

4.2. Option 2 - adopt the proposals to begin informal consultation as recommended:

Proposed closure of De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024.
Proposed closure of Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.
Proposed merger/amalgamation of Colvestone Primary School and Princess May Primary School, onto the Princess May site from September 2024.
Proposed merger/amalgamation of Baden Powell Primary School and Nightingale Primary School, onto the Nightingale site from September 2024

4.3. Option 3 - To make an alternative combination of closure / merges

Alternative options were considered and rejected as detailed against each proposal.

5. Policy Context - Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy

5.1. Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy

The Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy [appendix C], approved at Cabinet on 28 February 2022, has been formulated with a view to consider how to resolve four priority issues affecting Hackney:

- 1) the significant increase in demand for SEND education provision
- 2) falling primary mainstream school rolls
- 3) the projected fall in secondary mainstream school rolls due to a declining primary roll
- 4) a long term sustainable use plan for all education sites in the borough.

The proposals in this report relate to priority 2: to address falling primary school rolls by working with schools with budget pressures and falling pupil rolls to seek viable long-term solutions.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there is a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively, taking action where appropriate to mitigate the risks of too many or too few places.

SEND places and School Place Planning strategies are aligned to Hackney Education's strategic aims.

Hackney's aims are to create a fairer, more inclusive borough, which supports children and young people to thrive. We want to optimise schools' roles as an

anchor system in the borough and ensure that developments and changes are sustainable. Hackney Education’s mission is to improve the life chances of every child, young person and learner in Hackney.

5.2. Communication and Engagement

The Local Authority began an engagement process with stakeholders in February 2023. The table below outlines the engagement timetable during February to April 2023. The feedback from these events has been reviewed by officers and included in the appendices to this report.

A ‘Save Colvestone Primary School’ detailed report submitted to Hackney Council via email to the Director of Education, includes information that for GDPR reasons cannot be attached as a public document. This has been added as an exempt appendix, therefore it is not public, but it is available for Hackney Cabinet members for review.

8.4 Table 2 : Engagement timetable

From February 2023	The Director of Education, Head of High Needs and school places, along with the Deputy Mayor and Lead Member for Education, engaged with the Head Teacher, Chair of Governors and Executive head [if applicable] of the six proposed schools. In some instances the leadership chose to discuss this with the governing board. All school leadership teams went on to have three meetings with the Director and his team as part of the process prior to the parent and carer engagement sessions in April.
From 23 March 2023	The Local Authority provided school leadership teams with information packs to share with their communities and staff. School leaders informed staff and families of the children on roll about the potential proposals.
Between 18th April and 27th April 2023	Informal engagement sessions have taken place with the six schools' parent/carers communities, hosted by the schools and attended by Hackney Education representatives and lead Members.

In order to ensure that decision makers are aware of community thoughts and concerns, those potentially affected by the proposals were offered multiple options to submit their comments and questions (during engagement meetings, by filling out a form, or by email). The information and feedback

received have been anonymised for data protection purposes and included in the present report.

However, it is important to note that this stage is not a consultation yet. If the decision is made to move to informal consultation there will be a structured process to gather feedback from the community on proposals. Further advice on this will be given at that time.

The feedback has been themed and key concerns raised by school communities can be seen in appendix D. The raw initial feedback and detailed questions submitted from informal engagement can be seen in appendix E.

The key themes have been summarised in table 3 below.

Table 3 : Common themes across all schools

Overwhelming sense of sadness, anxiety and frustration	Parents and carers spoke passionately about their schools, many viewing them as their family. Parents and carers love their schools, headteacher, teachers and support staff. Emotions were strong throughout. Sometimes generations of families have attended the schools and now work there too. Concern over the stress this causes for children, particularly those most vulnerable, was also shared frequently.
Pupils with SEND	Concerns were heard frequently. Pupils with EHCPs, those waiting for EHCPs and those with SEND but no EHCP. Concerns around new staff not knowing their child, needs not being met, struggling in a larger school, travelling further for a school and not being welcomed to a new school.
Parent choice of school	Not having affordable childcare close by, parent choice of school (values, approaches, faith/ non faith etc.).
Moving to a larger school	Concern around how pupils would manage in a larger school, would staff know them as well and would parents/ carers have the same close relationships with staff?
Enormity of challenges families are already facing	Pupils who have already moved schools, families with a range of needs, housing, travel, cost of living, post pandemic, etc. Support needed for new costs of uniforms. Families with more than one child at the school(s).
Sense of not belonging anymore	Schools are viewed as family. There was a strong sense of belonging and fear of losing this.
Timing	Reception places offered, parents and carers aware of potential mergers/ closures so rolls falling faster/ frustration

	from those who have just recently been offered a place. Timeline too long, leading to lots of uncertainty.
Future	Risk of this happening to their child again with further closures or mergers.
Current Y4 pupils	Will have one year in a new school and then transition again to Secondary causing a lot of change in a short period of time.
Frustration around free schools and faith schools	Parents and carers frustrated about lack of powers around free schools opening and faith schools not part of current, potential consultation.
Concern around future use of the sites and implications on families costs.	Parents and carers expressed concerns about the school sites affected by closures / mergers being transformed into new unaffordable housing. Feelings of being pushed out of Hackney. Questions as to whether plans for street scene improvements would go ahead, and who they would serve. Concerns raised around additional costs i.e. uniforms, travel expenses.
Frustration around engagement	Parents and carers feel a lack of trust at the moment. They have been consulted with before on other issues and feel they aren't listened to. Attendees could see that data points to closures/ amalgamations being the only solution, so felt the consultation was pointless and a decision had already been made. Some frustration around timelines, timings, notice, etc. Lack of detail at this stage (e.g. What will happen to staff? How will everyone be supported? Will classes merge/ children be separated?). Parents were unsure if they should just move their children now to ensure a place at the next choice or wait (lack of guidance on what they should do). Concerns there won't be enough places in all local schools in response to need.
Concerns around not getting a place at next school of choice	Travel to schools further afield, the cost implication and disruption for pupils, especially those with SEND. Parents and carers of different faith, class, race, etc. not feeling welcomed in some schools/ communities. Worries about costs of new uniforms. Worries about waiting lists and not getting a school place.
Impact on school staff	Further clarity around the impact of what would happen to the staff at the schools was asked for. The gratitude of families towards staff they know and trust was shown.
Building / site use	Community concerns around what the empty school site will

	be used for should the building be closed.
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Answers to questions submitted have been provided at engagement events, where time permitted. The current information and FAQ available on the Council webpage already answers some of the questions raised: <https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/primary-schools-potential-changes>.

This report provides further information to address others. An updated FAQ for all stakeholders will be provided on the Hackney Education site, if the proposals progress to informal consultation.

NB: with regards to children with SEND, consideration should be given to the challenges for pupils with EHCPs, pupils waiting for an EHCP and pupils who have SEND but no EHCP.

NB: Parent/carer voice is stronger in some schools than others, but this does not necessarily directly reflect the strength of feeling. Consideration and support will be given to all schools involved in the process, including for those that might find it harder to engage parents and carers, and the barriers that some parents and carers might face in being able to actively engage (especially given the notice schools, parents and carers had in advance of the events).

There were common themes of concerns submitted by the community at each school as outlined above, some of the additional and school specific concerns are listed in table 4.

Table 4: Summary of key themes from engagement and feedback by school

Proposal	Themes from feedback
De Beauvoir - closure	<p>The community noted and questioned: the rationale for selecting the school; the impact on the children; the additional costs of moving school; the stress this would cause to children; impact on children with SEND; no correlation between free places in schools and lack of nursery places; the lack of promotion of De Beauvoir as a good school for new children; frustration around affordable housing; the review not including faith schools; concerns about moving from a small school; concerns about admission arrangements and priority listing; impact on pupils who will be in Year 6; lengths of waiting lists; unfair competition from Hackney New Primary School; and worries about where the children will go if De Beauvoir closes.</p> <p>De Beauvoir in person engagement event: 15 staff and 40 parents/carers in attendance Questions and answers captured from the event detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 21/25 April - De Beauvoir [appendix F]

Proposal	Themes from feedback
Colvestone & Princess May - amalgamate on Princess May site	<p>The community noted the timelines and asked questions about: the class sizes and performance of the school; the impact on staffing; and future use of the building.</p> <p>Princess May engagement event: 15 in attendance Questions and answers captured from the event detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 27 April - Princess May [appendix G] <p>The community noted and questioned: the differences in Princess May school fabric and pollution levels; the difference in atmosphere at Princess May (a larger school); the rationale for including Colvestone in the review; the previous investment in Colvestone; the positive impact of Blossom Federation support; the change in size of schools; the timeline; the impact on the 21st Century street plan; the need for pupil support and SEND provisions; Colvestone site usage; the impact on staff; the community petition.</p> <p>*A 'Save Colvestone Primary School' detailed report submitted to Hackney Council via email to the Director of Education includes information that for GDPR reasons cannot be attached as a public document. This has been added as an exempt Appendix O, therefore it is not public, but it is available for Hackney Cabinet members for review.</p> <p>Colvestone in person engagement event: 110 in attendance Questions and answers captured from the event detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 24 April - Colvestone [appendix H].
Baden Powell & Nightingale - amalgamate on Nightingale site	<p>The community noted and questioned: costs of the move; ethos of different schools; large playground in current school; uniform changes and costs; parents are keen to raise money and help; the impact this could have on new teachers; the impact on children with SEND; parents/ carers have mentioned the small sizing of the school and intimate environment has helped with their child's learning; what would happen to the building; and the importance of parental choice.</p> <p>Baden Powell in person engagement event: 30 in attendance Questions and answers captured from the event detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 19 April - Baden Powell [appendix I] <p>The community noted and questioned; ethos of the school; school organisation post-merger; the impact on staff and children (particularly children with SEND); and the use of the Baden Powell site.</p> <p>Nightingale in person engagement event: 30 in attendance Questions and answers captured from the event detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 18 April - Nightingale [appendix J]

Proposal	Themes from feedback
Randal Cremer - closure	<p>The community noted and questioned; the rationale for including Randal Cremer in the review; where would the children move if the school were to close; concerns if children move to a school which could close in the future; how the announcement of a potential closure impacts current roll; the impact on children (particularly those with SEND); what would happen to the school site</p> <p>*A report titled 'Why should we keep Randal Cremer Primary School open?' submitted to Hackney Council via email to the Director of Education includes information that for GDPR reasons cannot be attached as a public document. This has been added as an exempt Appendix P, therefore it is not public, but it is available for Hackney Cabinet members for review.</p> <p>Randal Cremer in person engagement event: 60 in attendance Questions and answers captured from the event detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 20 April- Randal Cremer [appendix K]

The next step, if the Cabinet agrees to begin a statutory process, will be to move to informal consultation; an updated communications plan will be prepared, to ensure stakeholders are engaged and informed throughout the process. If the decision is made to move to informal consultation, there will be a structured process to gather feedback from the community on proposals. Further advice on this will be given at that time. If agreed, an informal consultation will begin in June, extending to a wider range of stakeholders, to include:

- Pupils
- Parents /carers
- All residents
- Governors
- School leadership
- School staff
- Education staff
- All members
- Member governors
- Ward Councillors
- Unions
- MPs
- Other LAs
- Diocesan bodies
- Interlink

5.3. FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

The quantification of the financial impact of costs related to closure/amalgamation of a school/schools are complex to model and will be influenced by the timing of the closure, HR/redundancy costs and the future plans for any sites vacated (including site security and reuse options). In addition, the financial treatment of any deficit balances will also have an impact along with other incidental costs or potential liabilities.

5.3.1. Pre-closure costs which would fall on the Council

5.3.1.1. Redundancy

High-level modelling has been carried out in relation to redundancy costs for the six schools proposed in this report as of February 2023. The modelling is based on a number of assumptions and is indicative of potential redundancy and severance costs only. As a guide the estimated cost of redundancy and severance for the six schools outlined for amalgamation/closure is circa £1.6m.

It is to be noted that this is a broad estimate. The modelling assumes all staff in a school to be closed in August 2024 would receive redundancy and severance payments. For those schools where an amalgamation is proposed it is assumed half of the staff in each of the two schools would be retained. For amalgamations the modelling also assumes an even spread of more expensive and less expensive redundancies. In reality this process and the resulting cost will be subject to HR change management procedures and could be higher or lower than the estimate. The estimate is a snapshot based on the current staffing establishment only.

We will work closely with Hackney Human Resources, to implement a package of support for all the affected school based staff. Where possible, redeployment will be offered as well as the opportunity to upskill through working with agencies such as Hackney Works. As a last resort, redundancy or early retirement will be offered.

5.3.1.2. Write-off of school balances

When a maintained school closes, any outstanding deficit falls to the Council to be written off. As of 31st March 2023 Colvestone has a deficit balance of £562k. The other schools have a surplus balance, however this could change up to the point of closure. The revenue balances brought forward into financial year 2021/22 and the closing 2022/23 year end position are listed for each of the schools in the table below:

Table 5

School	2021/22 Closing revenue balance brought forward surplus/(deficit) (£)	2022/23 Closing revenue balance carried forward surplus/(deficit) (£)
Baden Powell	111,747	31,768
De Beauvoir	82,566	140,418
Colvestone	(589,966) Deficit	(561,646) Deficit
Princess May	24,947	29,630
Nightingale	257,507	138,116
Randal Cremer	179,035	310,032

The trend suggests that, by the date of a potential closure/amalgamation, Baden Powell and Nightingale could also reach a deficit position. There is a significant risk that school deficit balances could increase at a greater rate once proposals are known as some parents may elect to move their children sooner than the school closure, this could have an impact on school funding and cause greater pressure on in-year budgets up to the point of closure/merger. We will support schools during this period.

Post closure costs / risks

5.3.1.3. Site Security and maintenance

There may be a need to secure and maintain the school sites on an interim basis following closure pending future use. These costs are estimated and will be refined if the proposals in this report are implemented. We want to avoid this situation if at all possible as we work through options for the sites.

5.3.1.4. Cost of contracts or other liabilities

Contracts entered into by the governing bodies for each of the schools could represent a significant cost if they are not concluded by the school before closure. It is advised that full contract registers and liabilities relating to termination of contracts are settled by working with the schools concerned. Any liabilities that remain post closure would fall to the Council, working with the school would mitigate this risk and limit future potential costs.

5.3.1.5. Other incidental costs and programme management costs

There may be additional incidental costs which materialise and may need to be contributed to by the Council as a result of closure, an example of this could be uniform costs for pupils transferring to another school. The full costs

of closure will need to be refined, including incidental costs which may materialise during the course of the closure/amalgamation programme.

Additional staff resources required from both, within the Council and externally, will also need to be factored into current estimates, costs are estimated at circa £300k including on-costs for the length of the programme, however this value needs to be refined.

5.3.2. Summary of financial implications

Table 6 - A summary of the costs including those which need to be confirmed/refined are contained in the table below:

Description	Potential cost (£'000)	One-off / recurring
Redundancy	1,600	One-off
Potential write-off costs	562	One-off
Contracts / transferred liabilities	TBC	One-off
Incidental costs	TBC	One-off
Programme management	Approx 300	One-off
Site Security and maintenance	Approx 1,000	Recurring per annum if sites remain vacant
Total	3,462	

These are only potential costs, which carry significant risks of being higher than the current calculations, particularly for redundancy (where early retirement decisions can prove very costly) and also for the write-off of school balances, which will be subject to further movement between now and a potential future closure date.

5.4. PROPERTY CONSIDERATIONS

While rolls are falling, schools have to continue to pay for the maintenance of their buildings and sites. Reduced revenue budgets impact on a school's ability to set aside sufficient budget to deal with day to day repair and maintenance issues as budgets are prioritised to deal with staffing and essential resources.

Underinvestment in the maintenance of school buildings will create longer term issues with the building as repair and maintenance needs that could be maintained through appropriate annual investment are ignored and become a longer term burden. This will inevitably lead to more significant building repairs and an increased need for capital funding to deal with the growing lack of maintenance. Capital allocations from DfE are provided on the basis of pupil numbers, so a reducing pupil number will lead to reduced capital allocations and an increased burden on the Council to maintain the assets.

Should the amalgamation and closure options in this report be taken forward, school sites that become vacant will be considered for alternative uses to support the Council's wider priorities. A dedicated working group will be established to work with a set of agreed principles about future use of the sites; any permanent decisions have to be ratified by the Secretary of State for Education.

As noted above, since austerity arrived in 2010/11 Hackney has been consistently determined to avoid ill-conceived disposals of assets to hurriedly raise money. Hackney has been able to do this because of its disciplined financial management over the years, which allows it some space to stop, analyse and plan before acting. While others sold assets (which in some parts of the country has been unavoidable for a range of reasons), Hackney looked hard at its ownership, re-purposing where possible, to suit the local requirements at the time and in anticipation of the future. That has produced lasting social and economic local benefits over the years and in each of those cases it has been demonstrably financially viable and rewarding for the Borough. In the case of school sites, Hackney officers' philosophy will be no different. Working with elected members, we will focus on the local context of each school site, as well as the Boroughwide strategic needs, and continue working hard to ensure our recommendations are as thoroughly informed as possible.

5.5. TIMELINE & GOVERNANCE (decision making process)

The proposed outline of the school organisation timeline can be seen below leading up to a September 2024 effective date:

Table 7 - Overview of the timeline and key cabinet decision dates

Date	Event
January-March 2023	The Council talks to school leaders and governors to discuss plans and decide on next steps.
April 2023	Public meetings are held with the school communities.
May 2023 <i>Cabinet Decision 1</i>	The Council's Cabinet will make a decision on whether to informally consult on the amalgamation and closure options proposed in this paper.
June 2023	Informal consultation (subject to Cabinet decision) begins with parents, staff and governors, and those living and working in the area.
September-October 2023 <i>Cabinet Decision 2</i>	Results of the informal consultation are considered by the Cabinet who will decide whether to progress to formal consultation. Formal consultation involves the Council publishing a statutory notice of their intention to amalgamate /close the schools. There will be a 28-day 'objection period' for those who object to the proposal to send their objections to the Council.
December 2023 <i>Cabinet Decision 3</i>	The outcome of the statutory notice period and any objections are considered by the Cabinet, who makes the final decision to proceed or not with amalgamation and/or closures.
January-August 2024	School amalgamation and closure arrangements are made (subject to Cabinet's decision in December 2023). school officially closes. Community engagement begins to explore future use of the schools.
September 2024	New amalgamated school opens / Children begin at the new school.

Approximate dates subject to change depending on the progress.

5.6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Decisions about any school organisation changes should promote equality of opportunity to access a good or better local school.

In terms of the protected characteristics, all proposals arising from the Education Estates & Sufficiency Strategy will be subject to equality impact assessments, specifically, age, disability, race, belief and religion. The Council has undertaken an equality impact assessment in relation to decisions proposed in this report. The aim of this exercise is to ensure that any decisions made impact in a fair way, are based on evidence and that decision-making is transparent. See appendix L for Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) in detail.

5.7. SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The proposals in this report will lead to a more efficient use of school buildings. Running a higher number of school sites with fewer pupils is inefficient in terms of energy usage, as the buildings still need to be heated and lit. Reducing the number of buildings with surplus places will mean that the retained buildings will start working to their designed capacity in terms of number of occupants, both pupils and staff, leading to more efficient energy use instead of running a higher number of schools with fewer pupils.

5.8. CONSULTATIONS

For the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy paper, stakeholder engagement has been instrumental in shaping the ESE Strategy and assisting officers with developing the overarching aims of the strategy paper.

Pre-engagement meetings have been held with headteachers, chairs of governors, and relevant stakeholders to seek initial thoughts on proposals. Further in-depth engagement meetings were later held with school communities to provide detailed background information and a chance for Q&A.

In addition, Hackney Education's Senior Leadership Team and wider Council officers have been engaged throughout the development of the proposals to ensure broad agreement and understanding of the proposals. Engagement with members including the Mayor has taken place throughout development, with a key working group chaired by Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education. Individual ward Councillors were briefed and all Councillors invited to briefing sessions.

This report asks to progress to the informal consultation stage, where views will be formally sought on the proposals. Following this, and if it is agreed by

Cabinet, then there would be a move to statutory consultation. The law requires a statutory consultation where school organisation changes fall into what is known as a prescribed alteration. The consultation process allows stakeholders, residents and the general public to comment on the Council's proposals, both during the initial consultation and notice period. Responses received during these periods will be carefully reviewed and where appropriate, proposals may be further reviewed following comments.

5.9. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risks associated with the surplus of mainstream school places are reflected in the HE's strategic risk register and project specific register. The implementation of this strategy is key in mitigation of these risks as outlined below.

Key risks and mitigations at this stage:

- NO action taken risk highlighted in options section.
- Decision making timeliness - delays on decision making and programme would further leave a downwards trend impacting schools and push any proposed changes to Sept 2025.
- It is noted that once families find out about the proposed amalgamation /closures they may wish to move their child to a different school, i.e. one closer to their home, sooner than a decision is made.
- Ratio of SEN versus mainstream becoming further imbalanced . As rolls continue to fall but EHCP increases, there will be a further imbalance in small schools. New SEND provision as part of the ESES priority 1 is being created, [further information can be found on the Local Offer.](#)
- Parent/ carer voice is stronger in some schools than in others, but this doesn't necessarily directly reflect the strength of feeling. Consideration should be given to schools that find it harder to engage parents and carers and barriers that some parents and carers might face in being able to actively engage.
- Risk that in the future pupil numbers increase and more Hackney places are needed - this is mitigated by the size of the rest of the school estate and the physical capacity in schools, to allow for possible additional places by increasing PAN, should they be required in future years appendix M.

6. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES

- 6.1.** This report seeks agreement to commence informal consultation on the closure or amalgamation impacting six community primary schools in the borough. As outlined in section 6 of this report the potential

closure/amalgamations will incur costs such as redundancies, site security and maintenance as well as other incidental costs which will need to be quantified. There is also the write off of any schools deficit balances which will need to be considered. It is estimated that the overall costs of closure will be in the region of £3.5m, of which the significant proportion will be redundancy costs. These have been calculated on the age and length of service of different staff groups and based on a number of assumptions, and there are risks that the final costs could be higher than estimated.

- 6.2.** The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block, which is awarded to fund education provision, is primarily calculated using pupil numbers and pupil characteristics. Schools are funded on a formula basis and the number of pupils attending the school drives the level of funding received by a school. As such, schools with unfilled places are under increased financial challenge and struggle with financial sustainability. Reducing the number of school places in a planned way would support schools to manage within their funding allocations. At a borough level, there is expected to be a minimal impact on the amount of the grant received as a direct result of the closures or amalgamation of the schools within this report. With a similar amount of income spread over a smaller number of schools, there may be a positive impact on the financial position of individual primary schools.
- 6.3.** The potential future costs, should a decision be made to advance the proposals in this report, are currently estimated to be circa £2.5m of one-off costs and £1m of estimated ongoing costs linked to site security and maintenance, until alternative use options are developed. These costs would fall on the Council's General Fund and would represent additional financial pressures for the Council, and would need to be factored into the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) should a decision be made to proceed with the closures/amalgamation options contained in this report.

7. VAT IMPLICATIONS ON LAND AND PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

No land or property transactions are being recommended at this stage. VAT implications will be considered if changes to the site uses in the future are proposed.

8. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC & ELECTORAL SERVICES

- 8.1** This report recommends that Cabinet agrees to proceed with informal consultation regarding the amalgamation of some of the borough's maintained schools and the closure of two others.
- 8.2** The Council has various planning duties to ensure sufficiency of school places, notably, under section 14 Education Act 1996 (EA 1996) to ensure the

provision of “sufficient schools” for the provision of primary and secondary education in their area and. Section 27 Children and Families Act 2014 (CFA 2014), to keep under review educational provision, training provision and social care provision made both in and outside of their area for children and young people with SEN or a disability and for whom they are responsible.

8.3 Making changes to our school estate involves other legal duties:

8.3.1 Section 1(1) Local Government Act 1999 imposes a duty on the Council to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. The Council has fiduciary duties towards residents.

8.3.2 Section 149(1) Equality Act 2010 (EqA 2010) imposes the Public Sector Equality Duty on the Council. This duty should be considered at all levels of decision making. The PSED requires public authorities to have "due regard" to:

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA 2010.
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This involves having due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low. Compliance with the PSED may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but this does not mean that conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under the EqA 2010 is permitted.
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding.

8.4 Additionally, in taking decisions the Council must act lawfully, including acting within its powers, following its own procedures as well as those required by law. Decisions relating to the closure of schools (including amalgamations) are an executive function and in accordance with the Elected Mayor’s Scheme of Delegation, the power to make such decisions is reserved to the Elected Mayor and Cabinet.

- 8.5** The Council must ensure that all required consultations are properly undertaken in accordance with relevant law and guidance. Guidance referred to in the previous paragraph includes details of consultation required when making changes to maintained schools and proposing to close them. The guidance relates to regulations governing these procedures, The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013.
- 8.6** The Council must make rational, evidence based decisions, for a proper purpose, that are proportionate decisions which are properly reasoned and take into account all relevant considerations. Decisions must be compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 8.7** The Council must seek detailed legal advice where required, for example in meeting the requirements of the PSED, in school reorganisation, when commissioning and on employment, procurement and contract issues.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Primary and secondary schools by type
Appendix B - Published Admission Number (PAN) reductions
Appendix C - Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy
Appendix D - Community feedback by school and theme
Appendix E - Raw submitted feedback and questions
Appendix F - De Beauvoir in person engagement event Q&A
Appendix G - Princess May engagement event Q&A
Appendix H - Colvestone in person engagement event Q&A
Appendix I - Baden Powell in person engagement event Q&A
Appendix J - Nightingale in person engagement event Q&A
Appendix K - Randal Cremer in person engagement event Q&A
Appendix L - Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix M - Potential future PAN Capacity
Appendix N - Letter to SoS DfE

EXEMPT APPENDICES

By Virtue of Paragraph 3 as listed Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 insert Appendix O and P in this report are exempt because they contain information which is likely to reveal the identity of individual(s). It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Documents for Cabinet review and consideration which have been submitted via email but contain individual names:

Exempt Appendix O - Save Colvestone Primary School
Exempt Appendix P - Why should we keep Randal Cremer Primary School open?

BACKGROUND PAPERS

In accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) England Regulations 2012 publication of Background Papers used in the preparation of are as follows:

[London Councils - Managing Surplus School places in London \(2023\)](https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/children-and-young-people/education-and-school-places/managing-surplus-school-places)

<https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/children-and-young-people/education-and-school-places/managing-surplus-school-places>

[Public Version - Census 2021 Briefing 5: Ethnic Group, National Identity, Language and Religion](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wzarOaz1ac1qGtNxTpx82C2dceEQuzxJAUF0NV--o/edit#)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wzarOaz1ac1qGtNxTpx82C2dceEQuzxJAUF0NV--o/edit#>

[Hackney Air Quality Annual Status report](https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality-reports#report)

<https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality-reports#report>

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Title of Report	Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy - falling rolls
Key Decision No	CE S247
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Meeting Date	25 September 2023
Cabinet Member	Councillor Anntoinette Bramble, statutory Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care
Classification	Open with Exempt Appendix
Ward(s) Affected	All
Key Decision & Reason	Yes Significant effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Implementation Date if Not Called In	4 October 2023
Group Director	Jacquie Burke, Group Director Children & Education

1. Cabinet Member's introduction

- 1.1. As an Administration, and as Deputy Mayor, we are pleased with the improvement of Hackney's education system. Just 20 years ago the Borough's schools were some of the worst performing in the country; now they are consistently among the very best, not just in terms of school performance, but also in the outcomes for our children and young people as the results from recent pupil exams once again show. This transformation of education in Hackney is one of the greatest success stories in the country. We are proud of our children and young people who are among the top performing in the country for Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 1 and upper performing quartiles across all age categories. Their results are particularly impressive considering they were achieved after the difficulties of the pandemic and against a backdrop of 42% of local school children across all age groups accessing free school meals. This is a credit to our children, families, settings and schools, and we will continue to work in partnership with all our schools and settings.
- 1.2. As has been widely reported, in recent years many inner and greater London local authority (LA) areas, including Hackney, have been experiencing a significant decrease in pupil numbers. This has caused some schools to face

serious financial and sustainability pressures. The critical London wide factors are: lower birth rates, the cap on housing benefits, and families leaving the capital as a result of the housing crisis, Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic. All of these factors have resulted in a reduction in demand for primary school places in the borough. This is no fault of the Council or our schools, and we remain committed to delivering over a thousand new council homes and more affordable family housing across the borough.

- 1.3. School leaders and the Council in recent years have been doing everything possible to manage the risk of falling rolls. Hackney officers have been working with schools locally to progress a number of approaches, with a focus on preventing the escalation of risk to those in scope for potential closure and/or merger. The approaches we have had to use so far include measures such as restructuring school staffing levels, reducing the amount of available support staff, limiting extra curricular activity such as school trips, 'vertical grouping' by combining different year groups in some schools, formally reducing and capping reception places, and for some schools, the need to agree deficit recovery plans with Hackney Education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in Hackney's educational system for their often challenging work, as we have worked through these existing decisions and started to explore the even more difficult decisions outlined in this paper.
- 1.4. Most, if not all, of these 'graduated approaches' have been deployed by local schools to address the issue of falling rolls. However, this has not sufficiently solved the problem and the level of risk for some schools in terms of sustainability and enabling the schools to continue to provide their children with the very best possible teaching and learning experience on a daily basis that all schools would wish to provide. This high quality educational environment is what the people of Hackney expect and individual school communities deeply value, and which my colleagues and I see whenever we visit schools.
- 1.5. As previously referenced we have been lobbying the national Government to look at how funding is allocated, as part of our wider commitments to working towards a stronger and fairer school system more generally. We have also repeatedly asked the Government for greater powers to manage places in free schools and academies, which are independent of the Council, in order to pool place-planning resources. I previously wrote to the Secretary of State for Education (Appendix A) to formally express our concerns with regards to the issue of falling rolls for the Borough and other LA areas, expressing concern that government policy in areas such as free schools has compounded the problem, by bringing more school places into the system in areas where there may already have been surplus places. This puts at risk locally maintained schools due to unnecessary competition at a time of system pressure for the aforementioned reasons.
- 1.6. We know schools are more than just places for children to receive education, and that they play an important part in their local community. This is why having to now consider potentially closing or merging schools is very difficult,

and not something we would propose if we felt that there was a realistic option available for keeping all schools open. We do not underestimate the impact that such changes would have on the community, parents, staff and pupils, if approved. However, the impact of falling rolls is being felt widely across many schools, and Council officers believe that over time it is becoming increasingly more difficult for them to continue doing all the fantastic things that families, children, staff and the community love them for.

- 1.7. I know some concerns have also been raised that, if the proposals are approved, the Council might sell off vacant school sites for private housing development, but please be assured that this is not our plan. The Council's political leadership and I have been clear. We know how important that is, given the unique location of our schools, their wider role and close ties to our wider local communities. Throughout our time leading the Council and through now many years of austerity, while others across the country may have sold assets, we have taken other routes, stopping to think about what Hackney needed at the time and what it might need in the future - and this approach will guide our thinking when it comes to education land and the future needs of the borough for schools and specialist provision.
- 1.8. This means, if the proposals are approved, we would look to work through the potential for each site in its local context and we would seek to do our best to steer these sites into locally relevant and valuable uses mindful of the extreme financial pressure the Council is under and the need to minimise the impact on our finances. We also know from our visits to these schools, and our knowledge of Dalston, De Beauvoir, Haggerston and Hackney Downs, the depth of feeling in these places about their respective schools, how they sit in that wider community context and the need to work with communities to defend what makes these communities and places special, including Ridley Road. That's why the Council has invested so much in protecting and enhancing Dalston and has plans in De Beauvoir, Haggerston and Hackney Downs to build more Council housing and invest in community infrastructure.
- 1.9. We know that during this process there will be concerns raised about the potential risk to our children with protected characteristics, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As referenced in a range of recent communications to the local schools that may be in scope for evaluation as part of the work of the school estates strategy, we will work with them and provide targeted support where appropriate. The associated equality impact assessment (Appendix B) provides further commentary on this. My colleague, Cllr Woodley, the Cabinet Member for SEND, has been working closely with me and the officers progressing this programme and in association with schools where necessary, and will continue to do so for the duration of this programme. We will be advocates for children with SEND, to ensure these children are supported as much as possible, along with their families. That work sits within the wider context of delivering at least 300 new SEND places in the borough in new settings and existing schools.
- 1.10. We know that if the proposals are approved, this process will also be challenging for the whole school community including Governing Bodies,

school leadership teams, teachers, support staff and others who work in our schools. We are committed to having a proactive approach with all those involved, including the trade unions, to ensure that all staff are involved in these discussions and supported if or when changes are made to retain, upskill or find new employment. We also recognise that where we might merge schools, we will have to work with those schools to ensure they have the right facilities and investment on the new sites to meet the aspirations of their respective schools and communities. During the engagement with the school communities, we also met with local members of parliament, ward councillors, and invited all elected members to briefing sessions to discuss the consequences of falling rolls and the impact on schools.

- 1.11. No one goes into public life, or a leadership position, to close or merge schools, but it is our responsibility as a local authority to create life-improving opportunities for those in the borough who most need them - this starts with access to first-class education. And we must continue to ensure that every single child has access to an excellent education that allows them to fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions. This is why we must now begin to consider the difficult options outlined in this report.

2. Group Director's introduction

- 2.1. This report addresses the second priority of the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy (Appendix G), adopted by Hackney Council in February 2022, to seek viable sustainable solutions and work with existing primary schools with falling rolls. The information we have suggests there will continue to be falling rolls into the future. Falling rolls lead to a reduction in funding to deliver education across the borough, as the number of pupils on roll directly affects the amount of money received from central government. Surplus places impact disproportionately on schools across the borough; schools with unfilled places receive less income, while attempting to maintain the same physical space, staffing and education offer.
- 2.2. In January 2015, there were fewer than 1% unfilled reception places in Hackney. The January 2023 school census shows 616 surplus reception places (21%), the equivalent of over 20 empty reception classes. On the information we have, and without taking action, surplus reception places are forecast to rise above 23% by 2025. This would bring sustained and increasing financial strain on affected schools.
- 2.3. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient high quality school places for our children, and that places are planned effectively. In 2022/23 alone, Hackney primary schools are seeing £30m less funding compared to what they would be entitled to if their classrooms were full. This financial pressure, year on year, has a cumulative impact on our schools, and threatens the stability and quality of our education system.

3. Recommendations

Cabinet proceed to publish statutory proposals to:

- 3.1. close De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024.
- 3.2. close Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.
- 3.3. close Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guarantee all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.
- 3.4. close Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guarantee all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.
- 3.5. increase the published admission number of Nightingale Primary School by adding an additional form of entry to all year groups. This proposal is related to the decision at 3.4.

4. Reasons for decision

Background

- 4.1. Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in future, for the time we have forecasts for (see Appendix C).
- 4.2. School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.
- 4.3. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.
- 4.4. Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32. Analysis of past, current and projected demand and summary of reception places removed to date is provided in Appendix C.
- 4.5. Hackney Education's senior leadership team took the decision to propose closure/merger of six schools in September 2022 following analysis of a range of objective measures evidencing the impact of falling rolls on school's

viability. Following early engagement with head teachers and chairs of governors from January 2023 the proposals were publicly launched on 28 March 2023 and school community engagement activity was undertaken with staff and parents in April 2023. Community queries and feedback from March to May period can be seen in Appendix D by theme (as it was detailed in May 2023 Cabinet report appendices).

- 4.6. On 22 May 2023 Cabinet decided to proceed to consultation on all four proposals (The May cabinet paper is included as Appendix E). The consultation ran for 6 weeks, from 5 June to 16 July 2023, gathering feedback on the proposals from parents and staff of the schools in scope and other stakeholders that may be impacted by the decisions.
- 4.7. Analysis of the consultation responses are summarised in this report and it is now recommended that Cabinet agree to proceed to publish statutory proposals 3.1 to 3.5 outlined above.
- 4.8. If Cabinet agrees to publication of these proposals, then there would be a period of at least 28 days for people to make representations on the proposals. The Council would collect in all representations received in that time, consider them, and then the final decision about whether to proceed with the proposed closures and mergers is scheduled for the Cabinet meeting in December 2023.

Previous consultation outcome

- 4.9. At the end of the previous consultation period, a total of 613 postal and online questionnaires had been received, and a further 9 responses were received by other routes.
- 4.10. Response to the proposals was overwhelmingly negative with 89% of respondees disagreeing with the proposals, 3% neither agreeing or disagreeing and 8% agreeing. That prior consultation process, outcomes and response is outlined in detail in section 6 below.
- 4.11. Despite this overwhelming opposition, it is nonetheless still recommended to Cabinet to proceed with publishing statutory proposals. This is for the reasons set out below.
 - On the best information available to us, there are **not enough children** in the borough and neighbouring areas seeking places at Hackney primary schools. All the reception places at all 58 primary schools in Hackney were required just 9 years ago to meet our statutory obligations and offer all residents a place. However rapid and sustained decline in the number of children joining our primary schools mean that they are no longer filling up.

Our schools currently have over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (21% surplus) however the Council aims to have between 5 and 10% surplus. The number of children projected to need places in Reception over the coming years shows that, on the

projected figures we have, without reducing the number of schools in the borough, we will continue to have over 550 vacant spaces (20%+ surplus) until at least 2030. (section 4.12 below and Appendix C)

- High vacancy rates mean that **schools become financially unviable** over time. A school's funding is based on the number of children on roll, so schools with lots of vacancies have a smaller budget than schools that are full, but they carry the same financial, educational and wellbeing responsibilities to their children, families and staff.

As an example, in 2022/23, for every surplus place that a maintained primary school carries, it lost on average £6,484 per surplus place. For a one form entry school carrying 33% surplus places in every year group (10 empty seats in a class of 30), the school would be losing out on a potential £453,880 additional income, with no change to the number of class teachers, who represent the primary expense in school budgets.

In this situation schools are forced to use their surplus funds or go into deficit to ensure the quality of education for Hackney children is maintained. Over two thirds of Hackney's maintained schools, or the federations they form part of, are predicting they will over-spend by the end of the 2023/24 financial year. (section 4.14 to 4.12)

To avoid going into deficit, or to bring a school's deficit back under control, school governors are forced to make difficult decisions about whether to reduce the number of teachers or teaching assistants, support staff, school leaders, put off investment or maintenance in school building and equipment or find other savings, all of which **impacts negatively on the quality of education** and school experience for Hackney children and staff. (section 4.33 to 4.36)

- The Council **is financially liable** for any maintained school deficits, and must decide each year whether to continue to fund a school in deficit. When a maintained school closes the Council is responsible for the debt carried by the school at the point of closure. This also applies when schools faced with financial challenges convert to academies. (section 4.26)

If the Council does not take action to reduce the number of primary schools to align with the current and projected demand we knowingly take on increased financial burden and responsibility at a time when we are required to find £57m in savings over the next 3 years.

The longer the Council delays taking action, the greater the financial burden it will inherit.

- **Further measures to address falling rolls are likely to be required** in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand.

If taken forward, the proposals outlined in this report would begin to address the issue of falling rolls by removing 90 reception places; however, in isolation, this is unlikely to resolve the problem and, based on current projections, further action to bring surplus reception places under 10% is likely.

On this basis the Council will continue to work together with our schools to review and adjust future plans in line with the priorities outlined in the Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy to bring surplus reception places to within a sustainable range (ie. 5-10%).

- It is believed that a **merger can deliver significant benefits**, if the council decides to proceed, from the proposed arrangements for pupils currently at Baden Powell to join Nightingale Schools, and those at Colvestone to join Princess May Schools, and would create stronger educational establishments in each case.

It is anticipated that the receiving schools in each case would benefit from increased income and financial stability through higher numbers of pupils on roll. Managed effectively the schools could benefit from more robust resourcing and could positively impact academic opportunities, access to specialised teachers and wider range of extracurricular activities and clubs.

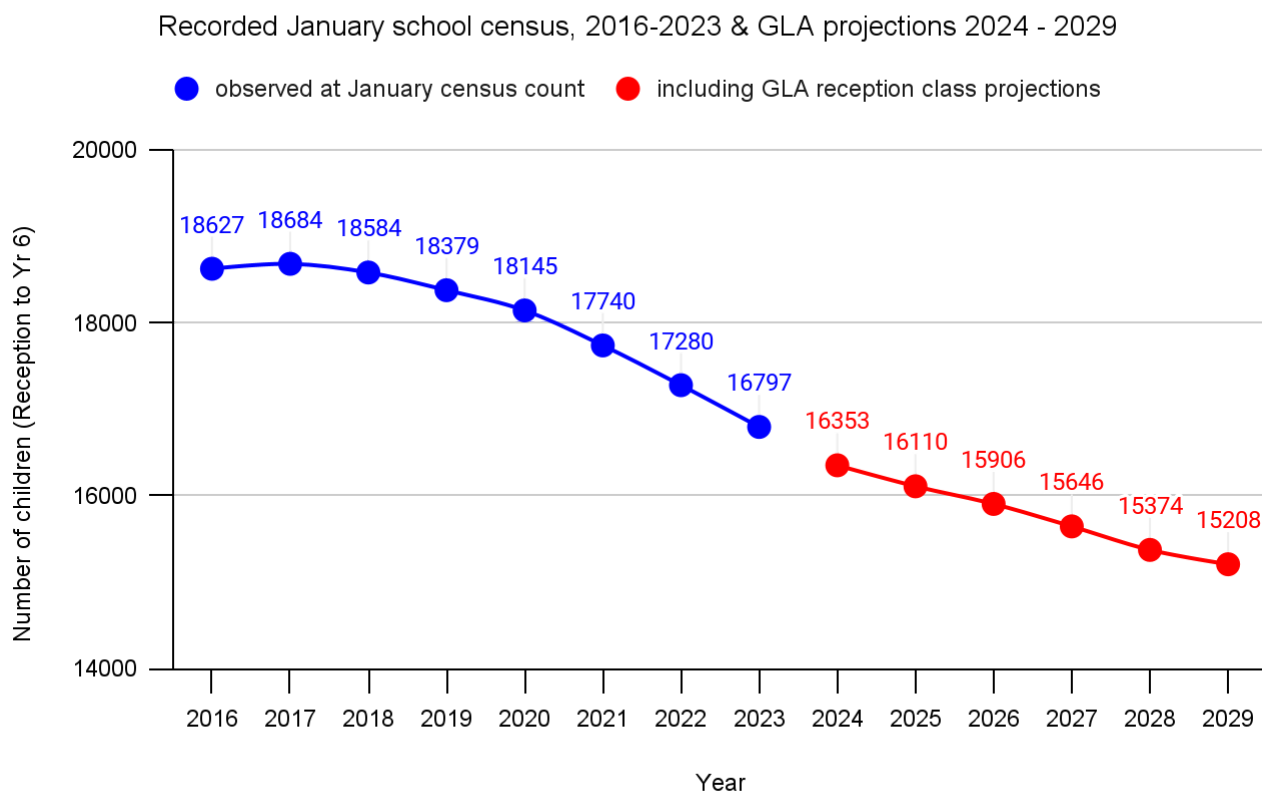
A larger student body can provide pupils with a more extensive and diverse peer group, promoting social skills and cultural awareness. It is believed the proposed mergers could, with the engagement of parents and school leaders, foster a sense of community among parents and pupils from both schools.

Falling pupil numbers

- 4.12. Figure 1 below shows the observed number of children in Hackney primary schools (in blue), down by 1,787 between 2018 and 2023. This reduced borough-wide roll means that in 2022/23, Hackney receives circa £11.5m less Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)¹ Schools Block funding based on 2022/23 per pupil funding rates, compared with 2018/19.

¹ The dedicated schools grant (DSG) is payable to local authorities under section 14 of the Education Act 2002. Local authorities are responsible for determining the split of the grant between central expenditure and the individual schools budget (ISB) in conjunction with local schools forums. Local authorities are responsible for allocating the ISB to individual schools in accordance with the local schools' funding formula.

Figure 1. Observed and projected number of children in Hackney primary schools



- 4.13. Figure 1 also forecasts the total number of children in Hackney primary schools between 2024 and 2029 (in red) based on GLA’s projected number of reception joiners. An additional net loss of 200 children per year is factored into the projection on the basis that at least this number have left Hackney primary schools each year between 2019 and 2023.

Impact on school income

- 4.14. Individual primary school balances in Hackney stood at a total of £9.9m in 2020/21. They reduced in 2021/22 to £9.08m and then fell significantly to £5.8m in 2022/23.
- 4.15. The decline in school balances is a national issue as schools face increasing cost pressures and reducing numbers on roll. It is becoming extremely difficult for schools to remain financially viable when pupil numbers are falling as most school funding is pupil-based in line with the School’s National funding formula. Unused or vacant school places create an immediate cost for schools through reduced budgets, which in turn can affect the overall sustainability and quality of education standards at a school. As pupil numbers decrease, the majority of schools experience a less than full year group and, therefore, an inability to maximise the use of resources. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

- 4.16. Under legislation, schools retain a high degree of autonomy when setting budgets unless they are in a deficit position. Schools have been reminded of the need to forecast as accurately as possible so that decisions are taken in the light of accurate budget projections.
- 4.17. Schools in deficit are required to complete deficit recovery plans to bring their budget back into balance by elimination of the deficit within three years.
- 4.18. Currently, the four schools proposed to close have budgeted for a deficit/surplus position at the close of 2023/24 as follows:
- Baden Powell -£300k
 - Colvestone -£589k
 - De Beauvoir -£128k
 - Randal Cremer £189k
- 4.19. Princess May anticipates an in-year surplus of £34k, closing with a balance of £64k. Nightingale forecasts a break-even position at the close of 2023/24 ie maintaining their 2022-23 brought forward surplus of £138k.
- 4.20. The current financial status of Hackney's maintained primary schools is outlined in the table below.

School Name	Closing Balance 2022-23	Projected Closing Balance 2023-24	In-Year Movement
Baden-Powell	31,768	-300,820	-332,588
Colvestone	-561,646	-589,261	-27,615
Nightingale	138,116	138,716	600
De Beauvoir	140,418	-128,830	-269,248
Princess May	29,630	64,506	34,876
Randal Cremer	310,032	189,537	-120,495
Total of schools/federations in scope	88,318	-626,152	-714,470
Total of other schools/federations	5,711,697	3,266,450	-1,803,729
Grand Total	5,800,015	2,640,298	-2,518,199

- 4.21. More than two thirds of Hackney's maintained primary schools have budgeted for an in-year over spend at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. This trend is expected to continue as roll numbers continue to fall.

4.22. From this table it can be seen that one school proposed to close is particularly financially unsustainable: Colvestone, which ended the 2022/23 year with an extremely large deficit balance of £561,646.

In order to avoid unnecessary process duplication and to ensure efficient use of resources the council's finance department has not produced alternative financial modelling for Colvestone following the agreement with the school on the deployment of a SRMA (School Resource Management Adviser) report process. This was carried out by an independent SRMA.

Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open suggest the recent reporting supports a view that Colvestone can be financially viable in the future and has the capacity to pay down the deficit.

The local authority does not agree with this assessment, with a number of assumptions based on non-sustainable funding informing, and considers the school to be financially unviable. The SMRA expresses the view that the schools' "overall financial position is precarious. The school and SRMA have discussed potential ways the deficit could be reduced and the debt repaid to the Local Authority. School leadership has been and still is, very mindful of how efficiencies may impact pupil outcomes and teaching standards."

The SMRA's view is that it would be "extremely challenging" for the school to balance their budget and repay the current deficit over three/four years. They point out that "any chance of financial recovery heavily relies on strong incoming pupil numbers and current budgets are reliant on almost full cohorts of Reception children entering the school."

The local authority does not accept the statement made in the report that "the SRMA and school have discussed the pupil number forecasts with the LA, who advised that these numbers are not unrealistic." The local authority is firmly of the view that the projected number of children joining the school, on which the budget is based, are unrealistic. The budgets are based on 24 children joining reception in September 2023, 27 in 2024 and 30 in 2025. 14 children joined the school in the Reception class in September 2023.

The SRMA goes on to say "... it is evident that demand for Reception places is falling, with London Councils, the collective of London Councils, predicting a 12% decrease in demand for Reception places in Hackney between 22/23 and 26/27. Therefore, the forecasts may be unfeasible. The school can better gauge this once September 2023 numbers are confirmed."

The 3-yr projected budget produced by the Senior Leadership Team (2023/24 - 2025/26) submitted in May 2023 projects a growing deficit as follows:

Year	Projected In Year deficit	Projected Cumulative deficit
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2023/24	-27,615	-589,261
2024/25	-93,690	-682,951
2025/26	-110,540	-793,491

By the schools' own forecasts, despite an in year surplus in 22/23 of £28,319 (supported by a £50,000 mid year additional cash injection), they are unable to demonstrate capacity to address their outstanding deficit.

- 4.23. The Council's schools finance team monitors the finance and budgets of all locally maintained schools, and with schools such as Covestone, have regular finance monitoring meetings with the school leadership to review progress with the agreed licensed deficit recovery plan.
- 4.24. The Council has a responsibility to deliver Best Value, and continuous improvement through the efficient, effective and economic management of our school estate, whilst also ensuring that secure, sustainable and high-quality education is in place for the children and young people of Hackney now and into the future.
- 4.25. The Council is financially liable for maintained schools affected by falling rolls and they must act in a timely way to minimise the risk of schools going into or increasing deficits.
- 4.26. If a school closes the local authority meets the cost of any deficit balance from the General Fund. In the event of academisation, there are two scenarios: for convertor academies (those that voluntarily convert) the deficit is repaid to the local authority by the DfE and recouped from the academy; for sponsored academies (forced conversion due to the school being assessed as inadequate) the deficit remains with the local authority to be paid from the General Fund.

Schools with excess physical space and large sites

- 4.27. Many schools that have had their [published admission numbers](#) (PANs) reduced or capped to reflect falling demand (Appendix C, section 4) retain responsibility for the day to day repair, maintenance and securing the unused parts of their buildings and sites.
- 4.28. While reducing or capping PANs allows greater certainty when planning staffing budgets, the combination of reduced income and premises costs bring significant additional financial pressure to schools with significant unused physical space.
- 4.29. Staffing and delivery of education must be prioritised when budgeting with limited financial resources leading schools in these circumstances to underinvest in maintenance of their buildings. This can lead to significant longer term issues and increased need for capital funding to deal with a lack of maintenance.

Roll instability

- 4.30. Figure 1 above demonstrates the growing number of surplus places across all year groups which make it easier for families to move their children from school to school.
- 4.31. School admissions regulations protect parental preference and parent's right to move their child between schools if that is what they wish. This means that schools are obliged to admit children when they have spaces, regardless of whether they are able to meet the joining child's needs.
- 4.32. High levels of pupil mobility bring significant challenges for schools because inducting and supporting new children thoroughly calls on additional resources to support staff and teachers and is unsettling for existing students.

Quality of education offer

- 4.33. Schools with reduced budgets have less income for support staff such as teaching assistants and learning mentors, who provide important support for pupils through academic and pastoral interventions. Specialist teachers with expertise in physical education, music, languages or art become too expensive, meaning primary class teachers who may not be skilled or trained in these areas have to teach these subjects themselves. It is also common in small schools to see leaders double up on roles, such as headteachers taking on the SENCO responsibility.
- 4.34. As budget pressure becomes greater, and class sizes drop below 50%, schools must also consider the option of "vertically grouped" classes to avoid going into deficit. This involves a sufficiently experienced and able teacher being employed to teach children from across two year groups in the same classroom. Vertical grouping brings increased complexity in day to day management and organisation and increased workload for the teacher. The challenges of recruiting and retaining skilled and experienced teachers in London can make schools under grave financial pressure less attractive.
- 4.35. In addition, limited budgets mean that occasional but important work to maintain the quality of experience at school is not taken forward in a timely manner e.g. the computers used by staff and children become increasingly obsolete and need replacement, sometimes across the whole school at once due to their original purchase being made in bulk.
- 4.36. Enrichment activities have to be curtailed such as curriculum days which schools might run to enhance an offer (i.e. Roman Days led by external companies). Clubs and wrap around provision can also be affected.

Impact of new housing and regeneration

- 4.37. There are proposed areas for regeneration and new housing across the borough and in some of the areas close to the schools covered in this report.

However, despite the extensive Council and family housing planned, the expected initial child yield is low and would not impact medium to long term demand. For the projected figures we have there would remain enough school places to accommodate need. Projections obtained annually from the Greater London Authority take into account proposed new developments that have attained planning permission.

- 4.38. Since 2011, the Council's in-house building programme has delivered more than 1,000 new homes, prioritising homes for Council social rent. Between 2018 and 2022, we started, completed or received planning permission for 1,984 homes – more than half being genuinely affordable. Over the next few years, we'll also complete 1,146 homes, including 255 social rent homes and 136 shared ownership homes, on the existing programmes of council homes.
- 4.39. This means that between 2022 and 2026, we'll start building, and support partners to build, 1,000 new homes for social rent through a mix of methods. In this context, the Mayor and Cabinet agreed, in December 2022, a direct programme of 400 additional new homes on sites we've identified via our HRA asset base; 75% of which are proposed for Council social rent.
- 4.40. The recently undertaken Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2023 indicates that household growth in Hackney between 2022 and 2039 will be predominantly single people (+45.1%) and co-habiting, i.e. shared living, households (+44.2%). In comparison, there is little change in the projection for families with children over the same period. With the exception of Stamford Hill, the majority of Borough-wide housing need is for smaller homes. This is important in considering the likely effect of such housing on pupil numbers.
- 4.41. Adopted in July 2020, the Hackney Local Plan 2033 (LP33), requires that all new development in the borough have regard to existing social infrastructure, which includes the provision of education facilities. Within LP33, policy LP8 states that *'where proposed development is expected to place pressure on existing social infrastructure by increasing demand, these developments will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional social infrastructure to meet needs, either through on-site provision or through contributions towards providing additional capacity off-site.'*
- 4.42. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which informed the policies within LP33, notes that while the borough's population is expected to increase to 321,000 by 2033 (42,000 higher than in 2018), that the age mix of the borough is anticipated to shift towards the older community with the growth in over 65s being four times greater than the growth in the school age population, ages 0-15. Again, such long term forecasting suggests that changes which forecast increases to the overall general population, need to be balanced against demographic changes over this time.

- 4.43. While there are variances across the different housing tenures, across the Council's programme as a whole, just over 70% of the homes delivered have been 1 and 2 bed homes; with just under 30% comprising a mix of 3 and 4 bed family sized homes. This is broadly consistent with policy LP14 as outlined in LP33, which, depending on the tenure of housing, requires all new developments to comprise a mix of family sized homes, ranging from 15 to 36%. **Despite Hackney building new homes the numbers will be insufficient to have any significant impact on the proposals in this report for schools in scope for closure and/or merger.**

Some points put forward against the proposal

- 4.44. Numerous points have been made against the proposals. The following summarises some of the principal points that have been made. It is not intended to be comprehensive. A fuller summary of the points made against the proposal is set out in Appendix S, which contains the summary of consultation responses.
- 4.45. It is said that local school communities are opposed to these changes.
- 4.46. The Council's forecast pupil numbers has been challenged. It is said that Colvestone has a stabilising roll. The Save Colvestone group submitted detailed information on projected in-year surpluses for future years. They also note the Colvestone 21st Century Street initiative, a short term / 1-2 year initiative to make Colvestone a permanent playstreet. It is said this may increase the number of families drawn to the area.
- 4.47. It has been said by some that Colvestone is financially stable, and that the previous consultation material did not provide financial information verified by a SMRA report showing Colvestone school to be financially viable. (This point is addressed at 4.22) It is also said that future housing development will increase numbers. Conversely, it is said that it is important to consider the potentially negative impact which these proposed school closures are likely to have on future housing provision and regeneration, such as in Dalston.
- 4.48. It is said that the Council's estimation of children who may move to Princess May School fails to take account of Colvestone's survey of parents, which indicate that many would not send their children to Princess May School. A separate concern has been raised that if fewer than the 120 projected children moved from Colvestone to Princess May, then Princess May may also be at risk of closure in the future; and may be so at risk even if 120 children transfer, as there would still be an approximately 23% vacancy at Princess May.
- 4.49. It is said by those opposed to the closure of Colvestone School that the air quality is significantly worse at Princess May School. Hackney's Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2025 identifies school communities as one of the most susceptible groups for air pollution. The Council considers that, although

there are slightly higher levels of air pollution at Princess May, both are within acceptable air quality limits.

- 4.50. Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open draw attention to the proportion of children on the SEND register at that school, which is higher than other schools. A concern was raised that the Council has not addressed Colvestone's record on SEND; and that that the School has implemented a SEND strategy with excellent feedback. It is also said that consideration should be given to the potential savings of Colvestone's integrated SEND provision, and its current surplus capacity, which it is said has the potential to save the Council money that it would otherwise have to spend in sending children with SEND to independent schools.
- 4.51. Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open also note its important history, as the last surviving Birkbeck School, which they say makes it a socially and historically important part of London and Hackney's past; as well as the Ridley Road market, which is a historic London market.
- 4.52. It was proposed that Colvestone has the ability to provide high quality education as a 1 form entry school on an "appropriately sized" site with all aspects of the site utilised and in a manageable condition; and that the school keeper's house could be used as an ARP.
- 4.53. Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open draw attention to the absence of risk assessment or costs of the size of schools, or comparisons of schools.
- 4.54. Questions were raised about Hackney Education's processes to ensure a school does not have a deficit and comments that issues were not raised in a remote audit. Respondents believe that Colvestone budgets are achievable and state that systems are in place to resolve historic debts; surplus has been achieved despite historic debts and again the respondents raise questions about the Hackney Education audit.
- 4.55. Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open claim that the school acts as a 'social binder' and closing it would damage the community, exacerbate exactly the kind of social atomisation and flight of families from the borough that the closure is meant to address. They claim closing the school threatens the mental wellbeing of children in particular, driving phenomena such as emotionally based school avoidance.
- 4.56. Respondents question why what is described as 'absolute faith' is being placed in GLA projections population figures when in 2017 the projections were wrong, and led to 'disastrous greenlighting of free schools' in the borough that 'largely produced the current problem'. They question why viable schools are not being supported through this period, particularly in Colvestone's case, given the scale of housebuilding projected in central Dalston.
- 4.57. Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open claim the consultation process has key flaws including it being said that-

- The consultation failed to follow the statutory guidance and estate strategy
 - A briefing report prepared for Cabinet was ill informed and lacking detail
 - Respondents claimed that they had been told the consultation was intended to help the Council determine whether to close the schools, but it was said that its design made it ineffective for that purpose
 - Respondents claimed that the consultation was inaccessible to some of the groups that should have been included
 - Respondents claimed that the consultation process itself damaged the financial viability of the schools in scope
- 4.58. Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open claim estimates of the costs associated with closing schools are inaccurate and fails to account for retention bonuses, the possibility of increased out-of-borough SEN provision, that estimates of redundancy costs are questionable and do not account for loss of revenue to the borough if families leave or go to free schools, academies or private schools.
- 4.59. It was claimed that the approach adopted to closure/merger is unusually aggressive, untested and the consequence unknown. They claim the council doesn't know how best to support staff, families and students and minimise damage to educational outcomes and that it can't predict what all the costs will be or how to design the process to minimise them.
- 4.60. It was claimed that Keeping Colvestone open is a win for the Council, showing the Council does genuinely listen to residents, is carefully considering which schools to close and was telling the truth when it said a decision had not been made.
- 4.61. It was claimed that Colvestone has a bright future in Hackney, that it has been an important part of this community for 161 years and with the Council's support it can continue to thrive as a key pillar of the community. They cite benefits of the school remaining open are:
- Ensures the provision of an academically strong, non-denominational, one-form entry community school for families.
 - Enables Hackney to recover Colvestone's budget deficit by allowing the school to pay it down over time.
 - Supports the future development of Hackney, attracting families to the new housing in the Dalston Plan and anchoring the borough's first 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent.
 - Preserves provision that reflects desires of Hackney residents, 84% of whom want non-faith education.
 - Provides strong SEND provision that can be expanded to meet the urgent need in the borough.
 - Saves the taxpayer the enormous cost of closing the school and of paying off the deficit.
 - Sends the message that the Council listens and does genuinely take the feedback of residents into consideration. It increases faith in the authenticity of the Council's consultation processes.

5. **Details of alternative options considered and not favoured**

Option 1 - No action

- 5.1. The Council has a responsibility to manage school places effectively, ensure that schools provide high quality education for children, and deliver Best Value, and continuous improvement through the efficient, effective and economic management of our school estate.
- 5.2. The Council is ambitious for Hackney children, our schools achieve excellent results and we want to ensure they remain among the very best in the country.
- 5.3. If no action is taken it is inevitable that quality of education and outcomes for Hackney children are at risk and the Council will be liable for the costs of schools worst affected by falling rolls as they move into debt or increase their deficit and eventually close for financial reasons.
- 5.4. As outlined in section 4, the operational and financial challenges affecting schools with falling rolls will continue to increase with a negative impact on pupils and the Council's financial position. Taking no action to the issues affecting schools with falling rolls is not an acceptable option available to the Council.

Option 2 - Phase implementation of the current proposals over 2 or more years

- 5.5. This option was rejected as there is an urgent need to take action and any delay is very likely to result in increased financial liability for the council as schools at risk move toward or increase their deficit position.
- 5.6. Additionally, further measures to address falling rolls are likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand. If taken forward, the proposals outlined in this report would begin to address the issue of falling rolls by removing 90 reception places; however, in isolation, this is unlikely to resolve the problem and, based on current projections, further action to bring surplus reception places under 10% is likely.

Option 3: Close/merge more schools than those currently proposed.

- 5.7. Further measures to address falling rolls, over and above those proposed in this paper, are likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand.
- 5.8. Action to address falling rolls that involve more schools than the six that would potentially be affected by the current proposals was considered. This option might be considered by some to be favourable because it could provide greater reassurance that children, forced to move school as a result of their school closing, would be less likely to have to move primary school again if further action is required in the future.

- 5.9. This option was not preferred due to limited resourcing and capacity to effectively manage and mitigate impact of a greater number of closures/mergers.

Option 4: Alternative options for De Beauvoir primary

- 5.10. Alternative pairings for the proposals were considered and detailed in the May Cabinet report, additional suggestions have been put forward in the consultation summarised below:
- 5.11. Merging De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer on either site was suggested however it was not considered a feasible option for all families as the schools are 1.1 miles apart, walking distance which is a 25 minute walk, and the distance would be a barrier for those living for example, north of De Beauvoir or south of Randal Cremer.
- 5.12. Merging De Beauvoir and Princess May on either site was suggested however it was not considered a viable option as it was considered unlikely to lead to sufficiently stabilising numbers of pupils at either school. Although a merger with Princess May was not proposed, at 16 minute walk (0.7 miles away) it is likely the school will have capacity to accommodate any families from De Beauvoir if that is what they want. Colvestone was considered a better school to merge being 0.4 miles and 8 minute walk away from Princess May.

Option 5: Alternative options for Colvestone primary

- 5.13. Merging Colvestone and Princess May on the Colvestone site was suggested however this option was considered unfeasible as the Colvestone site is unable to accommodate all the children from Princess May. The decision to propose a merger onto the Princess May site is expected to positively impact that schools' falling roll and unused capacity.
- 5.14. Merging Colvestone with other schools in the Blossom Federation was suggested however these options were considered unsuitable due to the distance between Colvestone and other schools in the federation.
- 5.15. Merging De Beauvoir and Colvestone on the Colvestone site was suggested however, based on pupil numbers at the time, Colvestone appears to not be able to accommodate all the children from De Beauvoir. The subsequent drop in pupil numbers at both schools makes this option feasible in terms of pupil numbers, however this is not favoured due to Colvestone's financial position.
- 5.16. It has also been proposed by those in support of Colvestone remaining open, that it could be a school for pupils with SEND. However in the short term this option is unfeasible because the school would need to be closed while building modifications and arrangements were made requiring all children to move to other schools. However all options regarding future use will be considered for medium to long term should be school close as a

result of these proposals.

Option 6: Alternative options for Randal Cremer Primary

- 5.17. Options for merging the school were considered but there was no single school located near enough with the sufficient places to accommodate all of the pupils. However, there are sufficient schools nearby with surplus places that could accommodate the pupils from Randal Cremer. Hoxton Garden, Sebright, St Monica's and St John the Baptist are likely alternative schools and all rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted.

Option 7: Alternative options considered for Baden Powell Primary School

- 5.18. Options to merge Nightingale and other schools with surplus places rather than Baden Powell, were considered. This option was not progressed primarily because Nightingale did not have capacity to guarantee all children at neighbouring schools with surplus capacity a place, based on pupil roll data at the time, and because the distance between these other schools was less optimal than between Baden Powell and Nightingale.

6. Background

Policy Context

School Organisation Plan & Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy

- 6.1. Hackney's aims are to create a fairer, more inclusive borough, which supports children and young people to thrive. We want to optimise schools' roles as an anchor system in the borough and ensure that developments and changes are sustainable. Hackney Education's mission is to improve the life chances of every child, young person and learner in Hackney.
- 6.2. The School Organisation Plan (SOP) (Appendix F) is reviewed and updated annually and provides schools, governing bodies and the public with:
1. an overview of the educational provision on offer in Hackney;
 2. a summary of current pupil numbers and projected demand across the primary and secondary phases;
 3. the factors considered by Hackney Education when determining the need to increase or reduce school places;
 4. a summary of historic and planned primary school place reductions from 2019 to up until September 2023.
- 6.3. The SOP is reviewed and updated annually with the latest school roll and projections data, as well as any further proposed changes to school organisation.
- 6.4. To best respond to the borough's school organisation challenges Hackney Education has developed The Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy

(Appendix G) approved at Cabinet on 28 February 2022, a 10 year, medium to long term strategy, to consider how best to resolve four priority issues:

1. the significant increase in demand for SEND education provision
2. falling primary mainstream school rolls
3. the projected fall in secondary mainstream school rolls due to a declining primary roll
4. a long term sustainable use plan for all education sites in the borough.

6.5. The proposals in this report relate to priority 2, to address falling primary school rolls, by working with schools with budget pressures and falling pupil rolls to seek viable long-term solutions.

6.6. In addition, if the proposals in this report are taken forward, the Council will consider whether any vacated site could reasonably be utilised in addressing priority 1, the significant increase in demand for SEND education provision.

Merger/amalgamation and closure of schools

6.7. Section 6A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, requires that, where a local authority identifies a need for a new school in its area, it must establish an academy (free school). This requirement, known as the 'free school presumption', means that the Local Authority is unable to open a new school and must instead seek proposers for a free school/academy.

6.8. This removes the option for the Local Authority to consolidate one or more schools at risk due to falling rolls by closing them all and creating one new school that brings governors, staff and students from all schools together on an equal footing.

6.9. Given this context the Council has the following options:

1. Merge/amalgamate schools by closing one school and guaranteeing places for displaced children in another 'host' school if that is what parents want. This gives the option for all pupils to move to the new school with their peers as a group. This option means the host school retains its original DfE school number as it is not technically considered a new school. However, following the merge/amalgamation process, governors of the 'host' school have the option to rename the school to create a new identity for the merged schools.

This process would mean that the staff who are currently working at the closing school would be at risk of being made redundant, as merging/amalgamating the children may not result in new jobs being created in the host school. Firstly as stated earlier the parents may not choose to move their children to the host school therefore opportunities for additional roles in the host school will only be known following completion of the schools admissions process. However, as part of the drive to avoid redundancies as much as possible, we are seeking to obtain agreement from the

host school and the Hackney family of schools to support job opportunities for those staff at risk of redundancy.

2. Close a school and support all displaced children to access places in other local schools. This can take the form of a full and immediate closure or a 'staggered' closure.

A staggered closure option would cease the admission of children into reception each year until all remaining children have worked their way through to year 6, at which time the school would close. While this may be a less disruptive option for some families, it significantly increases the financial burden and further damages the quality of education at the school as pupils do not benefit from the mixing of year groups they would usually experience. Therefore full and immediate closures are recommended in this report.

Equality impact assessment

- 6.10. Hackney's Education Sufficiency and Estate (ESE) strategy, agreed at Cabinet in February 2022, is a 10 year plan with four strategic priorities. Priority 2 is to work in partnership with mainstream primary schools whose rolls are falling to seek viable solutions. In May 2023, the cabinet agreed to consult on proposals to amalgamate/merge or close six schools in Hackney.
- 6.11. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively; surplus places should be between 5-10%. Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.
- 6.12. Allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on quality and breadth of the education offer at those schools.
- 6.13. The Council must make best efforts to ensure that the gradual attrition of pupils does not further disadvantage those who are already disadvantaged socially/educationally.
- 6.14. In making any decision to amalgamate/merge or close schools the Council must consider the school and local communities and groups with the following protected characteristics:
 - Age (a person belonging to a particular age or range of ages)
 - Disability (a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)
 - Gender reassignment (the process of transitioning from one sex to another)

- Pregnancy and maternity (Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding)
 - Race (Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.)
 - Religion and belief (Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.)
 - Sex (A man or a woman)
 - Sexual orientation (Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.)
- 6.15. In addition to protected characteristics, Hackney also considers disadvantages for people by socio-economics and identifies other priority groups, for example, children in care and single parents.
- 6.16. The Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix B) details Hackney's protected characteristics profile, risks, impacts and mitigations if a decision is made to reorganise schools.
- 6.17. If the decision is made to either close or merge schools, pupils at the schools affected will be supported to move to a neighbouring school during the Summer Term of 2024. There are sufficient school places in the areas where the schools are affected to accommodate all children. The Local Authority has chosen amalgamation/merger sites that are close walking distance to the original schools, to ensure travel times don't exceed the statutory walking distance requirement of 2 miles or under. This will also ensure that pupils stay in areas that they are familiar with. Should parents choose a different school closer to their home, the Local Authority will support them with this.
- 6.18. The Local Authority will ensure that children with SEND are placed in appropriate settings to minimise disruption.
- 6.19. None of the schools that are being considered during this phase are faith schools, however should parents wish to enrol their child in one of these schools we will work with the Diocesan Board to accommodate this wish.

Sustainability and climate change

- 6.20. The proposals in this report will lead to a more efficient use of school buildings. Running a higher number of school sites with fewer pupils is inefficient in terms of energy usage, as the buildings still need to be heated and lit. Reducing the number of buildings with surplus places will mean that the retained buildings will start working to their designed capacity in terms of number of occupants, both pupils and staff, leading to more efficient energy use instead of running a higher number of schools with fewer pupils.

- 6.21. The Council is committed to fulfilling the manifesto pledge, taking all schools onto a pathway to Net Zero Carbon (NZC) by 2026 and achieving NZC by 2030.
- 6.22. The schools currently in scope remain in focus for the NZC commitment. In the event a school site should be no longer required, the Council will undertake an Asset Review identifying the optimum short and long term future solutions. In doing so the Council will seek to provide environmental and sustainability measures to achieve measurable decarbonisation of the site. This will include minimising energy consumption through a period of transition, developing a bespoke NZC solution for future use and occupation of the site.

Parental Choice

- 6.23. Under Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Local Authorities and the Governing Bodies of maintained schools are under a duty to comply with the wishes of a parent in expressing a preference for a particular school, and admit the child, unless complying would prejudice the provision of education or the efficient use of resources. Parents have a right to express a preference for the school they want their child to attend, but do not have a right for their child to attend that particular school.
- 6.24. Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 requires the local authority to ensure compulsory school aged children can access full time, efficient education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that a child may have.
- 6.25. Parents have a right to express a preference for a particular type of school, for example a non-faith school, a one form entry school or an academy, and may seek a place at schools outside their local area in preference to local schools, if that is what they wish. However the local authority is under no obligation to ensure parents have all of these options within walking distance of their home or their local area.

Impact of the proposals on pupils

- 6.26. The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) in schools proposed to close is shown below by year group. It is expected that numbers will change, likely to reduce between now and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Baden Powell School	20	19	19	28	25	25	27	163
Colvestone Primary School	14	16	24	26	12	13	16	121

De Beauvoir Primary School	6	7	8	8	10	10	17	66
Randal Cremer School	17	16	22	18	24	21	34	152
Grand Total	57	58	73	80	71	69	94	502

6.27. In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to those proposed to close shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. (Appendix H - Nearby schools and vacancies - SES - August 2023)

6.28. Mapping of children affected by the proposals demonstrates they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney and that families are very likely to have several options of alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. 2 miles for primary aged children). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following proposed closures/mergers and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided as Appendices I - O (There is one map provided for each year group addressing all schools)

6.29. There are sufficient alternative places for children attending nursery classes in schools proposed to close. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled places based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
Baden Powell	9	40
Colvestone	6	37
De Beauvoir	15	40
Randal Cremer	18	50

6.30. The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support in schools impacted by the proposals is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Baden Powell	8	4.8%	22	13.1%
Colvestone	10	7.7%	21	16.2%
De Beauvoir	10	9.1%	28	25.5%

Nightingale	24	11.9%	30	14.9%
Princess May	10	5.1%	17	8.7%
Randal Cremer	17	7.0%	42	17.4%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

- 6.31. Representations made to the Council state that Colvestone School has a higher proportion of children with SEND (17%) than the national average (13%), and that the numbers are such that 25% of children in that school have SEND. Cabinet will wish to be aware of this when taking into account the extent of impact of the proposals.
- 6.32. The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly in those schools proposed to close. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

Impact of the proposals on current enrollment

- 6.33. The Council understood that roll numbers at schools proposed to close could be negatively affected as proposals were publicised and consultation progressed.
- 6.34. The following table compares roll numbers at schools proposed to close between the autumn census and the start of the 23/24 academic year.

School	Autumn census (Oct 2022)	Start of 2023/24 (as reported by schools)	Change
Baden Powell	163	163	0
Colvestone	137	121	- 16
De Beauvoir	117	66	- 51
Randal Cremer	241	152	- 89

- 6.35. The Council is monitoring pupil movement closely and supporting schools as required. The Council acknowledges the impact for staff and pupils to see their peers and friends leaving the school prior to any final decision.
- 6.36. The Council acknowledges the uncertainty parents are facing and it is a

decision to be taken by each parent individually about whether they act now in anticipation of a decision to close their school or wait until after the final decision. The admissions team will support families via existing In Year admissions systems but has not directly advised parents to act either way.

Impact of the proposals on staff

6.37. We acknowledge the serious impact these proposals have on staff wellbeing prior to any final decision and the direct impact on the lives and livelihood of staff should the decision to close or merge schools go ahead. In view of this we will ensure those staff have access to an employee assistance programme, where they can access confidential advice and counselling.

6.38. The number of teachers and support staff that would be affected if the proposals are taken forward are summarised in the table below (data as at 31/08/2023).

School	Teachers	Support staff	Total
Baden Powell	13	22	35
Colvestone	10	8	18
De Beauvoir	8	11	19
Randal Cremer	18	31	49
Total	49	72	121

6.39. In the event of closures, the Council will do everything it can to help staff find alternative roles in schools across Hackney. However, as a last resort, some staff will be offered redundancy, which the Council hopes would be managed through voluntary redundancies and retirements.

6.40. In the event of a merger, we will work with the leadership teams of the affected schools to assess the full impact on staff. Governors and school leaders in receiving schools will lead the significant changes brought by these proposals.

6.41. Staff and all other relevant parties including trade unions would be consulted about any potential changes.

6.42. Those affected will be supported through practical outplacement support such as application and CV writing, interview skills and potential job opportunities in other Hackney Schools. A particular emphasis will be given to supporting support staff, many of whom are Hackney residents.

Consideration of pre-consultation community engagement

6.43. Following engagement with head teachers and chairs of governors from January 2023 the proposals were publicly launched on 28 March 2023 and

early school community engagement activity was undertaken with staff and parents in April 2023.

- 6.44. Comment and feedback received during this period of engagement was considered by Cabinet on 22 May 2023 when taking the decision on whether to move to informal consultation and is provided with this report in Appendix D for the consideration of decision makers.
- 6.45. The comment and feedback received at this early stage is not formally included in the following consultation analysis however, as all the key themes from this early engagement were raised again during the consultation, they are addressed in the response and commentary in this report.

Consultation Summary

- 6.46. On 22 May 2023 the Council's Cabinet decided to proceed with consultation on proposals to close and/or merge six primary schools. The six week consultation period aimed to gather feedback on the proposals not just from parents and staff of the schools in scope, but also from wider categories of stakeholders that may be impacted by the decisions.
- 6.47. The consultation asked respondents to share their views on the proposals. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposals and were given the opportunity to offer further comments on the proposals.
- 6.48. Hackney Council commissioned Kwest Research to analyse and report on the results of individual paper and online forms returned during consultation. The findings and report are available in Appendix P. Raw data submissions and all comments can be seen in Appendix Q.
- 6.49. Additional responses received during the consultation, not submitted through the consultation form, have been collated by Hackney Council in a separate report available in Appendix R along with responses and comments shared during consultation events.
- 6.50. At the end of the consultation period, a total of 613 postal and online questionnaires had been received, and a further 9 responses were received by email (sent to school.sufficiency@hackney.co.uk), Council members and the Mayor's Office.
- 6.51. We have sought to include all comments and representations about these proposals so that they can be considered by decision makers at all stages. We have also included comprehensive and accurate summaries of this information.
- 6.52. The local authority's detailed **responses to consultation feedback** are provided in Appendix S for the decision maker's consideration.

Analysis of consultation feedback

- 6.53. Consultation feedback submitted on citizen space and printed questionnaires has been analysed and reviewed by independent third party Kwest (Appendix P).
- 6.54. Additional responses to the consultation were received by email, sent to school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, Council members and the Mayor's Office. The comments in the additional responses (Appendix R) have been classified in line with Kwest's qualitative analysis classifications.
- 6.55. Parents and carers were invited to attend workshops at each of the schools to provide an opportunity to ask questions about the consultation proposals. Workshops were developed in partnership with school leadership teams and were adapted to meet the needs of each school community. Schools were asked to identify the language support needed for each event and interpreters were provided at the events to support parents and carers who speak English as an additional language and who may need additional support to engage with the consultation. Notes taken at these events are included in the Additional Responses and Engagement Workshops feedback and summary (Appendix R).

Consultation methodology & engagement approach

- 6.56. The consultation ran for 6 weeks in total, from 5 June to 16 July 2023. The consultation was published on Citizen Space, the Council's engagement platform. The consultation was open to all Hackney residents. Parents and carers of pupils and staff at each of the six schools were directly informed of plans to consult by letter and were provided with printed consultation documents and questionnaires. In addition to the consultation questionnaire, parents and carers were invited to attend workshops at the schools.
- 6.57. The Council sought to include all parents and carers of all affected schools by devising and providing each school with comprehensive and accessible information about the consultation.
- 6.58. The Council worked with the schools to tailor workshop events to best meet the bespoke needs of the parents/carers of children at each school, to ensure, to our best endeavours, that none were disadvantaged and all could engage in the consultation. Each school had access to a parent and carer engagement toolkit which included an audit, action plan, tools, etc. and targeted support from the Council's Parent Carer Engagement System Leader to maximise parent/carers engagement in the consultation.
- 6.59. The Council's Parent Carer Engagement System Leader worked with individual schools to identify any potential barriers to engagement and to ensure that these were removed as far as possible. The Parent Carer Engagement System Leader liaised with schools about the need for creche provision; to discuss workshop format, timing and whether the workshops would be delivered in person or virtually; how to have less talk and more

time for questions; to set up drop ins at end of the session; interpreters; and best methods for engaging. Support was offered to schools in developing these workshops. The needs of parents/carers at each school were identified and arrangements made to address these, to the best of the Council's abilities.

- 6.60. In most cases schools have arrangements for assisting parents with English as an additional language. Those that require it are assisted by friends or relatives and in some cases staff. The Council also supported schools in meeting needs relating to language by offering invitations to the workshops in languages requested by the schools and providing interpreters in those requested languages at the workshops. The Council decided, having considered alternative methods of support, time and cost, that this was the best option available to ensure that parents and carers with insufficient English language were not excluded.
- 6.61. Other stakeholders, internal audiences and local residents were informed about the consultation and invited to take part through a variety of methods, including [website updates](#), letters and emails to schools, partner organisations, newsletters, social media posts, a press release, an article in Love Hackney (distributed to 120,000 homes and businesses in Hackney), [a leaflet](#) distributed in print and electronic format (sent to internal and external staff, members, school governors, children centres, nurseries, childminders, libraries, adventure playgrounds etc.)

Pupil voice

- 6.62. Inclusion of pupil voice was given careful consideration in order to ensure an age appropriate and proportionate approach. The Council liaised with and agreed to be led by schools as to if, when and how pupil voice would be collected. This acknowledged the potential impact on children and young people's wellbeing, the practical logistics of the Council seeking their views directly, without school involvement, and the breadth of opinion among schools about when and how pupil voice should be obtained. This approach recognised that school based personnel were best positioned to progress any form of dialogue with the children at their school regardless of the context.
- 6.63. Some schools said that it was appropriate to deal with this in circle time or assembly while others did not feel that the Council directly approaching pupils was appropriate. In some cases the school's leadership indicated that they did not want to capture pupil voice until a decision was made. The views of children and young people that have been shared with the Council are attached for consideration in the Additional Responses and Engagement Workshops feedback and summary (Appendix R).

Staff engagement

- 6.64. Staff at each of the six schools were directly informed of plans to consult by letter and were provided with printed consultation documents and questionnaires.
- 6.65. In addition, at the request of schools, in person meetings were convened during July 2023 at all schools. Human Resources staff and Trade Union Officials attended meetings with staff to discuss how the proposals may impact them should they be approved by Cabinet in December 2023.
- 6.66. Should the decision be made to close/merge/amalgamate schools, a detailed support package will be rolled out including practical outplacement support such as CV writing, interview skills and potential job opportunities in other Hackney Schools. A particular emphasis will be rolled out for support staff in schools many of whom are Hackney residents.

Next steps

- 6.67. If a decision is made by cabinet in September to progress statutory notice, the timeline will follow as below:

Date	Event
September 2023 <i>Cabinet Decision 2</i>	Feedback from the previous consultation considered by the Cabinet who will decide whether to publish statutory proposals.
October-November 2023	The Council publishes statutory notices of their intention to amalgamate/close the schools. This triggers a 28-day 'objection period' for those who object to the proposal to send their objections to the Council.
December 2023 <i>Cabinet Decision 3</i>	Response during the statutory objection period is considered by the Cabinet, who makes the final decision to proceed or not with mergers and/or closures.
January-August 2024	School merger and closure arrangements are made (subject to Cabinet's decision in December 2023). Schools in scope officially close. Community engagement begins to explore future use of vacated school sites.
September 2024	Children begin at the new schools.

Approximate dates subject to change depending on the progress

Risk Assessment

6.68. The implementation of this strategy is key mitigation associated with the surplus of mainstream school places and key risks and mitigations at this stage are outlined below.

	Risk	Mitigation
1	<p>No action taken</p> <p>Growing financial burden (highlighted in section 4.11, 4.14 to 4.26), reputational damage and risk to quality of education (highlighted in sections 4.33 to 4.36).</p>	<p>This report and other evidence produced for decision makers clearly sets out the financial and quality of education risks associated with no decision and emphasises the need for action .</p>
2	<p>Decision making is delayed</p> <p>If the decision making timeline outlined at 6.67 is not achieved statutory school admissions lead times would push any proposed closures/mergers by at least 12 months (i.e. September 2025 or later), resulting in continued and escalating pressure on school finances, the quality of education offered to residents and continued uncertainty for families and staff.</p>	<p>Decision makers are made aware and reminded of timeline dependencies and impact.</p>
3	<p>Decision to implement moves to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator</p> <p>If proposals are progressed and the statutory representation period is triggered, subsequent failure to take a decision within two months of the end of the statutory representation period would see the decision revert away from Cabinet to The Office of the Schools Adjudicator.</p>	<p>Decision makers are made aware and reminded of timeline dependencies and impact.</p>
4	<p>Impact of proposals on schools proposed to close/merge.</p> <p>Pupils and staff leave schools proposed to close/merge following decisions and prior to July 2024 (highlighted at 6.33 to 6.36) affecting quality of provision or making schools unviable during the current academic year.</p>	<p>Monitoring pupil and staff movement, robust communication and early reporting of viability concerns in cooperation with schools. Support offer developed and implemented</p>
5	<p>SEND to mainstream pupil ratio increases</p> <p>SEND to mainstream pupil ratio in schools proposed to close/merge brings additional pressure as rolls and funding continue to fall.</p>	<p>Monitor impact and progress proposals to provide direct financial support.</p> <p>Progress implementation of ESES, priority 1 creating new SEND provision in borough</p>

		(further information can be found on the Local Offer.)
6	<p>Engagement disparity between school communities</p> <p>Parent/carer voice and ability to engage differs between schools/communities and is not necessarily reflective of the impact of proposals or strength of feeling.</p>	<p>Independent assessment and thematic reporting of consultation responses for decision makers.</p> <p>Raise awareness with decision makers around disparity between school communities' ability to engage.</p>
7	<p>Meeting potential future demand</p> <p>Ability to meet future demand if schools are closed/merged and pupil numbers increase.</p>	<p>Unused capacity in existing school estate is monitored and retained to allow for expansion of places by increasing schools PANs (Appendix C, section 5)</p>

7. Comments of the Interim Group Director, Finance

- 7.1. The potential closure and/or mergers will incur costs such as redundancies, site security, the write off of any school deficits and maintenance as well as other incidental costs. The overall costs of closure are estimated to be £3.5m, which includes £2.5m of one-off costs such as redundancy costs and deficit write-off and £1m of ongoing costs linked to site security and maintenance, until alternative use options are developed. Redundancy costs have been calculated on the age and length of service of different staff groups and based on a number of assumptions, and there are risks that the final costs could be higher than estimated. These costs would fall on the Council's General Fund and the impact of these will need to be factored into the Council's financial planning.
- 7.2. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block, which is awarded to fund education provision, is primarily calculated using pupil numbers and pupil characteristics. Schools are funded on a formula basis and the number of pupils attending the school drives the level of funding received by a school. As such, schools with unfilled places are under increased financial challenge and struggle with financial sustainability. Reducing the number of school places in a planned way would support schools to manage within their funding allocations. At a borough level, there is expected to be a minimal impact on the amount of the grant received as a direct result of the closure and/or mergers of the schools within this report. With a similar amount of income spread over a smaller number of schools, there may be a positive impact on the financial position of individual primary schools.
- 7.3. The future use of sites will be considered with their local geographical context in mind, the options for their future potential use will also be balanced against the broader financial pressures the Council faces in the

medium term. Any future decisions for sites vacated would need to minimise the impact on the Council's overall financial position and the services we provide for our residents.

8. VAT implications on land and property transactions

- 8.1. No land or property transactions are being recommended at this stage. VAT implications will be considered if changes to the site usage in the future are proposed.

9. Comments of the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services

- 9.1. Cabinet is being asked to publish proposals to make a significant change to one of its maintained schools by increasing its size to 2 forms of entry, and to close four others. Two mergers amalgamations of schools are proposed and one of these does not require an increase to admissions. Officers working on the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy and falling rolls agenda have taken legal advice throughout the process.
- 9.2. Ensuring the sufficiency of school places, making significant changes to schools and closing schools require further consideration of the following:
- 9.3. S14 Education Act 1996 (EA 1996) imposes a duty on the Council to ensure the provision of sufficient schools for the provision of primary and secondary education in its area.
- 9.4. The Department of Education publishes statutory guidance related to the legislation that empowers the Council to add a form of entry to a school and separate statutory guidance that empowers the Council to close a maintained school. These are "Opening and closing maintained schools, Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, January 2023" and "Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools, Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, January 2023". These sets of guidance include statutory processes, guidance on consultation and guidance for decision makers when determining proposals. Those making proposals to make significant changes to maintained schools or to close them must have regard to the relevant guidance. The proposed addition of a form of entry constitutes a significant change ("prescribed alteration") to a school.
- 9.5. s 1(1) Local Government Act 1999 imposes a duty on the Council to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". The Council has fiduciary duties towards residents.
- 9.6. S149(1) Equality Act 2010 (EqA 2010) imposes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on the Council.
- 9.7. The PSED requires public authorities to have "due regard" to:
- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA 2010.

- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This involves having due regard to the need to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that is connected to that characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and
 - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding.

9.8. The PSED should be considered at all levels of decision making.

9.9. In taking decisions the Council must act lawfully, including acting within its powers and following its own procedures as well as those required by law.

9.10. The Council must ensure that all required consultations are properly undertaken in accordance with relevant law and guidance. It must make rational, evidence based decisions, take into account all relevant considerations, act for a proper purpose, and be properly reasoned.

9.11. The Council is the employer of staff engaged at its community schools. It must take further advice to ensure compliance with employment law if staff become affected by these proposals.

9.12. Following publication of any proposals, the Council should continue to seek detailed legal advice where required, for example in relation to; the requirements of the PSED, closing and making significant changes schools), consultation, commissioning, employment and procurement questions.

Appendices

- Appendix A - Letter to Secretary of State DfE
- Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix C - Demand for reception places
- Appendix D - Community queries and feedback March - May
- Appendix E - May 2023 Cabinet paper,
- Appendix F - School Organisation Plan (SOP)
- Appendix G - Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy
- Appendix H - Nearby school and vacancies - SES - August 2023
- Appendix I - Year R map
- Appendix J - Year 1 map
- Appendix K - Year 2 map
- Appendix L - Year 3, map

- Appendix M - Year 4 map
- Appendix N - Year 5 map
- Appendix O - Year 6 map
- Appendix P - Kwest report consultation findings
- Appendix Q - Raw data submissions all comments on consultation
- Appendix R - Additional Responses and Engagement Workshops
- Appendix S - LA responses to consultation feedback

Exempt

None

Background documents

London Councils - Managing Surplus School places in London (2023)

<https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/children-and-young-people/education-and-school-places/managing-surplus-school-places>

Public Version - Census 2021 Briefing 5: Ethnic Group, National Identity, Language and Religion

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wzarOaz1ac1qGtNxTpx82C2dceEQuzxJAUxFe0NV--o/edit#>

Hackney Air Quality Annual Status report

<https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality-reports#repor>

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Main Report – Final

Prepared August 2023

Hackney Council

Consultation On Amalgamation Or Closure Of
Six Hackney Primary Schools



**Kwest
Research**

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Appendix 1 - Report from the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Appendix 2 - Copy of the Questionnaire Used in the Consultation

1. Introduction & Background

During June and July 2023, Hackney Council undertook an informal consultation on the following proposals:

- Closure of De Beauvoir Primary in September 2024
- Closure of Randal Cremer Primary in September 2024
- Amalgamation of Colvestone Primary and Princess May Primary, onto the Princess May site, in September 2024
- Amalgamation of Baden Powell Primary and Nightingale Primary, onto the Nightingale site, in September 2024

The consultation ran for six weeks between 5th June and 16th July 2023 and aimed to gather feedback on the proposals, not just from parents and staff of the schools in scope, but also from wider categories of stakeholders that may be impacted by the decisions.

The consultation was hosted on Hackney's Citizen Space and was open to residents and stakeholders across the borough. A copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix two.¹

In addition, paper consultations and questionnaires were sent to the following numbers of staff and parents at each affected school:

- Randal Cremer - 400
- De Beauvoir - 250
- Baden Powell - 300
- Nightingale - 350
- Colvestone - 300
- Princess May – 350

In June 2023, Hackney Council commissioned Kwest Research to analyse and report on the results of individual paper and online forms returned during consultations on the proposals.

Additional responses to the consultation, not submitted through the consultation form are being collated by Hackney Council in a separate report and will be added, by the Council, as an appendix to this report. Similarly, responses and comments shared during consultation events will also be included in Hackney Council's report.

1.1 Response Rates

At the end of the consultation period, a total of 613 postal and online questionnaires had been received, three-quarters of which were commenting on the proposed amalgamation of Colvestone Primary with Princess May.

¹ <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-amalgamation-closure/>

The following table shows the number of responses to each proposal that were received by the time the consultation closed on 16th July 2023.

Proposal	Number of online replies	Number of paper forms	Total responses
Closure of De Beauvoir	117	37	154
Closure of Randal Cremer	98	8	106
Amalgamation of Colvestone with Princess May	400	63	463
Amalgamation of Baden Powell with Nightingale	116	41	157

Table 1 Number of responses per proposal

Some of the online questionnaires contained a paragraph of identical comments so a review of the IP addresses used to complete the forms was conducted to check for the likelihood of multiple submissions from the same source. The vast majority of online forms (403/467) were found to come from a unique IP address. There were three IP addresses where four forms in each case were submitted, one with three forms and 25 where two forms were submitted.

The source of these identical comments has been identified as the Save Colvestone Primary School website. This contains a link called “council consultation tips” which leads to a list of points that can be used when responding to the survey. ²

² <https://www.savecolvestone.com/council-consultation>

2. Overview Of Response To The Proposals

The proposals are universally unpopular, with 89% of respondents reporting that they disagree and 8% that they agree.

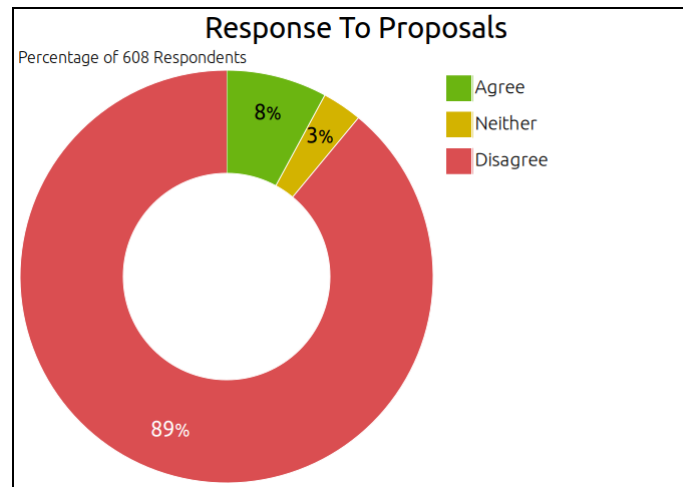


Figure 2.1

A breakdown of the results for each proposal is shown below.

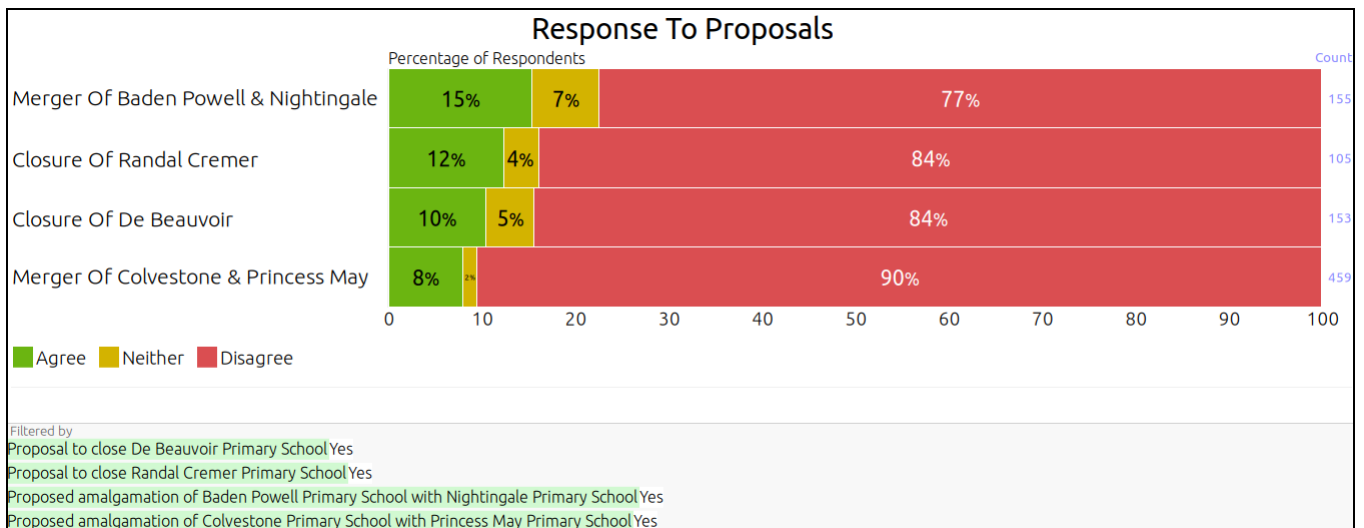
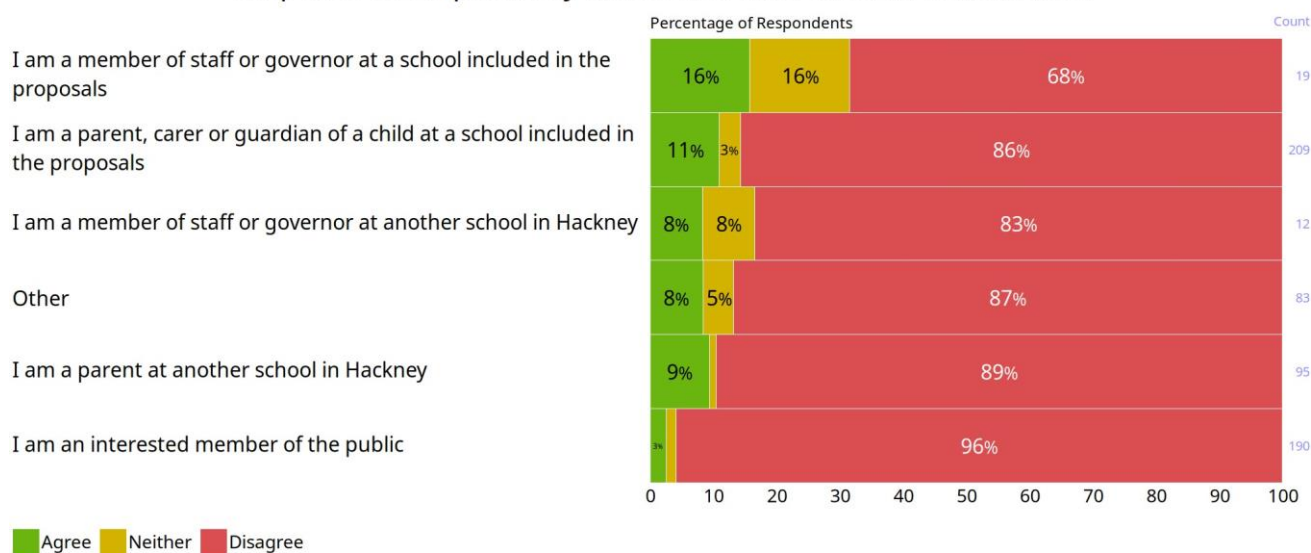


Figure 2.2

The graph below shows the results from the different respondent groups to the consultation. This is shown at an overall level due to the small number of responses in each group when broken down by proposal. It should be noted there were only 19 responses from staff or governors at schools included in the proposals and only 12 from those at another school in Hackney. Therefore, when looking at the percentage of these respondents who agree/disagree with the proposals the accuracy of the data is extremely poor.

Response To Proposals By Reason For Interested In Consultation



Accuracy poor when few replies

Figure 2.3

2.1 Strategic Themes In The Consultation Feedback

The consultation feedback received is wide ranging, including many testimonials from parents in support of their current school. The key themes in the comments are discussed in more detail in the sections on each individual proposal.

Some of the feedback received was more strategic in nature, offering alternative approaches to the issue of falling rolls and/or suggestions on how to move forwards, and the key points from these comments are discussed below.

Use Existing Schools To Address Borough-Wide Shortage Of SEND Places

A number of SEND professionals responded to the consultation making the case for keeping one or more of the schools open and working with them to expand the SEND provision on their sites. The feedback encourages decision makers to consult further with the EHCP and wider SEND team, as well as the Re-Integration Unit, with a view to building and expanding on the good practice of SEND provision in a mainstream setting that already exists in Randal Cremer, De Beauvoir and Colvestone. In addition, De Beauvoir and Colvestone receive extensive praise from parents of pupils with SEND who chose these schools due to their small size and worry about whether their children will be able to cope in larger schools.

More Mergers Instead Of Closures

Some respondents have asked why the Council is considering school closures, rather than mergers, since this would ensure friendship groups could stay together and potentially allow some staff to transfer alongside them, thus making the process slightly less difficult for children and parents.

Some respondents consider De Beauvoir and Colvestone to be schools with a similar ethos, and as they are located half a mile apart, several respondents suggest this would be a more suitable merger than Colvestone and Princess May.

Many respondents say they chose their children's existing school specifically because it was single form entry.

Future Use Of School Buildings

Respondents comment that some of the schools are listed buildings which are over 100 years old. A Buildings and Heritage Conservator responding to the consultation points out the fragility of listed buildings when left unoccupied. As an original Birkbeck school, Colvestone Primary is believed by some respondents to have a restrictive covenant meaning it can only be used for educational purposes.

There is a perception amongst respondents that the buildings are likely to be sold off for development, into further unaffordable housing, increasing the perceived "gentrification" of Hackney.

One respondent to the consultation states that they work in "child-friendly urban planning and design", advising cities across the world. Their comments are shown below.

Falling school roles and forced school closures can be an indicator of systematic problems making cities hostile to families and children. Hackney and London are not alone in this struggle and there are innovative and valuable examples to learn from in the international context especially around municipalities and councils retaining real estate even if schools close, to be repurposed to generate income for the municipality and also to be held for use in the event that populations swing upwards in the future.

The loss of the existing schools and school communities is challenging and emotional for all involved. The loss of these buildings forever I believe could be a strategic error on the part of the councils, which will have further negative impacts on the viability of cities for children and families in the short, medium and long term.

A respondent from the Orthodox Jewish Community makes the point that Charedi schools in Stamford Hill are oversubscribed. Referring specifically to Baden Powell primary school, they suggest:

Given these circumstances and considering the proximity of this site to the Stamford Hill Jewish community. I request that the council explore the possibility of leasing or selling the school premises to one of the Jewish schools in the area as part of this consultation process. This would alleviate some of the overcrowding issues faced by the Charedi schools and help accommodate the increasing number of students more effectively.

Impact Of Extended Consultation Process On Trust & Confidence In The Council

Many respondents to the Schools Consultation suggest the decision to close or merge these schools has already been made. There are concerns among respondents about the process exacerbating the sense of disempowerment amongst communities already feeling marginalised and neglected in local planning decisions taken as part of the perceived 'gentrification' of Hackney.

There are questions raised in respondents' comments about the data being used and the lack of answers provided by Hackney Education. Respondents express frustration at being "refused all meetings" with officials in charge of the process, about the lack of data and financial modelling provided, and the lack of Council engagement with the local community.

The following comment encapsulates the feelings expressed by these respondents.

*There's no point me reiterating all the many reasons why closing Colvestone is a bad idea because I don't think you're really listening anyway. But I will tell you this. My daughter, a student at Colvestone, was getting frustrated when I dragged her to yet another meeting related to trying to get the Council to listen to our arguments. She told me making all this effort to engage with the Council was a waste of my time and hers because no matter what we do the Council was going to close the school anyway. She's *** years old. At such a young age she is already cynical, already has no faith in democratic institutions and processes. She still believes in unicorns, but she doesn't believe in you. This is the lesson you are teaching hundreds of children across the borough, that elected officials lie, that democratic processes are phoney, that engagement is fruitless and that they are powerless. So when they grow up and they don't want to vote or get involved with local government or when they turn to more extreme means to respond to societal problems you can know that you helped contribute their sense of hopelessness.*

3. Response To The Proposal To Close De Beauvoir Primary

At the start of the consultation period, 250 forms were given out to parents and staff at De Beauvoir primary school, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 154 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close the school.

32% of respondents are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 27% are interested members of the public, 21% are parents at another school in Hackney and 6% are staff or governors at the school.

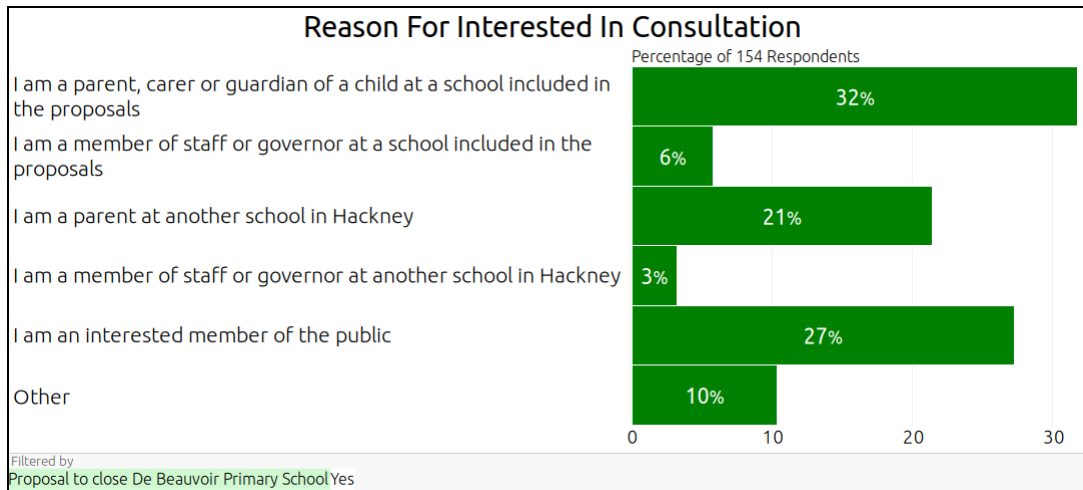


Figure 3.1

Overall, 10% of respondents agree with the proposal to close De Beauvoir, whilst 84% disagree.

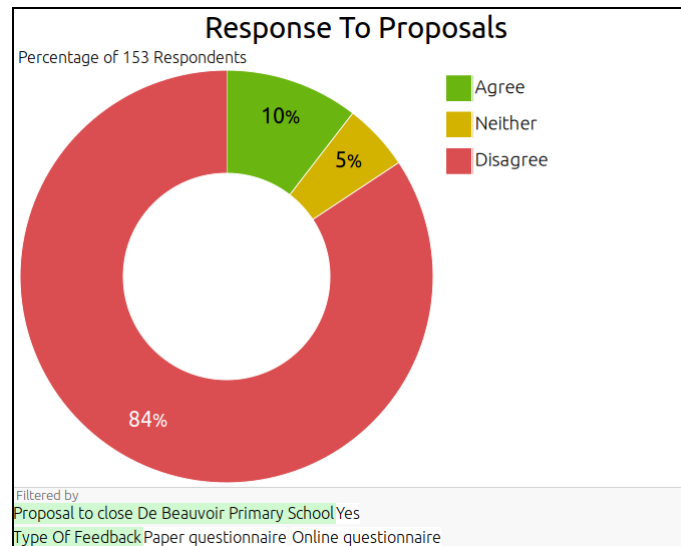


Figure 3.2

6% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 12% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the small numbers of respondents.

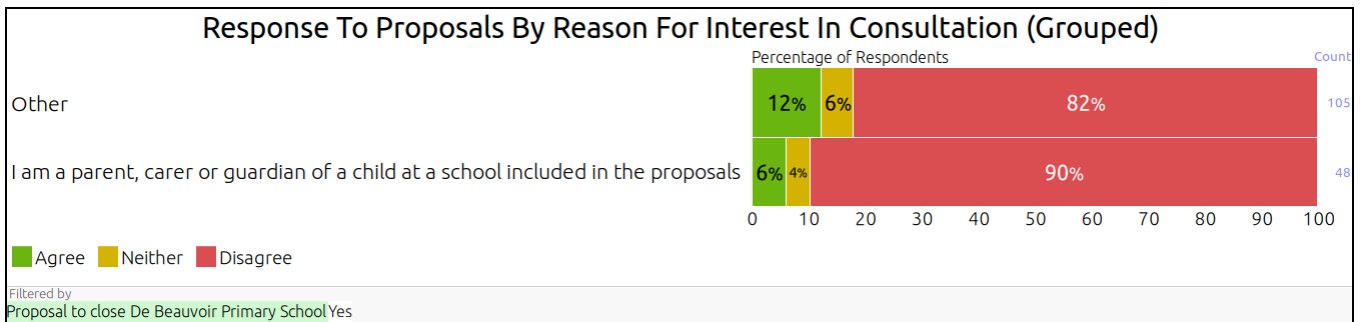


Figure 3.3

3.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Close De Beauvoir

Respondents were able to comment on the proposals and the feedback received has been classified into a number of broad themes. 43% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 26% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 24% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 23% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

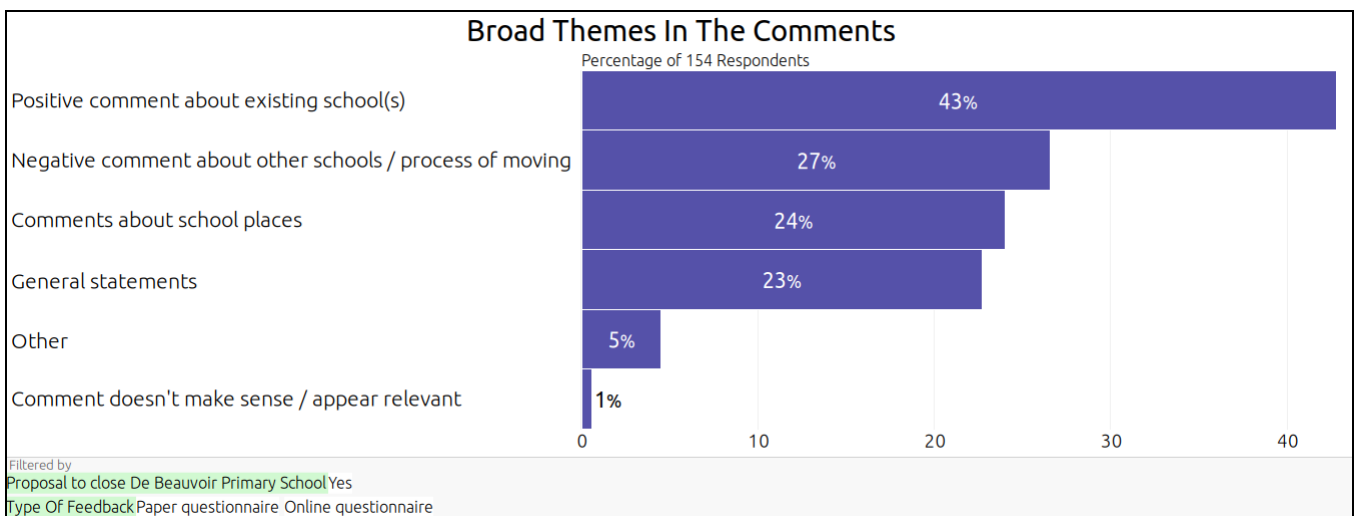


Figure 3.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes, which are shown in the graph below and discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

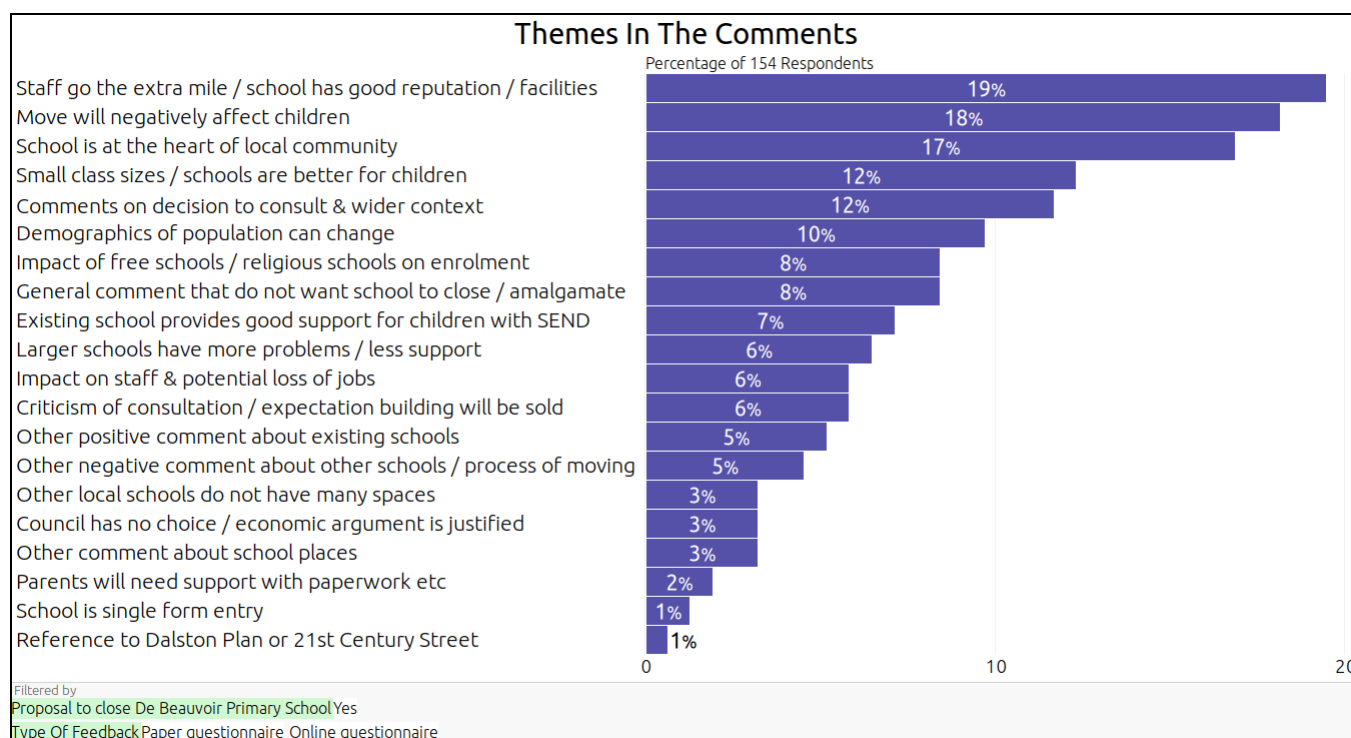


Figure 3.5

3.2 Positive Feedback About De Beauvoir

19% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

17% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

12% think that small class sizes are better for children

Some specific points raised by respondents in their comments include the following:

- The latest OFSTED inspection (2022) is cited by respondents, one of whom points out that this rated De Beauvoir as 'Good with Outstanding Features', despite approximately 65% of children being in receipt of pupil premium and a similar proportion living in homes where English is not the first language.
- The school is currently believed by respondents to be operating with a surplus budget.
- A high proportion of children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) attend the school (one respondent puts the figure at 35%). Concern was expressed, by several respondents, about the lack of specialist places for such children in the borough. A health and social care professional responding to the consultation urges the Council to consider the loss of this resource to the community, scope the SEND work the school is currently providing and carefully consider how these needs would be met in other settings. They consider De Beauvoir to be a model of good practice and excellence in this regard.
- Alternatives to closure were also suggested by respondents, including amalgamating with one of the other schools in the consultation.

The comments also include many testimonials from parents about how they and their children love the school and feel well supported by staff. A selection of this feedback is shown below.

Four of my children have attended this school. [Name] and the teachers and staff at this school have been extremely supportive when I have had health and personal issues. My children love coming to this school and are devastated about the possible closure. This school is one big, supportive family. It is not just bricks and mortar. I highly doubt that I will have this support from another school.

The staff are caring and nurturing and have successfully adapted teaching and learning styles to suit all types of learners. As a parent who is unable to drop off and pick up my child regularly, I have been able to reach out to staff whenever needed, including sending late night emails which have received instant replies. During the Covid 19 lockdowns, the school was quite quick in implementing online learning which many private schools still have not been able to implement.

*My children are at the school and have learning disabilities and struggle with transitions who is to support them or me, I have my own health I have ***, ***, ***. Who will support me with a new setting for my children? De Beauvoir was a decision I made thoroughly I put a lot of thought into choosing a school for my boys and now it's closing. I will keep them in there until the last day and probably won't get them back into a school until something magical happens and a school pops up like De Beauvoir small, intimate, family friendly environment, everyone knows everyone, everyone feels safe.*

3.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

18% think the move will negatively affect children

6% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

6% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments are shown below:

- Respondents believe that walking to school is encouraged by the Council. However, if De Beauvoir closes and parents want to keep their children in local authority maintained schools, respondents fear there may be insufficient places to allow children to walk to school. The only nearby non-voluntary primary school not proposed to close is Princess May, and it is mentioned by respondents that this is also included in the consultation process and so may not be attractive to parents.
- Respondents make a comparison between one of the nearby free schools, Hackney New, which does not have a playground, and De Beauvoir, which has ample outdoor space and is on a quiet side street with no through traffic.
- Concern was also raised by respondents about the potential impact on local traffic flows as they feel that large schools in busy urban areas can be overwhelming for residents at pick up and drop off times.
- Staff members taking part in the consultation report a deterioration in their own well-being as they try to help children manage their anxiety.

Some parents and school staff submitted anecdotal evidence of how their children have been or will be negatively affected by the move. A selection of this feedback is shown below.

Moving [my son] will make him feel alienated and in a completely new environment and I know this will affect his mental wellbeing as it will be difficult to handle this change and will be a completely new academic curriculum which will in turn worsen his grades.

*Since this proposal has come to light, my eldest [child] has been feeling very anxious and upset as some of * friends have left during this process.*

Uprooting all these kids in the middle of a key development phase will not only cause distress to the child, but add more financial pressure onto each parent from having to buy new uniforms for their children and additional travel costs, which in this day and age is one more nail in the coffin

I have direct access to children crying and emotionally drained as their peers leave for another school one by one. I have direct access to children as young as 4 only having 1 day to process that it would be their last day with their friends and favourite teachers; as parents frantically do in-year applications. I have direct access to parents who struggle with the English language asking for support and guidance on how to do transfer applications.

*My wellbeing is deteriorating as I have to constantly readjust and support my children as their friends leave randomly week by week. The anxiety in my class of *** year olds is completely unfair and out of their control*

3.4 Comments About School Places

10% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

8% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

3% believe that other local schools do not have many places

3% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

Examples of specific points raised by respondents in their comments include:

- There is confusion amongst some respondents about why there is now a surfeit of primary school places when permission was given recently for Hackney New Primary school, in De Beauvoir's catchment area.
- Respondents consider it unfair that free schools, academies and faith schools cannot be included in action taken by the Council to address falling rolls. There are questions in the feedback about the rationale behind closing and amalgamating so many local schools, whilst leaving the voluntary sector out of the equation, particularly when any future new schools in the borough would have to be free schools.

- Other local schools are believed to be mostly full already following the proposals being publicised. One respondent makes reference to a government website that they say shows many local schools, particularly those to the south of Dalston Lane, have been largely unaffected by the fall in pupil numbers, with some having as little as 2% of spaces free, despite an overall maximum pupil number of 500+.
- Respondents comment that some children at De Beauvoir are resident in Islington and may have a preference for relocating to an Islington school, where they believe they will have no priority in terms of waiting lists.
- There is doubt amongst respondents about the evidence for the predicted decline in demand for school places. Brexit, covid and cost of living, all cited as possible influences, are perceived as recent events, whose longer term impact may still be unknown.

Some examples of the comments received on these topics are given below.

Hackney council have told parents that De Beauvoir school should close because pupil numbers are falling and will continue to do so in the future. The council cited three driving factors; Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis; all of which were pushing families out of London. [...] Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis are all recent events. Although they have had an impact on pupil numbers recently, there is no evidence that these trends will continue in the long term. In fact shortly before these events, pupil numbers in Hackney had been rising.

A school does not go from being oversubscribed in several year groups 6 or 7 years ago meaning my children had to wait until nearly the end of the school year for a place, to virtually empty now in comparison, as has happened with De Beauvoir. When this has happened elsewhere it has taken decades. I do feel like the council have somehow pursued an internal unwritten policy of diverting potential pupils whether they are reception age or in year admissions for older year groups, away from De Beauvoir and into other neighbouring schools, to keep pupil numbers up at the other schools so they don't have to consider closing more schools and the council admitted at a parent's meeting that they have no power to close free or academy schools and religious schools, so siphoning children into those schools saves the headache of trying to reason with those schools to close of their own accord.

There is low public confidence in the data interpretation. Many parents are sceptical, and cite examples such as the closure and reopening of Hackney schools previously.

Whilst the school has had a falling roll for a number of years, the opening of Hackney Free School severely impacted the number of children applying. When the area was already suffering with many unfilled Reception places, Hackney's decision to allow an additional Free School to be built is baffling. The closure of De Beauvoir, we believe, is related to this decision and seeing as the school has recently achieved a good Ofsted, the timing of the proposed closure is devastating for everyone involved.

I'm worried about the pressure the closure of De Beauvoir Primary will put on other schools in the area. Our most local school (Hackney New) has no outside space so it is important to us to have other options with outside space when our son starts reception in Sept 2025. We're worried if De Beauvoir Primary closes that not only takes that option away but possibly others as the other schools will be full with children who would have gone there.

3.5 General Feedback

12% commented about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

8% just said they do not want the school to close, with little additional detail

6% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some specific points raised in the feedback from respondents around these topics include:

- There are questions in the feedback about the slow response to the problem of falling rolls and the pressure this has placed on schools. Respondents believe that other local authorities took action sooner to address the issue.
- The feedback suggests many parents feel they are not being listened to, that the Council has already given up and the outcome of the consultation is a foregone conclusion. There are references to the 'gentrification' of Hackney as well as other council consultations where the proposals have subsequently been adopted despite a majority expressing disagreement.
- There are concerns in the comments about the perceived lack of answers from the Council to questions raised during meetings about the proposals. Additionally, there are reports of low public confidence in the data being used to inform decisions.

Examples of comments around these issues are shown below.

I do wonder if filling this form is merely a process with no clear facts that it would be read and understood. This is because I cannot believe we are even at this stage considering the comments and issues raised at the first stage and the lack of answers and explanations provided by Hackney Council.

Hackney in general pushes people out the borough through, for example, their own housing schemes, increase in rental properties, lack of initiative to encourage people to come and live in the borough, road closures where many consultation processes showed more voted "no" to closure than "yes" but they still proceeded. They have not factored in their own conduct as a borough into this decision.

There are few spaces for children and young people. The school is a much valued community resource for families. I'd argue that the tokenistic closure consultation process has served to further disempower local residents who perhaps already feel marginalised and neglected in local planning decisions. The decision of the council to close the school will have a social impact beyond the disruption of those children who are currently being educated.

I think it would be wise for a third party to check the data informing the school closure policy. There is low public confidence in the data interpretation. Many parents are sceptical, and cite examples such as the closure and reopening of Hackney schools previously

I understand the rationale for the consultation for the closure of schools in Hackney. My concern is the length of time it has taken the Local Authority to address the problem of falling rolls - it has been clear London, including Hackney, was likely to be put into a difficult position. Other LAs adjacent to Hackney acted sooner.

4. Response to Proposals To Close Randal Cremer Primary

At the start of the consultation period, 400 forms were given out to parents and staff at Randal Cremer primary school, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 106 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close the school.

35% of respondents are interested members of the public, 25% are parents at another school in Hackney, 17% are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school and 3% are staff or governors at the school.

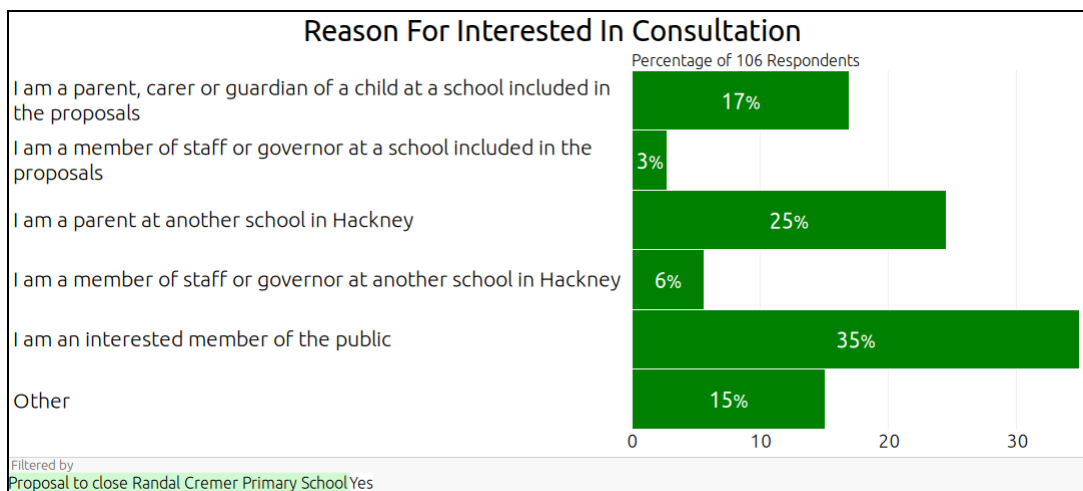


Figure 4.1

Overall, 12% of respondents agree with the proposal to close Randal Cremer, whilst 84% disagree.

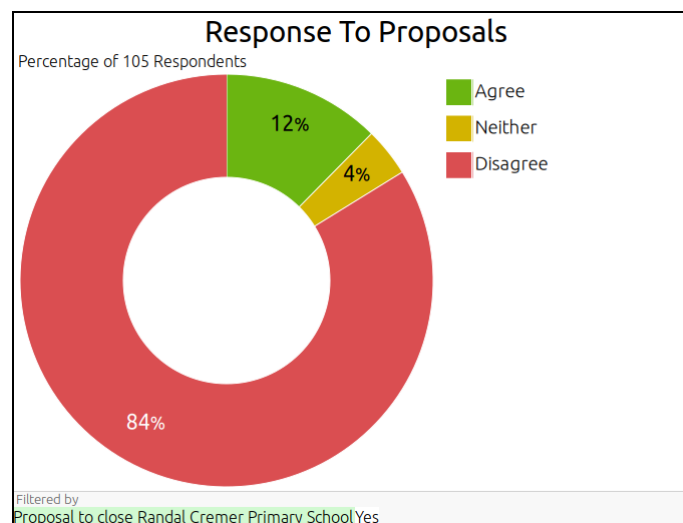


Figure 4.2

6% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 14% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the very small numbers of respondents.

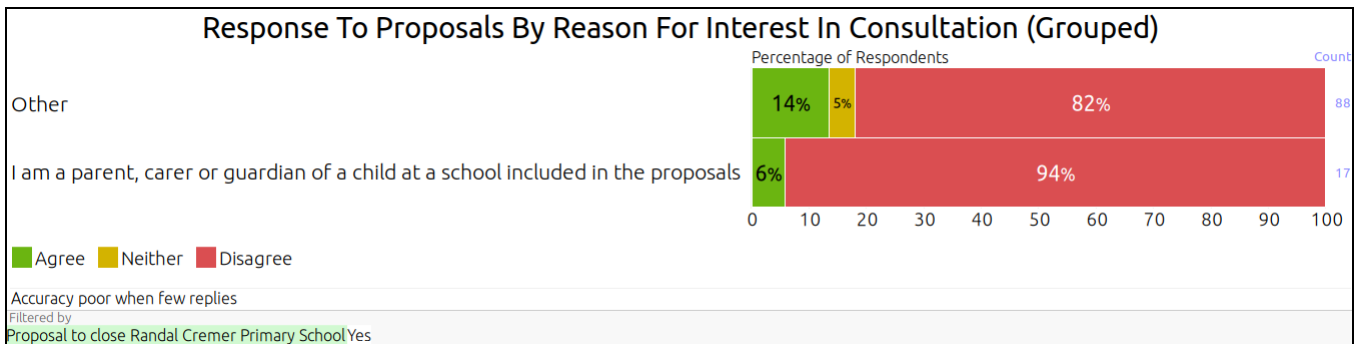


Figure 4.3

4.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Close Randal Cremer

32% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 25% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 22% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 18% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

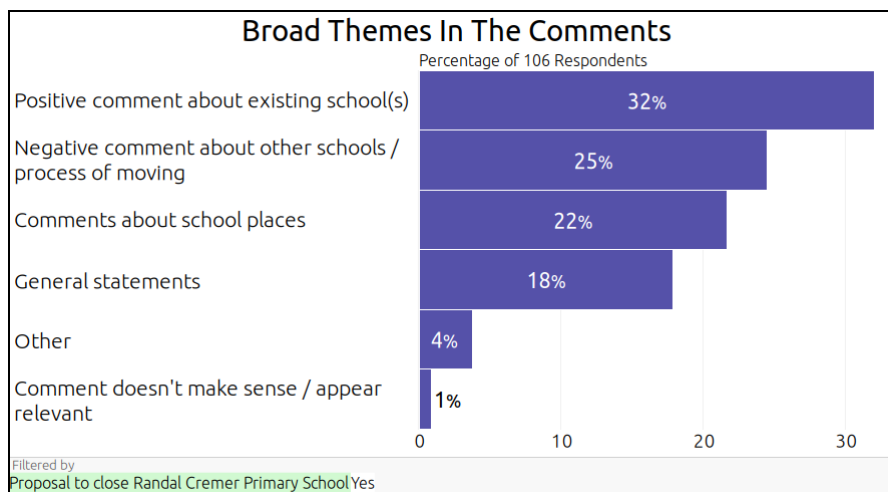


Figure 4.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

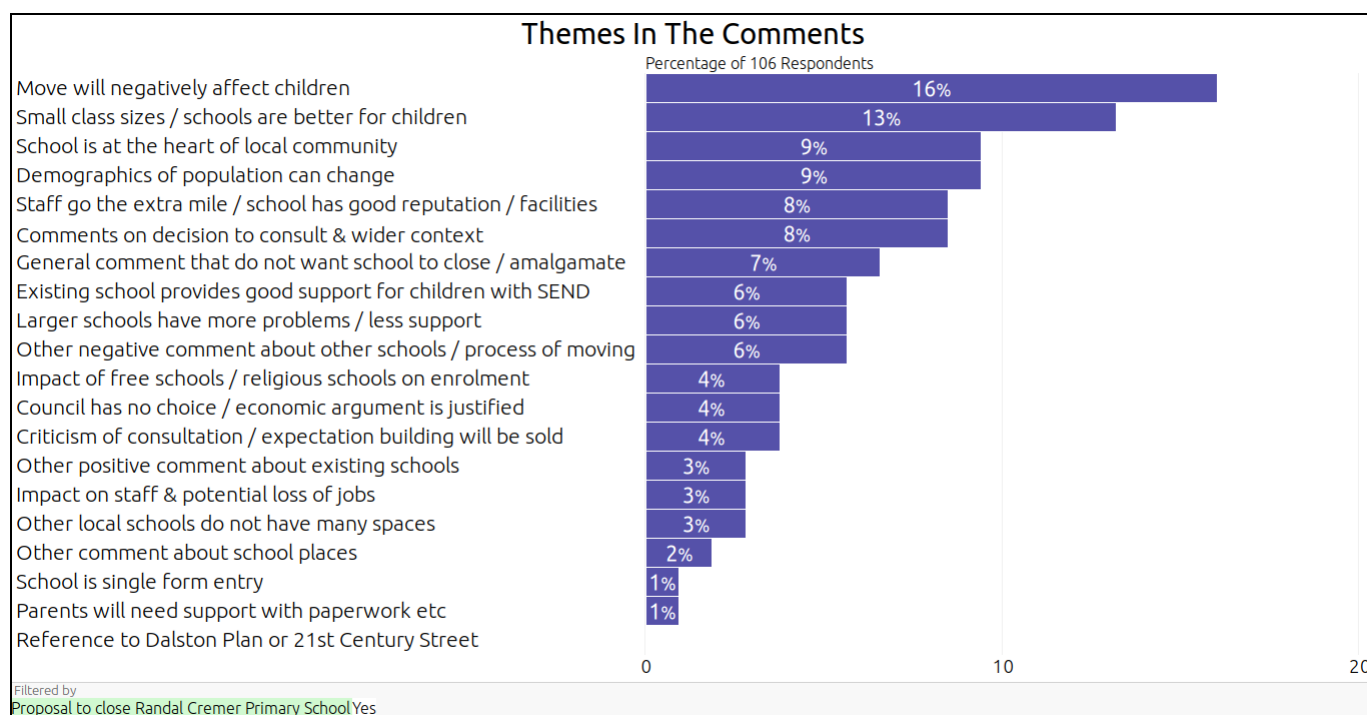


Figure 4.5

4.2 Positive Feedback About Randal Cremer

13% think that small class sizes are better for children

9% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

8% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments include the following:

- An Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team has responded to the consultation to raise concerns about the closure from a SEND perspective.
- Randal Cremer is also seen as a hub for refugee families as well as other minority groups.
- Additionally, the school is described by respondents as being somewhere that accepts those who have been excluded from other schools.
- Alternatives to closure were also suggested by respondents, including amalgamating with one of the other schools in the consultation.

The Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team highlights the very significant challenges the borough faces with the inclusion of such pupils in mainstream settings. With specialist settings and ARPs full, and more requests for placements than space available, “an extraordinary amount” is spent on out of borough independent provision.

Due to the inclusive, nurturing environment at Randal Cremer, the respondent feels that the children with SEND are less on the local authority's radar because their needs are being met, whereas this is likely to change if these children are required to move to a larger, less inclusive environment. There are concerns that these children may then require more costly specialist settings. The respondent expresses concern that "the proposal has not sufficiently considered both the distress and cost implications of closing our most inclusive primary schools". This could be avoided by working with Randal Cremer to expand on its current SEND provision. The respondent encourages decision makers to consult more widely with the ECHP, wider SEND Team and the Re-integration Unit.

Randal Cremer is also perceived to be a hub for refugee families. A respondent cites the latest Ofsted report, which confirms that pupils who do not speak English as a first language are well supported, helped by the partnerships the staff have formed with their families. There are concerns expressed by respondents about what will happen to these children if the school closes.

A selection of the positive comments about the school is shown below.

Randal Cremer is the only school in the borough that will take pupils who have been excluded from other schools. It provides absolutely essential services for pupils who are our most vulnerable, and they have been directly impacted by the Hackney New School opening nearby - but this school won't address the needs of the very disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils served by Randal Cremer.

They are a fantastic support for children with SEN and other needs. They have also been a hub for Refugee families and other minority groups within the area. The loss of this school will be an incredible blow to an already marginalised community with no thought to where these families will be sent across the borough.

I feel that Randal Cremer is a strong community school which works well with marginalised families and children with high levels of SEND - perhaps it would be of great benefit to offer more funding to increase and extend this work.

4.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

16% think the move will negatively affect children

6% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

3% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

The feedback collected in the consultation includes testimonials from parents about the negative impact the situation is having on their children.

Everyone in the school is stressing about this proposal. I have two special needs kids. You are not thinking about us at all. Kids are struggling

*I have had to move *** of my children to a different school and leave *** at Randal Cremer until they go to Secondary school. This is not because I wanted to or because it is a bad school but because I had to give my kids some stability in the situation that Hackney Council have created. There are children still at Randal Cremer seeing their friends leave because their parents, like me, want to give them stability. I have no faith that Hackney can meet their promises of supporting parents to find appropriate places. Moreover, I have seen the staff at Randal Cremer lose heart and although they are all doing amazingly to support the children, who is supporting them? They are about to lose community that can't be replaced and jobs that are hard to find elsewhere. To top it off, [teacher] is visibly heartbroken each week to see more kids leave. And then there are many kids left with SEN, who have no easy way to stay or move to somewhere else as places are so limited.*

Not enough thought has been given to the long distances children will have to travel, what will happen to the vulnerable children who rely on Randal Cremer and the divide that is opening up between schools serving middle class pupils and those from working class families.

4.4 Comments About School Places

9% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

4% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

4% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

3% believe that other local schools do not have many places

A selection of the comments on this topic is shown below.

Birth rates and population rates rise and fall. What evidence does the council have that birth rates and population of Hackney will continue to decline? History says this is unlikely to be the case as dips in birth rates often follow a rise.

These are public local authority schools. Once closed, because of government policy, they can only reopen as academies, which are secretive schools outside democratic control. Many problems have recently come to light in Hackney academies. Working class and black students are less likely to thrive.

Unfortunately these schools have falling numbers of children attending. No fault of the schools - a problem across London. But the way schools are funded, it's unfair to disproportionately spend money on these few children when this money could be spread out amongst all Hackney schools.

4.5 General Feedback

8% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

7% just said they do not want the school to close, with little additional detail

4% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some specific points raised in the feedback from respondents around these issues are:

- Many parents feel that the decision has already been made and the outcome of the consultation is a foregone conclusion.
- There are references in the comments collected during the consultation to the 'gentrification' of Hackney and concerns that long-standing council policies have created the current situation.
- Respondents suspect that the land will be sold to developers.

Some of the comments illustrating these points are shown below.

The closure of schools in Hackney seems to be a foregone conclusion. We found out about it earlier this year but I feel this has been years in the making, especially given the council's gentrification of Hackney in recent years.

This is not a consultation process. The decision has already been made. There seems to be no opportunity to amalgamate. Parents and staff have not been given adequate notice. It is opportunistic as undoubtedly the building will be sold to developers to turn into private housing for large amounts of money. Children will have to attend new schools, siblings may have to attend different schools, which amalgamation would have avoided.

5. Response To Proposals To Merge Colvestone & Princess May Primaries

At the start of the consultation period, 300 forms were given out to parents and staff at Colvestone primary school and 350 to those at Princess May, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties.

In total, 463 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close Colvestone and merge with Princess May.

Colvestone parents have created a website setting out their “case for Colvestone” with a link to the consultation and tips for what to say in response. Many comments received in response to the proposals appear to have been copied and pasted from the website.

40% of respondents are interested members of the public, 21% are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 19% are parents at another school in Hackney and 1% are staff or governors at the school.

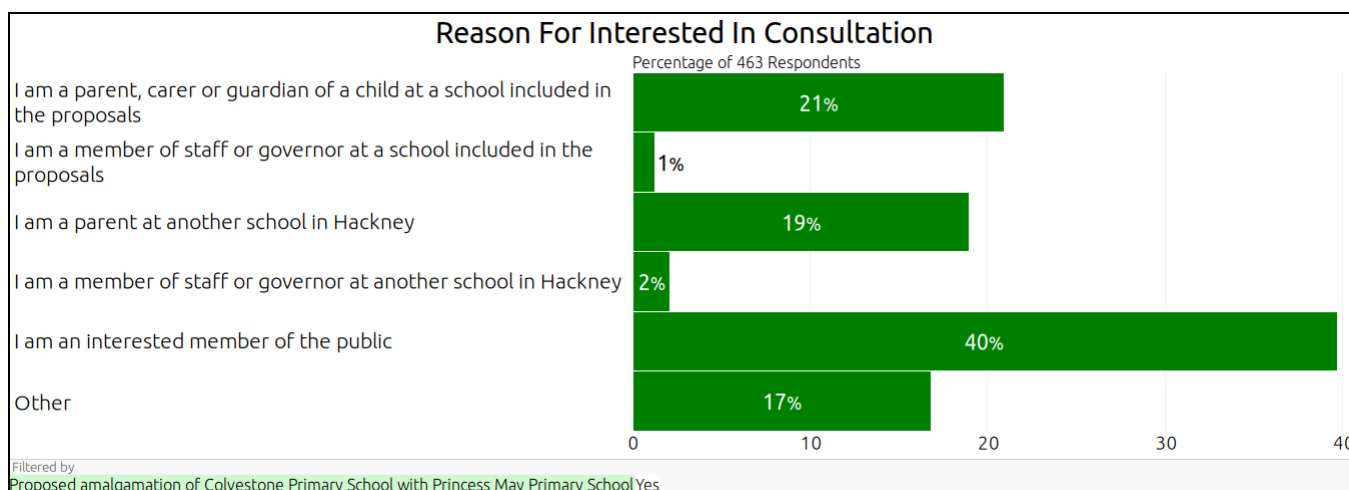


Figure 5.1

5.1 Response To Proposals

Overall, 8% of respondents agree with the proposal to merge Colvestone and Princess May, whilst 90% disagree.

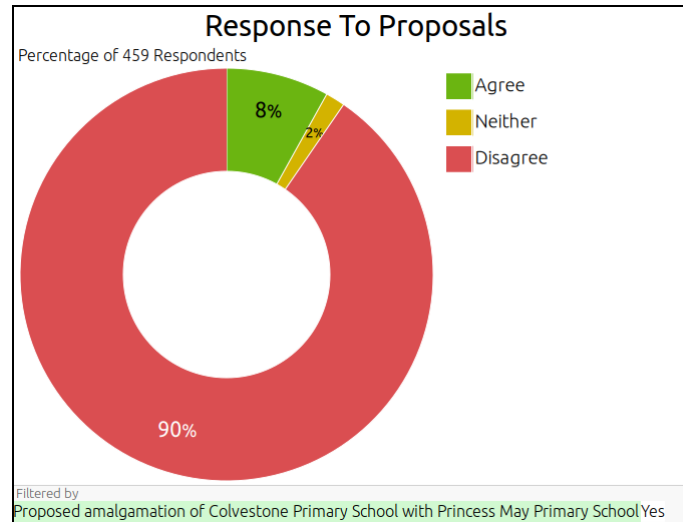


Figure 5.2

Due to the larger number of responses to the Colvestone consultation compared to the other proposals, it is possible to break results down in more detail by 'reason for interest in the consultation'.

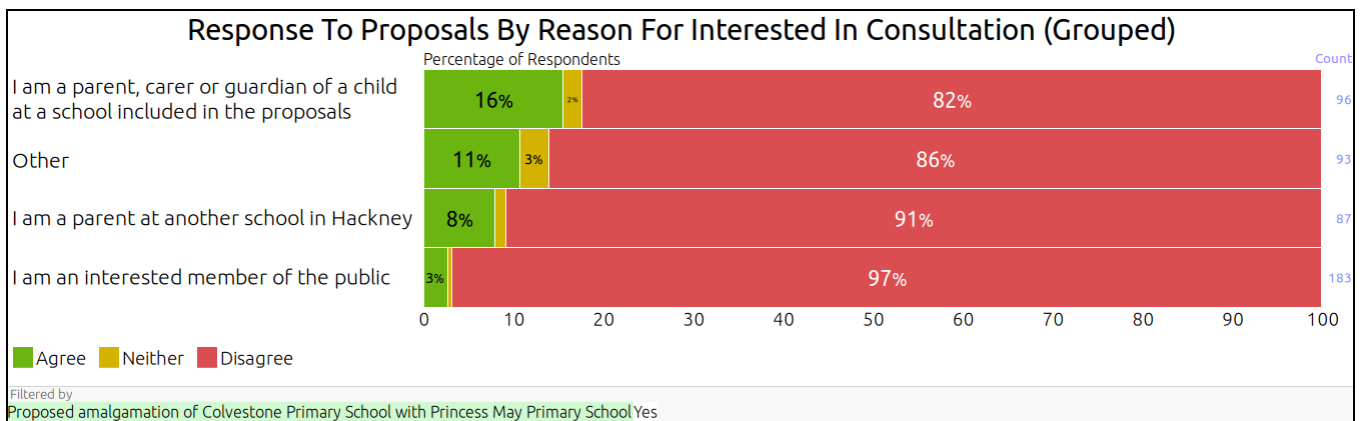


Figure 5.3

5.2 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Merge Colvestone & Princess May

58% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 24% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 26% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 19% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

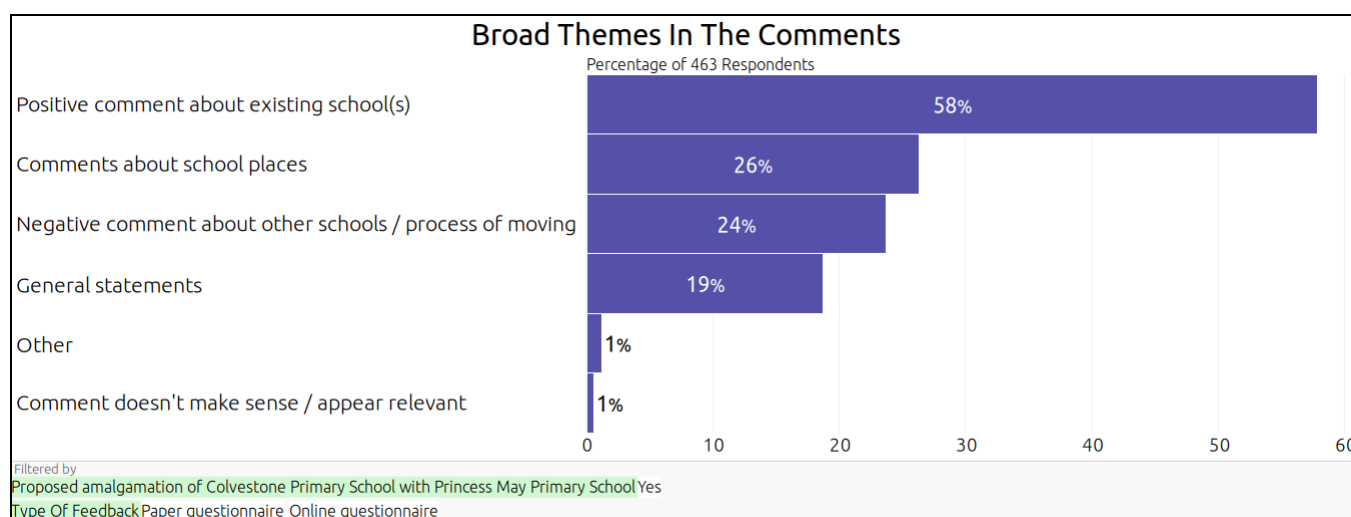


Figure 5.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

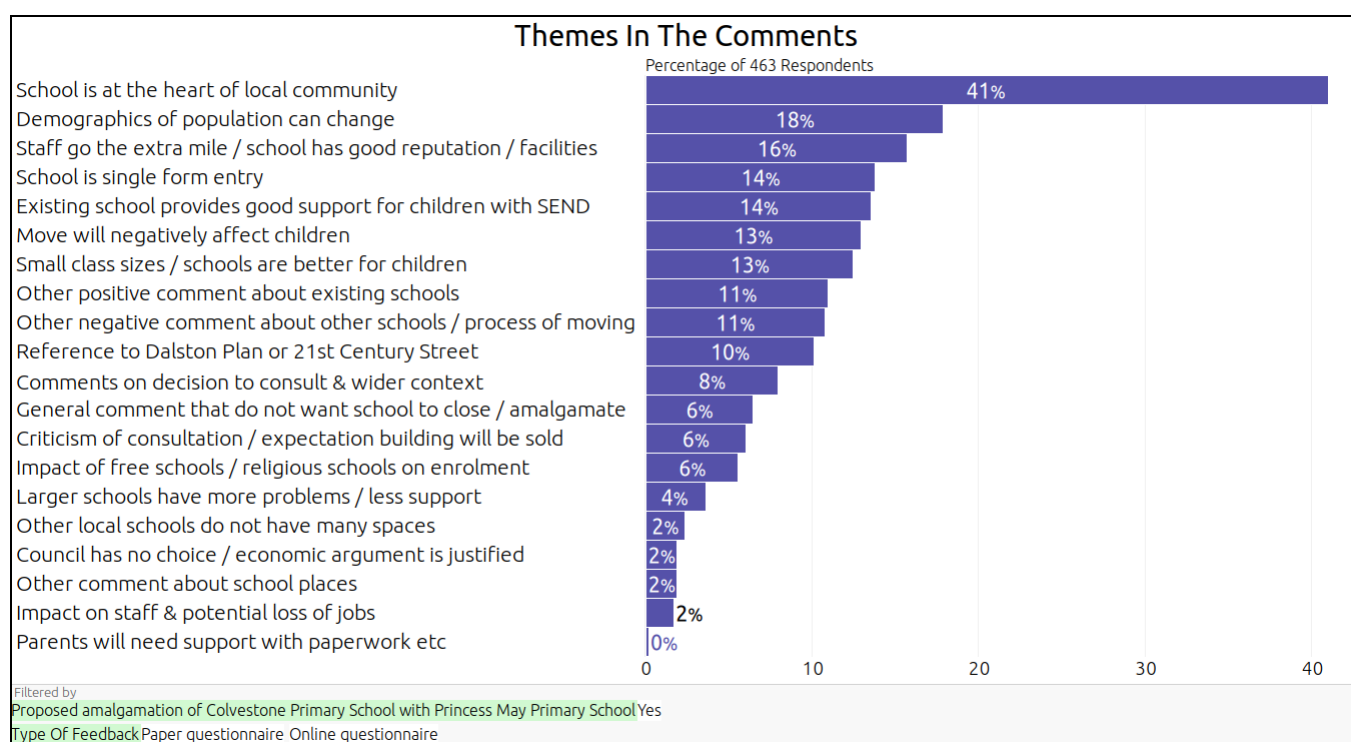


Figure 5.5

5.3 Positive Feedback About Colvestone

41% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

16% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

14% mention that the school is single form entry

14% feel the school provides good support for children with SEND

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments include the following:

- 10% of respondents mention the Dalston Plan and/or the 21st Century Street that is to be created in Colvestone Crescent, the area around the school.
- The comments suggest that the school has strong links with the local community. Traders in Ridley Road market responded to the consultation expressing concern about the reduction in footfall as the parents and children of the school are currently regular customers.
- Respondents state that 7% of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), well above the 4.3% average across the borough. In addition, a number of SEND and Inclusion professionals responding to the consultation express concern about the merger. They consider the small, single form entry school to be “exactly what local authorities need right now to tackle a number of growing problems in our student population”.
- The grade two listed school buildings are believed to be of historic significance, being part of the original Birkbeck Schools founded by William Ellis. Some respondents believe there is a restrictive covenant on the building, barring its use for anything other than education provision. Respondents report that the building has also recently undergone an extensive restoration process.
- Respondents feel that joining the Blossom Federation in September 2022 has had a positive impact on Colvestone. The introduction of the new leadership team has been well received and the school is perceived by respondents to be on an upward trajectory with proactive steps being taken to address its budget deficit, including running an in-year surplus for 2022. Respondents believe this partnership deserves to be given more time.

Dalston Plan & 21st Century Street

The Dalston Plan aims to shape the future of the area by building over 600 affordable new homes. A key feature of the Plan involves turning Colvestone Crescent into the borough's first 21st Century Play Street. As the primary school is located at the end of Colvestone Crescent, a number of respondents to the consultation feel it is an integral part of the creation of the Play Street. This is viewed by respondents as being the case as the Plan aims to create a child-friendly, safe environment. Similarly, Colvestone is the closest primary school to the main location proposed for the new homes.

A selection of comments about the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Street is shown below.

The school is pivotal in the plan to turn Colvestone Crescent into a 21st Century Street, the borough's first permanent play street. This will not only be an incredible community asset, but will make Hackney an example for other boroughs to follow in the necessary move to make cities more human-friendly and sustainable, which is all key to ensuring improved mental health across our city communities.

Whilst pupil numbers have dropped, the local area has huge plans for residential development so I strongly believe this to be a temporary issue.

The 21st Century Street by Hackney Council is a brilliant plan and demonstrates everything Hackney is and what the residents want it to be like in the future. Colvestone Primary School is at the centre of this plan. The vision for such a street is built on creating a child-friendly safe environment. Closing the school makes no sense, whilst the plan itself is funded to go ahead. Without a school in that street, this investment is entirely pointless and a misuse of public finance.

The Dalston area has a Plan to build more housing very nearby. The proposed closure feels extremely short-signed in light of this - will families have the choice they deserve? Or will families even choose to live there if there is no community school nearby

Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes the commitment to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. This is part of an important move to try and get families to stay in the borough and keeping this local school is a huge part of that.

SEND Provision

An Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team has responded to the consultation to raise concerns about the closure from a SEND perspective, highlighting the very significant challenges the borough faces with the inclusion of such pupils in mainstream settings. They state that as specialist settings and ARPs are full, and there are more requests for placements than space available, “an extraordinary amount” is spent on out of borough independent provision. Due to the inclusive, nurturing environment at Colvestone, the respondent feels that the children with SEND are less on the local authority’s radar because their needs are being met, whereas this is likely to change if these children are required to move to a larger, less inclusive environment. There are concerns that these children may then require more costly specialist settings. The respondent expresses concern that “the proposal has not sufficiently considered both the distress and cost implications of closing our most inclusive primary schools”. They feel this could be avoided by working with Colvestone to expand on its SEND provision. The respondent encourages decision makers to consult more widely with the ECHP, wider SEND Team and the Re-integration Unit.

These comments are echoed by a CAMHS social worker responding to the consultation, employed by another borough, whose children went to Colvestone. They consider the school to be a “huge resource precisely because it is small and nurturing” and suggest it would be waste of resources to close the school. Their suggestion is to use money from the SEN budget that is currently spent on alternative provision, out of borough, and work to enhance the SEND provision already offered by Colvestone. Similarly, an Inclusion Expert responding to the consultation suggests converting the currently vacant school keeper’s house into a resource base for children with SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs) and Neurodiversity. They believe this could be staffed with specialist teachers and teaching assistants who work to support children in mainstream classes.

Many parents of children with SEN included testimonials within their feedback about how happy and well-supported their children are at the school. Some examples are shown below.

*My older [child] with [SEND] went to *** schools in Hackney, including outstanding schools. * was facing being out of mainstream education and Colvestone showed * love, acceptance and support which totally changed things around and * is now at a mainstream secondary. The fact that Colvestone accommodates for so many children with additional needs and keeps them in mainstream schools saves Hackney a lot of money. My younger [child], like so many other children, is on a 2-3 year wait list for a diagnosis with CAMHS and therefore is not part of the SEN stats*

*My child has SEN and needs to be educated in a small, calm school. It has taken * *** years to settle at Colvestone, so any disruption to* routine will harm * health and education.*

*We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [child], who is *** years-old and [SEND] because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([my child] has an experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [my child] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [my child] to be happy and settled in * school (***) years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredibly difficult impact on * and it will be practically impossible for * to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on * mental health.*

Historical Significance & Future Of The Building

Colvestone has been a school since it was built in 1852 as one of the six Birkbeck schools. Respondents report that there has recently been investment in the fabric of the building: the exterior has been sand blasted and the lead on the roof replaced.

Campaigners believe there is a restrictive covenant on the site, which prohibits its use for anything other than education. The example of Hackney Downs School is cited in the feedback with respondents suggesting it closed and then had to re-open as a school (Mossbourne Academy) due to restrictions preventing the site being used for anything else.

Council figures are cited by respondents in reference to the cost of maintaining an empty listed building: £1m to close the school and £250-£300,000 each year to maintain the closed buildings. In addition to these costs, respondents comment that the Council would have to absorb Colvestone's historic debt, which respondents believe is currently being reduced under the new management.

Local residents of Colvestone Crescent responded to the consultation expressing concern that an empty, disused building could increase the risk of anti-social behaviour in the area. Many stated that they feel the school is an integral part of the community.

Examples of comments about the historical significance and future use of the building made in response to the consultation are shown below.

The site has multiple protections - two Grade 2 listings and an outdoor classroom / playground that is an Asset of Community Value - it is not a building easily repurposed but it is an excellent building purpose-built as a school. We also strongly suspect that it has protected educational use and are searching for the deeds.

Colvestone is the beating heart of Dalston. It creates natural surveillance in the area and makes Dalston the vibrant, diverse, friendly community that it is. Without it I believe we would soon see a rise in the levels of anti social behaviour.

The decision to close a school without any plan for the future of the site is bizarre. I understand it is to be a community asset, but this is vague and without a clear plan and funding will likely see the site lay vacant for a long time, draining further resources. This lack of plan is compounded when you consider the very recent (and long overdue) capital works to the buildings.

I believe that writing off Colvestone's deficit, and paying for security costs whilst the school is mothballed, is an egregious use of public funds.

Impact Of Joining Blossom Federation

Respondents to the consultation are very positive about the stability, new leadership and improved facilities Blossom has brought the school since it began in September 2022 and they believe the school is now running an in-year budget surplus and can start to reduce its financial deficit.

Feedback has also been provided in the consultation about the previous partnership with Thomas Fairchild primary as part of the Soaring Skies Federation. Substantial criticism is levied by some respondents towards the previous leadership of the school and the oversight from the Learning Trust. Respondents feel the new leadership and partnership with Blossom has seen the school turn a corner and they feel this should be given further time to develop to fulfil its potential.

Some of the comments about the new partnership with Blossom are shown below.

This year has seen huge developments at Colvestone since the Blossom Federation partnership, which can clearly be recognised in all the ODR and SIP reports - yet we need more time to be given a chance to develop further (and build a new reputation under the new leadership) to attract new families, increase our numbers of children, and therefore really begin to lower the deficit again.

It seems as though we are in this process mostly due to the large historic debt but Hackney Education supported the school to choose Blossom Federation as new leadership going forwards and they are taking proactive steps to address the deficit. YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN THEM A CHANCE.

The Federation has turned a budget surplus - despite a low pupil roll - in its first 6 months in charge. So doing Blossom Federation has shown that the school can be financially viable under its new leadership. We, as parents, carers and students, love the stability and improved facilities Blossom Federation has brought the school.

Being on the list to close (or merge - which essentially means our school will close), completely diminishes our chances of attracting more families - and yes, if we were not on the list, with all the work that Blossom have helped the school to do this year, we would have absolutely taken a lot of the surplus school children in the area looking for Reception places because that's how much we believe in the impact they have made to our school!

5.4 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

13% think the move will negatively affect children

11% comment on other negative aspects of moving

4% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

The feedback from respondents in the consultation suggests that many Colvestone parents are unhappy at the idea of sending their children to Princess May. Some say they will chose another school, even if they have to move out of the area. Their comments cite a number of specific reasons for this:

- Several respondents mention a poll of parents that revealed that over 90% did not include Princess May as one of their original options when applying for a school place for their child. 13 respondents explicitly state that they will not be sending their child to Princess May and many others express concern about doing so.
- There are multiple references in the feedback to a meeting on 27th June 2023 with Paul Senior (Hackney Education) who confirmed that Princess May is on the list of schools to be considered for consultation next year. Thus, there is a fear amongst some respondents that sending children here may result in them being subject to a second school closure or amalgamation in the future.
- Many comments make reference to Princess May being on the A10 with its playground backing directly onto the main road. Additionally, to get to the school, respondents say many children would have to walk directly up the main road, which they believe is very polluted and congested, and would be particularly difficult for children with SEND.

Examples of the comments on these topics are shown below.

The pollution levels at Princess May Primary were 40% higher than Colvestone Primary School in 2021 due to the extremely busy main road that the school sits on. With 70% of eligible roads in Hackney becoming LTNs and the council's drive to promote LTNs in the borough, the diverted volume of traffic is only going to increase this pollution.

If the pupils currently at Colvestone are forced to move to Princess May, I feel the care afforded to children and the educational options available to their parents will suffer a serious deterioration, as they would likely be forced to disturb their children's education and transfer them to a school exclusively for SEND children.

It has become clear that many of the wonderful staff from Colvestone will not be transferred to Princess May and based on this information and the survey that was carried out, many, if not most of the families (ourselves included) will not go to Princess May. So the result would be that Princess May will still suffer from low numbers and also face closure in the not too distant future.

Had you chosen to merge De Beauvoir and Colvestone this would have been a different matter as they are very similar in ethos and size but going to Princess May is not an option for us.

5.5 Comments About School Places

18% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

6% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

2% believe that other local schools do not have many places

2% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

Many of the comments about future changes to the demographics of the population refer to the Dalston Plan and the intention to build 600 new affordable homes by 2031. Colvestone is believed to be the closest primary school to the main site earmarked for this development so many respondents argue that closing it is short-sighted.

Other specific points about school places raised by respondents in the consultation feedback are shown below.

- Merging Colvestone with De Beauvoir is suggested as an option by some respondents, since otherwise children may have to travel long distances, if parents reject Princess May, as they believe that many other schools in south Hackney are oversubscribed.
- Without Colvestone, many respondents believe there will be a lack of future parental choice as those schools that remain are religious, academy or free schools. The comments mention the perceived unfairness that only community schools can be included in any consultation.
- There is concern amongst some respondents about the loss of the maintained (free) nursery facility on the site, which currently enables seamless transition to the main school.

A selection of comments about school places is shown below.

Colvestone as a merger school for De Beauvoir. They are a much better fit and are not far geographically. Initially there may have been too many pupils at De Beauvoir but many of these have now transferred to other local schools. In fact we understand that as families have moved away from Randall Cremer and De Beauvoir in light of the proposal many of the schools in that part of the borough are now FULL and these families need another option.

I do not want to send my child to a religious school (especially as a gay parent) or a free school (the funding of which is cloaked in secrecy) therefore there are no other options available to us a family in this area. The schools we would otherwise choose are full.

Out of interest I looked at the reception intake for 2023 and saw that all the schools in my locality have a full allocation for this September, the only exception being Princess May. This was not on my list of schools and I would not send my child to this school. I'm concerned about the lack of parental choice if Colvestone closes. Also given that a high percentage of current Colvestone parents will not send their child to Princess May, would there be capacity in the other non faith (and potentially non free) schools in the area to accommodate these children?

It seems that it is only certain parents who fundamentally prefer the aesthetics of the school that are insisting on it remaining open. This preference is to the detriment of properly funded education for the pupils. The council is not to blame for the way in which education is funded, and it is not within the Council's gift to modify the national system of education funding. Wishing that it were different does not address the present problem. Amalgamation of the schools will deliver better outcomes.

The closures planned are unfairly hitting Dalston, with too many community schools close together being affected. You have not put any faith schools in this plan, which means there is nowhere left to go for pupils who do not want to go to faith schools. Leaving the one school with a strong community to continue, as a single form school, would be a fair way to rectify this problem.

5.6 General Feedback

8% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

6% just said they do not want the schools to merge, with little additional detail

6% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some respondents mention that they have formed a campaign group, Save Colvestone Primary School, but say that they do not feel the Council is listening to them. Criticisms from respondents of both the wider context and the Council's approach to the consultation include the following points:

- Respondents comment that despite being told that Hackney Education is one system, that has to meet the needs of all the borough's schools including academies, free and faith schools, the perception is that local authority schools have been unfairly targeted in the proposals. Their argument is that "if there is ONE system - then it needs to be considered as A WHOLE".
- Respondents believe that the threat of closure makes it impossible to increase numbers on Colvestone's roll. However, they think that the campaign has raised the school's profile and those involved feel it would be possible to increase numbers if the school is removed from the list.
- These respondents do not see the proposals as a merger but rather a closure of Colvestone with a presumption that children will transfer to Princess May.
- Campaigners believe they have articulated the reasons not to close Colvestone using facts, data and numbers, whereas, in their opinion, the Council has not taken this approach. For example, respondents say that financial modelling has only been provided by the school itself and the campaign group, rather than by the Council.
- Respondents describe officials as reluctant to discuss the proposals, with meetings with councillors said to have been blocked, although the comments also make frequent references to meetings, including with the Director of Education & Inclusion. Campaigners argue that a genuine consultation requires the Council to respond to the information received and that to act "on weak data or inertia or an ill-thought through proposal would be an act of gross dereliction of duty".
- The perception of respondents is that the Council has not engaged with the wider community, such as the market traders, neighbours and other local residents.
- Many comments from the campaign group express increasing cynicism as well as concern about how the experience is affecting their children's view of the democratic process.

The graphical documents provided to the Council alongside this report include all the comments submitted as part of the consultation. Extracts from the campaigners' responses to the consultation are shown below.

I feel that the consultation 'process' as a whole has been completely unfair to the six schools thrown into the melting pot with no solid reasons given as to why they have been singled out. If this was a fair and considerate consultation all schools in the borough would have been included in the 'process' from day one. The six schools chosen are now having to fill their enrolment quotas for the coming school year with the shadow of closure hanging heavy above them. This is obviously going to have a massive negative influence on their success. If this was a 'consultation' I do not understand why Hackney Council would put a small number of the borough's schools at such a debilitating disadvantage.

It is hard not to despair at the lack of response we have been getting, at how badly the documents from the council are prepared, at the lack of data, research, or even just answers, at the fact that there is no discernible scope of the actual consultation that has been outlined, and how much this process reveals a broken democratic process and a dysfunctional education department. The only financial modelling has been provided by the school itself and our group of parents, and as it emerges that clearly closing the school will be more expensive to the tax payer than keeping it open one wonders if anyone really cares what a decision like this one is being based on.

The plans have not been properly thought through. The 'term' merger does not fool anyone. It is a closure of Colvestone with a presumption that our pupils will transfer to Princess May. This is not borne out in our consultation with parents and carers at Colvestone - and betrays a real lack of understanding behind parental choice. There is a real demand for a single form entry Local Authority school in Hackney. That need should be respected and met. Colvestone IS that school.

6. Response To The Proposal To Merge Baden Powell & Nightingale Primaries

At the start of the consultation period, 300 forms were given out to parents and staff at Baden Powell primary school and 350 to those at Nightingale, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 157 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to merge the schools.

40% of respondents are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 24% are interested members of the public, 20% are parents at another school in Hackney and 3% are staff or governors at the school.

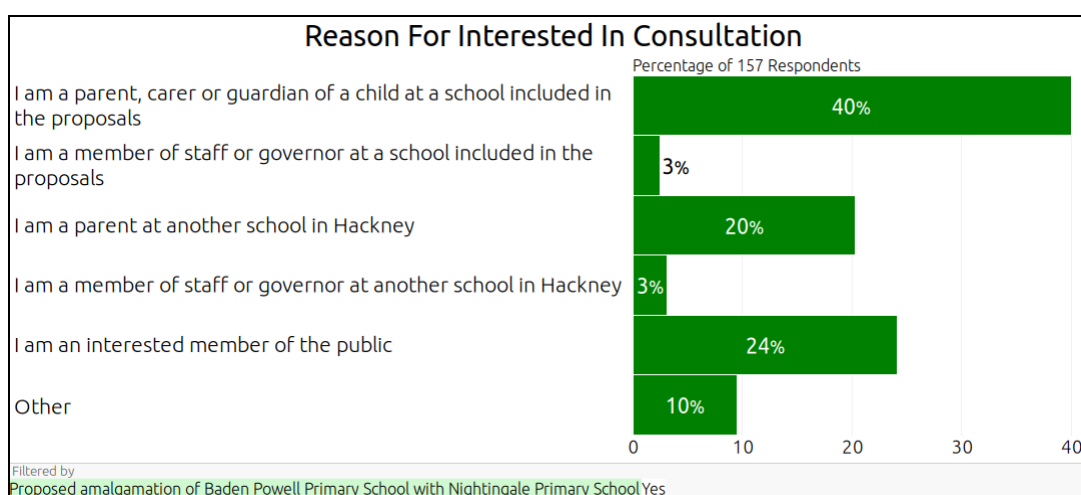


Figure 6.1

Overall, 15% of respondents agree with the proposal to merge Baden Powell and Nightingale, whilst 77% disagree.

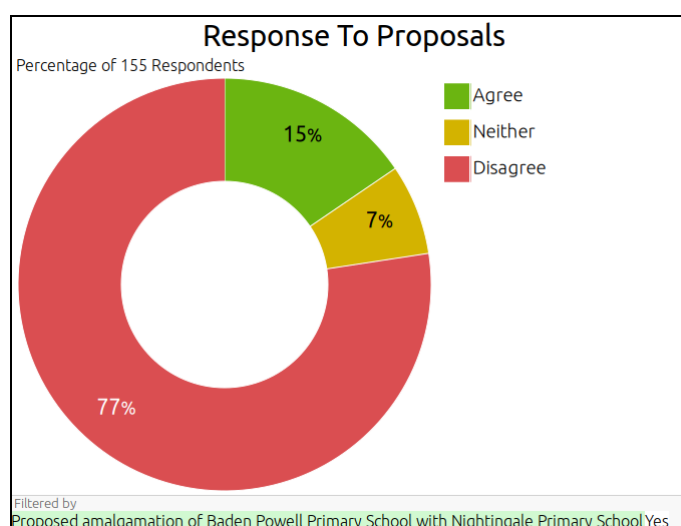


Figure 6.2

11% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 18% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the small numbers of respondents.

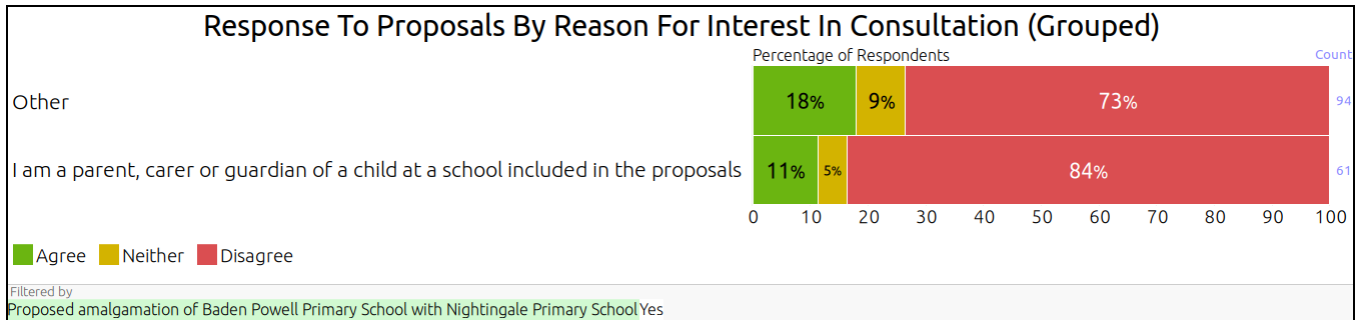


Figure 6.3

6.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Merge Baden Powell & Nightingale

31% of respondents made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving, whilst 27% gave positive feedback about the school. 20% discussed the wider context of the consultation and 17% gave broader feedback about school places in general.

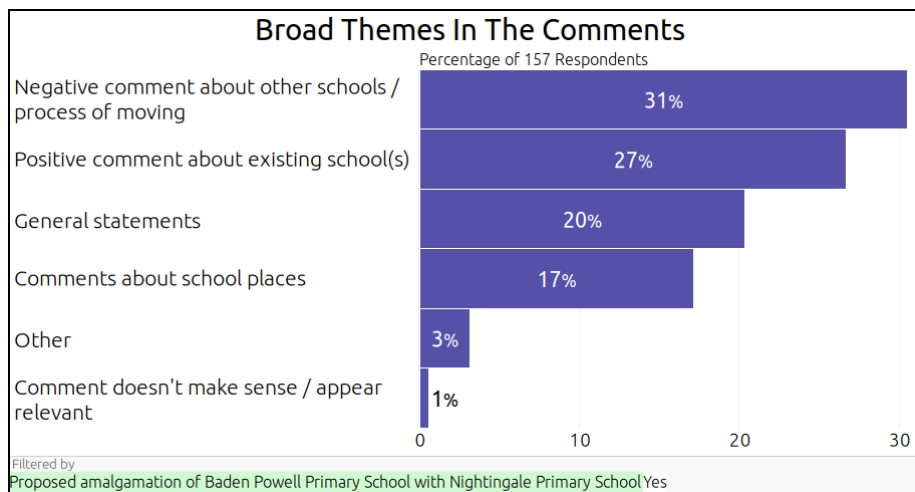


Figure 6.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

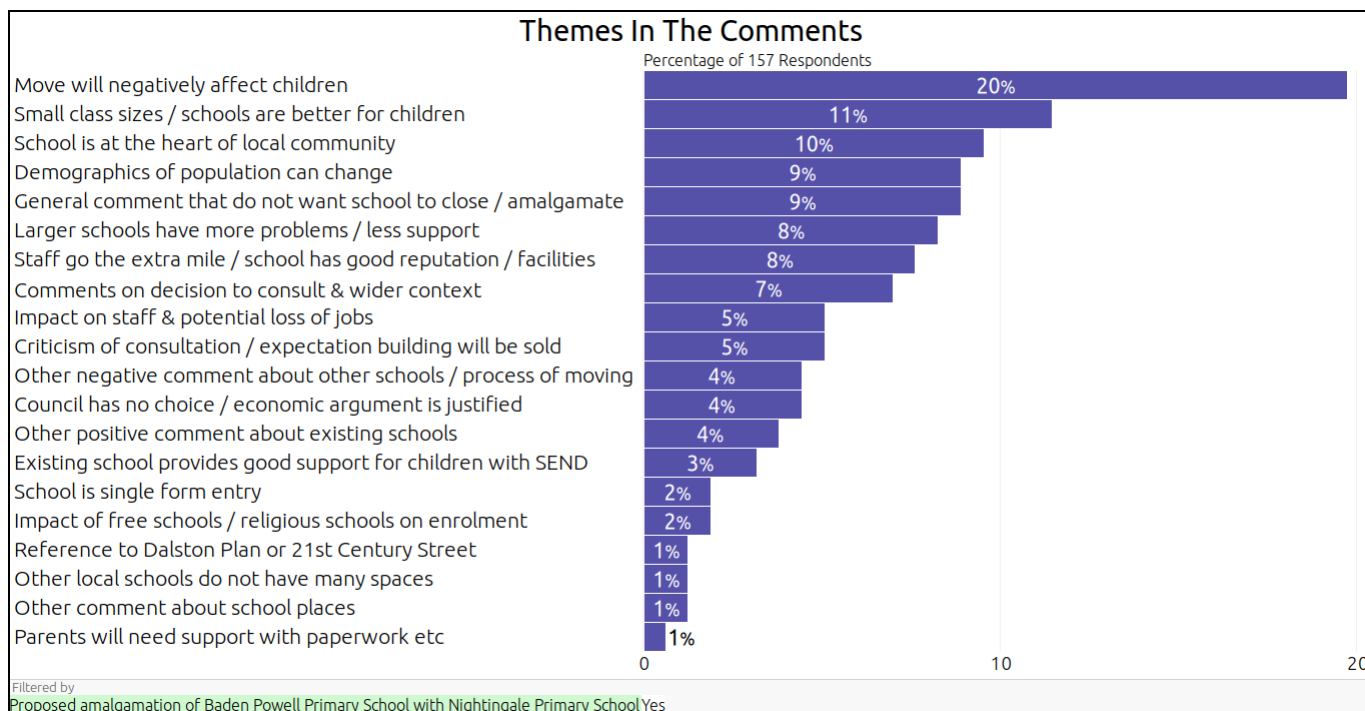


Figure 6.5

6.2 Positive Feedback About Baden Powell

11% feel small class sizes / schools are better for children

10% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

8% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

Many comments included testimonials from parents about the school as shown below.

BP school is over 30 years old, staff are very friendly and dedicated to their jobs and pupils. They take responsibilities really seriously: looking after the kids, helping them with classwork and encourage to achieve the best grades of education. Teachers give regular updates to the parents on how their kids have been in the classroom that day. At this moment the school has two amazing young pianists, a few talented chess players, 2 wonderful violinists etc.

Generations and generations of children have been attending this school and Baden Powell has been in the heart of the community of Hackney for many, many years with nothing but good things to say about it.

We are all very happy in our school and we love our little community. Children are learning, playing and growing up in a close and peaceful environment. I deliberately have chosen a one entry form school for my child.

*I have an [SEND] child and one with needs in years ** & **. They both don't like change and do not like too many children around them. It took more than a year for each of them to get settled in Baden Powell. It is going to be so unsettling for them to change into a large school with so many pupils. I chose Baden Powell as it was small for both their needs. We love all staff. All staff know the pupils and parents. Please don't merge. If you do I will move them to a smaller school like Baden Powell.*

Although there are only a small number of responses that were clearly from families of Nightingale pupils, their comments also related to the benefits of small schools, as shown in these examples.

Nightingale is already a relatively small school, which also benefits from a distinctive admissions process that prioritises children in care and those subject to a child protection plan. There is a delicate ecosystem and one that will be particularly destabilised by the sudden arrival of so many additional pupils. Proximity should be just one measure of the suitability of a potential merger.

*Many of us picked Nightingale because it's a small school. As a parent of a SEN child, I am worried how a busier school will affect * day. I also hope that the kids won't be torn apart as they are a lovely little community with many friendships already formed.³*

³ Nightingale has capacity for 60 children per year group but currently operates to 30 children per year group.

6.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

20% think the move will negatively affect children

8% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

5% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

Many respondents are worried that children will struggle to adapt to the change, especially those with SEND. There are also concerns expressed by respondents about whether all Baden Powell staff will be offered a job at the merged school.

Examples of the comments on this topic are shown below.

Moving to a new school, some pupils will develop anxiety and stress, friendships between kids would be broken, some teachers would lose their jobs and Baden Powell Primary School structure would be shattered.

*It's going to be devastating for year * children to move once in year * and then move to a secondary, which is a huge change in their life in general. My [child] has [SEND] and * struggles to cope even with little changes during * daily routine. This will completely mess * up.*

I feel Nightingale will not be able to handle the extra children and will also not be able to employ everyone to come over either. Their after-school clubs do not tie in well with working single mums as well and it will cause a real disruption to my work as well as my son's schedule. I do not see the point of this merger and can only see Nightingale being overwhelmed by the extra students.

I would like all Baden Powell staff offered a job at Nightingale to ensure a smooth transition for the children. I would like there to be extensive collaborative work between Baden Powell and Nightingale in the lead up to September 2024 to ensure that this is a proper amalgamation of systems & ethos and not just Baden Powell becoming taken over by Nightingale. I would like the leadership at Baden Powell to move with us as the leadership in Nightingale.

6.4 Comments About School Places

9% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

4% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

2% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

1% believe that other local schools do not have many places

Many of the comments received on this topic are general in nature, as shown in the examples below.

Firstly, I do not understand why the school budget has been cut and they have to merge schools. What happens when they agree to close the school and the birth rate goes back up?

I am a parent of a 2 year old in Hackney Downs that would likely have enrolled in one of the 4 schools involved in the merges. I was not aware of the falling enrolment numbers but agree Hackney council should protect the funding and quality of the school provision by merging. My only concern is whether there will be enough places in future years if numbers start to rise again and the closed school buildings have been repurposed/sold to developers.

My concern is that no information was given about birth rate projections for the future and the level of confidence the council have that numbers will not rise again in the foreseeable future that would impact on these proposals. I am also concerned about the loss of publicly provided nursery places, I do feel this is a loss to the local area and that alternative provision will not have the same outcomes for the children that they currently get being on the same site.

6.5 General Feedback

9% report they do not want the schools to merge, with little additional detail

7% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

5% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

There are concerns amongst respondents about what will happen to the school buildings if the merger goes ahead. A representative of the Orthodox Jewish community taking part in the consultation suggests the Council should consider the possibility of selling or leasing the school to one of the local Jewish schools as there is extensive overcrowding in these establishments.

Examples of the comments received about the building/repurposing are shown below.

I am worried if Baden-Powell is closed that Hackney council will build a tower block in its space blocking out light and scenery, making it harder to find a parking space due to more people living on this road. And you will probably only provide a minimal amount of social housing.

This has the makings of landgrab. i.e. Hackney council are very aware of the increasing land value in the area, and closing Baden Powell is an easy way to sell off valuable land to the next property developer waiting in line.

I would also like to see the former Baden Powell site used for something that would benefit the community.

Merging schools and selling off public land to developers is taking the interest away from residents and is more of a money making scheme.

The loss of the existing schools and school communities is challenging and emotional for all involved. The loss of these buildings forever I believe could be a strategic error on the part of the council that will have further negative impacts on the viability of cities for children and families in the short medium and long term.

7. Feedback - Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

The Hackney Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission met on 27th June 2023 to scrutinise the proposals and has submitted a short summary of its conclusions in response to the consultation.

The Scrutiny Commission's role is strategic and, therefore, its submission to the consultation avoids commenting on the proposals for specific schools. Instead, it aims to highlight issues that can positively contribute to decision-making. The summary report, which is presented in full in Appendix 1, makes the following key points:

- Any decision to close a locally maintained school is likely to be irreversible, as the 2011 Education Act requires future demand to be met by the academy or free school sector.
- The impact of falling rolls is a long-term policy issue, as GLA modelling does not suggest a stabilisation until the end of the decade. Therefore, the Commission suggests conducting broader engagement with stakeholders and the public across the borough about the implementation of the School Estates Strategy. This would also provide an opportunity for the Council to clarify the restrictions of the existing legal framework, which does not permit them to effect direct change equally across all schools.
- The Commission acknowledges that the 20% pupil vacancy rate across the borough's primary schools is not sustainable and the Council needs to act to maintain the quality and integrity of education in Hackney.
- A number of concerns with the approach used in the consultation are highlighted in the Commission's report. In particular, it was not clear to the Commission how the information would be analysed and used to develop proposals for the next stage of the process, given the volume and wide ranging nature of the feedback likely to be received.
- Whilst accepting the financial impact falling school rolls is having, the Commission would have welcomed the provision of further evidence to demonstrate this impact on schools. More details from the affected schools would have helped those responding to the consultation to understand the implications of the situation and the Commission believes this could assist the case for change.
- The Commission also considers that it would be helpful for the Council to provide further information, going forwards, on the number of school places that need to be removed and a more detailed review, with costs, of possible alternative models for delivering the required reduction. For example, other local authorities have chosen a merger-led approach rather than school closures.
- Falling school rolls impact the wider community. In addition, they are an indication of a loss of children and families from the area, which will need the Council to make maximum use of all available options to deliver on its broader aims to create diverse and sustainable communities.
- Financial viability is clearly a key factor to be considered when determining the future of schools with falling rolls. The latest figures indicate the number of local schools carrying forward a budget deficit at the end of 2022/23 will rise from 11 to 13. However, the picture for the schools in the consultation is mixed, with some managing to maintain a surplus whilst others have a substantial deficit.
- If all the proposals go ahead, the cost to the Council is estimated to be £3.4m, of which £1m will be ongoing (for security of the vacant sites).
- The provision of further information on the additional support that may be made available to help children with SEND transfer to new schools might give some reassurance to parents.

8. Demographic Profile Of Respondents

Postcode Areas Of Respondents

Responses were received from postcodes across the borough and further afield.

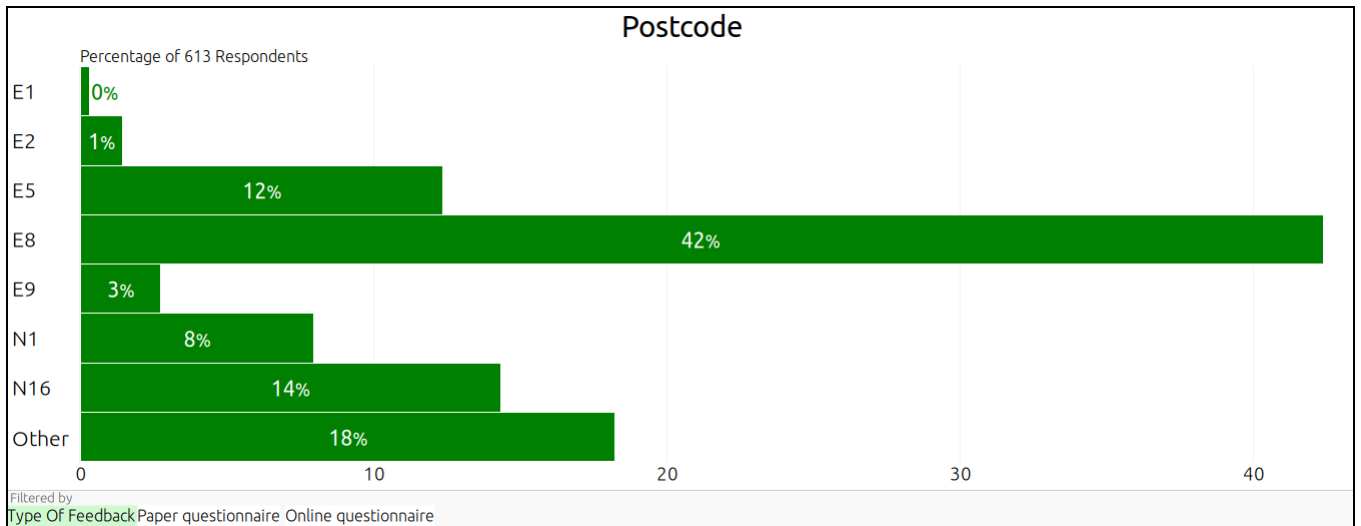


Figure 8.1

Gender Of Respondents

68% of respondents were female and 29% are male. 1% describe themselves as non-binary and a further 1% using another term.

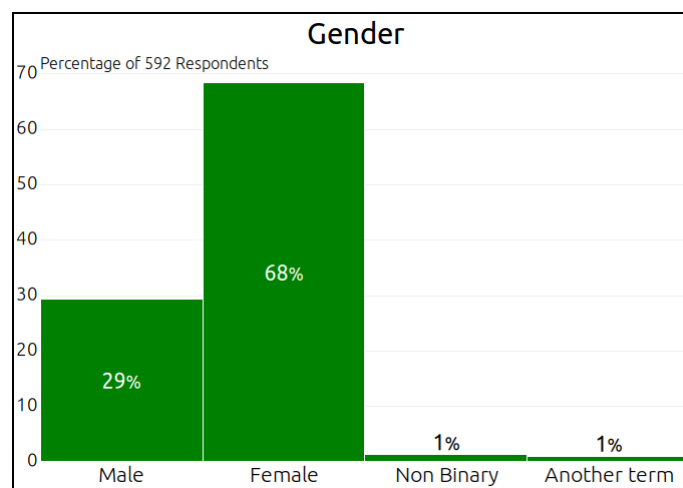


Figure 8.2

Age Profile Of Respondents

Responses were received from a broad cross section of age groups. Eight in ten respondents are under the age of 55, whilst the remainder are aged 55 or over.

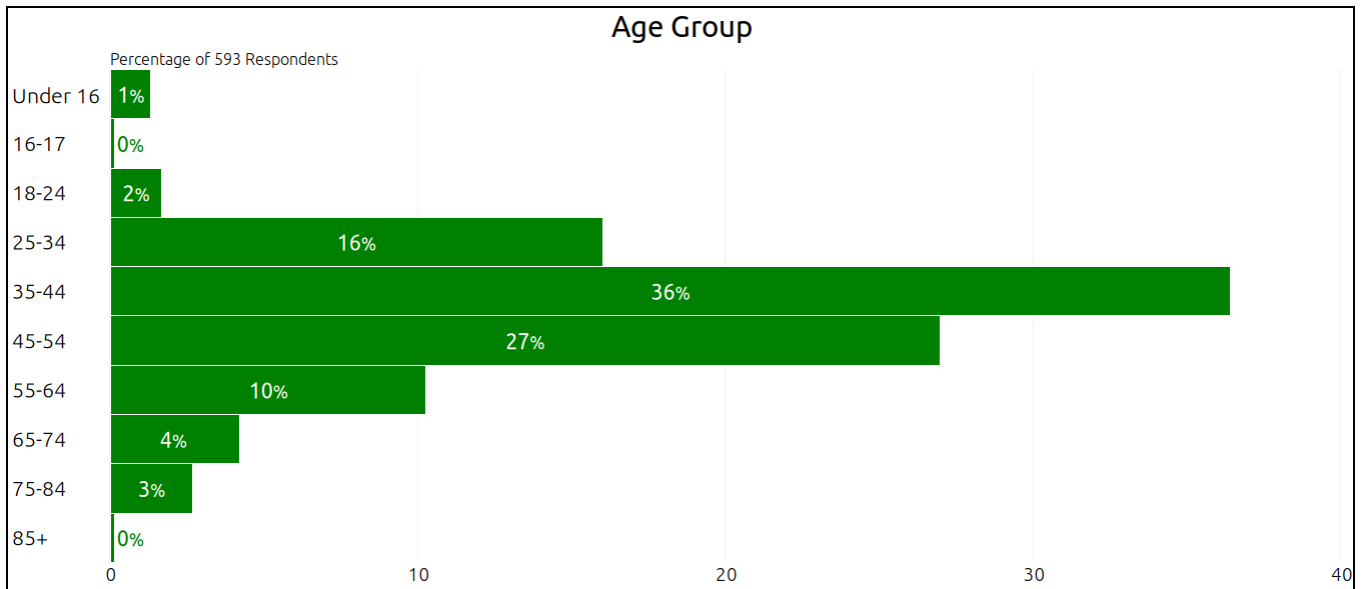


Figure 8.3

Disability

10% of respondents have a disability and 18% have caring responsibilities.

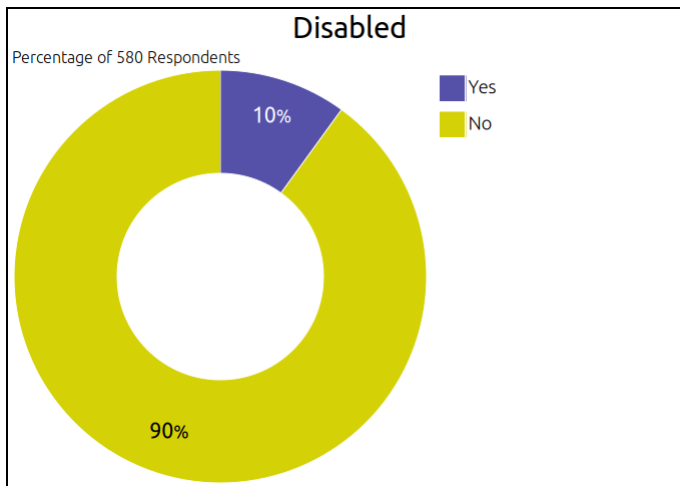


Figure 8.4

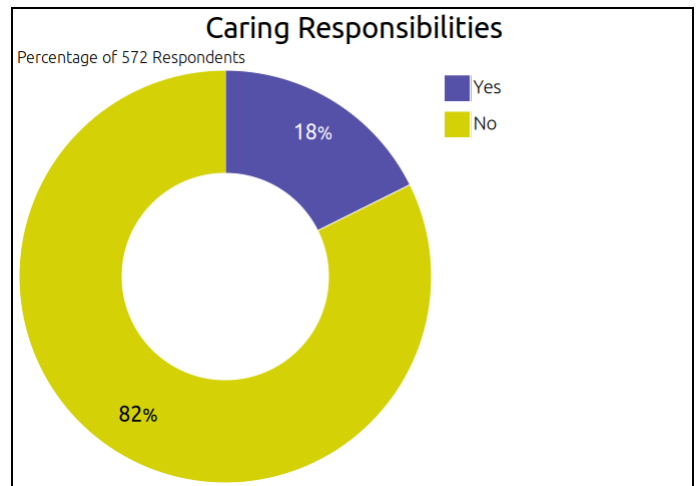


Figure 8.5

Ethnicity Of Respondents

58% of respondents are White, 15% are Black and 8% are Asian. 17% of respondents describe themselves as being from another ethnic group and 1% say they are from a mixed background.

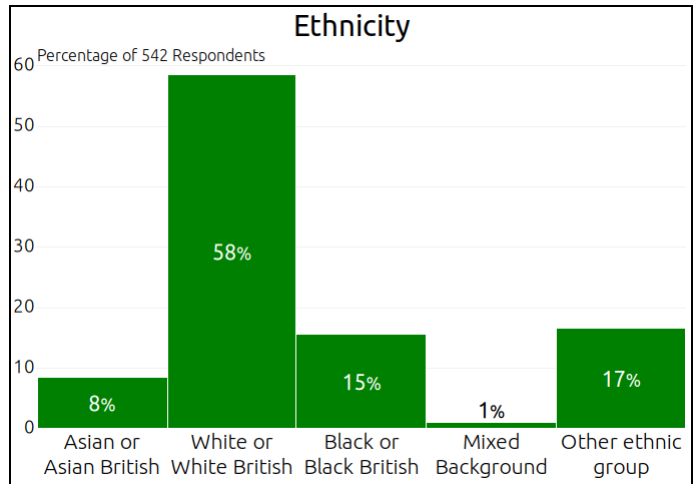


Figure 8.6

Religion Of Respondents

46% of respondents describe themselves as being atheist/having no religious belief.

27% of respondents are Christian and 13% Muslim. Smaller proportions are Jewish (2%), Buddhist (1%), Hindu (1%) or Sikh (1%). 6% describe themselves as having another belief or religion.

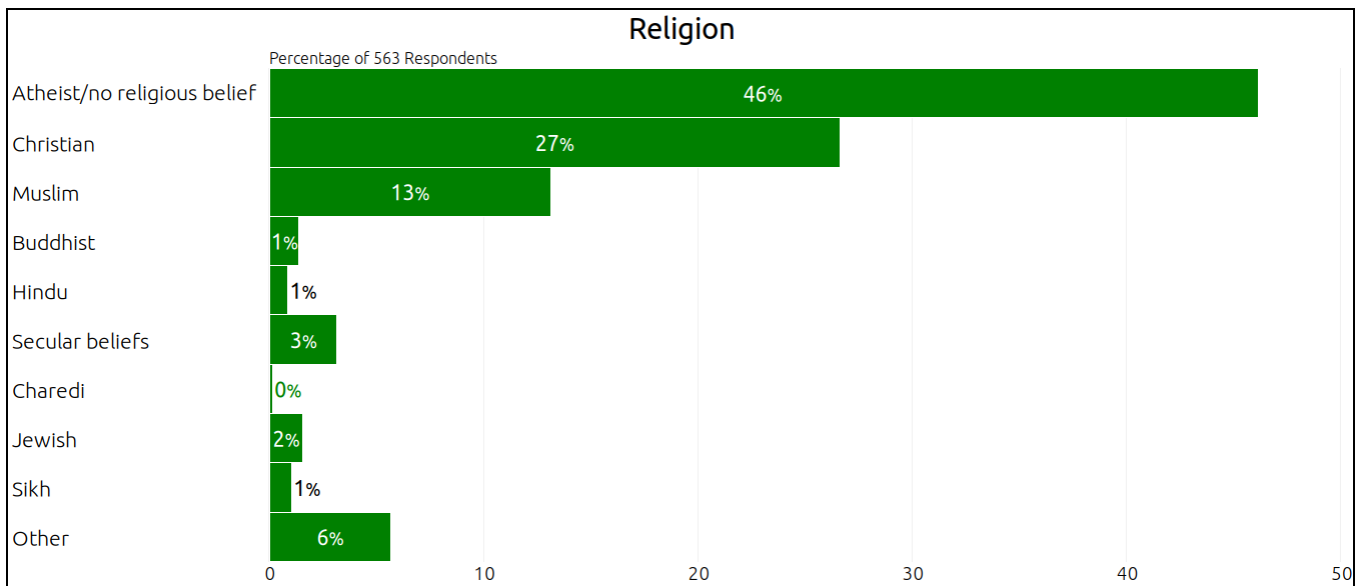


Figure 8.7

Sexual Orientation Of Respondents

19% of respondents reported that they prefer not to answer the question about sexual orientation.

74% say they are heterosexual, whilst 2% are bisexual. 1% in each case describe themselves as a gay man, lesbian or gay woman, pansexual or queer.

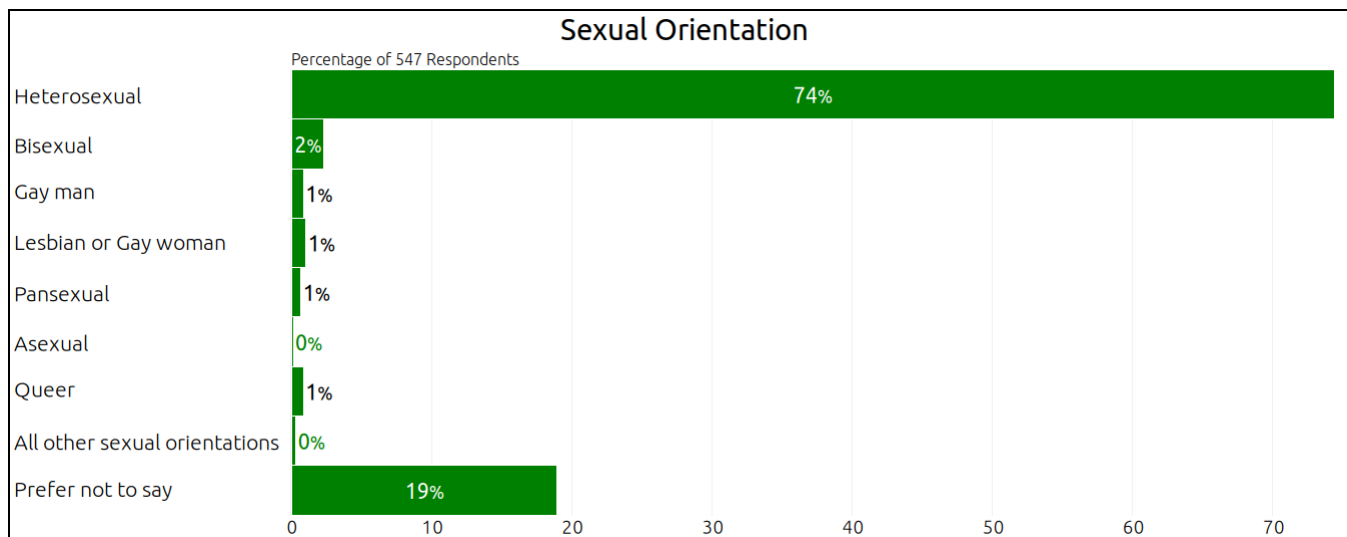


Figure 8.8

Housing Tenure Of Respondents

67% of respondents are in rented accommodation. 24% rent from the council and 16% from a housing association, while a further 27% rent privately.

23% of respondents own their home outright, whilst 3% have a mortgage. 6% are in a shared ownership property.

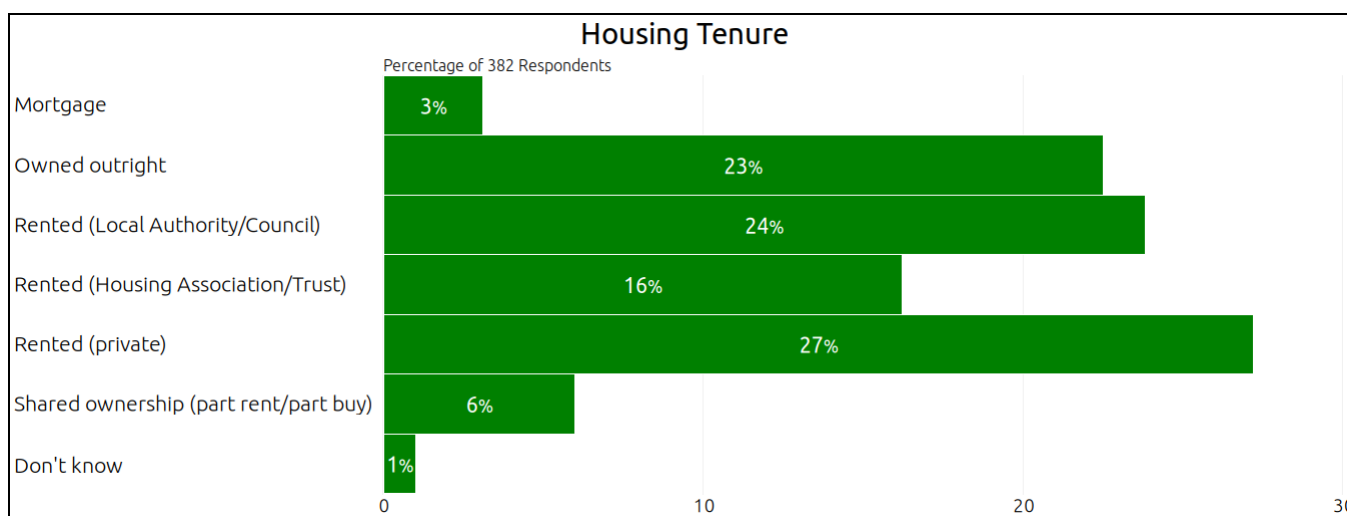


Figure 8.9

Appendix 1

Report from the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

**Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission**

Room 118, 2nd Floor
Hackney Town Hall
Mare Street
London, E8 1EA

15th July 2023

martin.bradford@hackney.gov.uk

Cllr Anntionette Bramble,
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education,
Young People and Children's Social Care
London Borough of Hackney.

Dear Cllr Bramble

School Estates Strategy (Falling School Rolls) - Informal Consultation Response

At its recent meeting on the 27th June 2023, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission scrutinised proposals emerging from the School Estates Strategy to close two primary schools (De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer) and to merge a further four (Baden-Powell with Nightingale and Colvestone with Princess May). At this meeting, members of the Commission agreed to submit a short summary of its conclusions which were to be submitted to the informal consultation on these proposals (ending 16th July 2023).

The Commission is grateful for the support and contributions from local parents representatives (from Colvestone Primary School and Baden Powell Primary School) as well as those officers that attended the meeting and who responded to questions raised by members. All these contributions have helped to shape and inform the Commission's response to the informal consultation which is attached to this letter. A full record of this meeting is provided through the [audio visual recording](#) and the [draft minutes](#).

Schools are anchors within local communities. As well as being a hub for learning, creativity and inclusion schools are also commonly the centre of community and social networks of local children, families. Children over multiple generations have often attended these same local schools which help to create long-standing bonds and ties to the community, therefore changes to the local school establishment undoubtedly raises concerns among local children and families, school staff and among the wider community. With a 20% pupil vacancy rate across local primary schools the Commission acknowledges that the current position is not sustainable

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and there is a need for the Council to act to preserve the integrity and quality of local educational systems.

The Commission understands the difficulties and challenges of falling school rolls and accepts that there are no easy pathways ahead in making such difficult decisions about the future of our local schools. The existing legal framework for education provision by the local authority compounds the difficulty of such decisions, which whilst placing a duty on local authorities to ensure that there is sufficient education does not give them jurisdiction to effect *direct change* equally across *all* educational settings. Furthermore, the Commission is all too aware that any decision to close a locally maintained school now is likely to be final as any future increase in local demand for education provision will need to be met through the academy or free school sector (*the academy and free school presumption* as set out in the Education Act 2011).

Scrutiny can play a positive and constructive role in local decision making, particularly where decisions might be difficult and challenging. Engaging and bringing local stakeholders together helps to bring a shared understanding of the issues and challenges at hand and can help to identify a common way forward. Scrutiny, where proposals are challenged and tested in public can also provide assurance to both local decision makers and the local community that subsequent decisions are taken in the public interest.

Attached is the submission of the Commission to the informal consultation to the School Estates Strategy (Falling Rolls) and the proposal to close two primary schools and merge a further four which we hope will prove helpful. As the focus of scrutiny is strategic it has necessarily avoided commenting on individual proposals for specific schools but has sought to draw together issues which can positively inform current and future decision making in this area.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Sophie Conway

Chair, Children and Young People Scrutiny
Commission

Cllr Margaret Gordon

Vice Chair, Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission

Cc:

- Jacquie Burke, Group Director Children and Education
- Paul Senior, Director of Education and Inclusion
- school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission Submission to the Informal Consultation on the Proposals to Close Two Primary Schools and Merge a Further Four

Consultation

1. The Commission welcomes the ambitions of the informal consultation as an opportunity to engage and involve a wide range of local stakeholders ahead of any statutory consultation and formal decision making process on the future of local schools. Given that the consultation is likely to cause concern and anxiety among children and families likely to be impacted by the proposals to close or merge local schools however, it is important that there are clear and unambiguous expectations of the information which is required from contributors in this consultation.

The [consultation documentation](#) sets out just one question (whether contributors agree or disagree with the proposals) and one open-ended invitation to comment on the proposals more broadly. Alongside some stakeholders, the Commission wish to highlight a number of concerns with this approach:

- a) The agree/ disagree questioning infers that there is some form of ballot on the proposals which may inflate expectations arising from this consultation.
- b) Whilst understanding there is genuine desire to garner wide ranging feedback on the proposals, with little guidance as to what information is being sought through this open-ended questioning, stakeholders may be confused as to what practical, useful or meaningful information might be required which may influence or provide mitigation for the proposals or future subsequent plans.

In relation to above, given the volume and wide ranging nature of contributions likely to be received through the consultation, it was not clear to members of the Commission as to how this information would be analysed and used in developing proposals for the next stage of this process. In this context, further clarification was needed.

2. GLA modelling forecasts that school rolls will continue to decline in Hackney over the medium to long-term with rolls not expected to stabilise until the earliest in 2029/30. Given that the impact of falling rolls is a long term policy issue and likely to impact on a growing number of schools across the borough, the Commission suggests that this might be the basis for broader borough wide public conversation on the *implementation* of the School Estates Strategy. Such a process with broader stakeholder and public engagement may help to further develop overarching principles and guidance which can inform future proposals in relation to school place planning. Equally importantly, this would also be a further opportunity for the Council to clearly again set out its duties and obligations in respect of school place planning and in maintaining high quality education for all young people across Hackney, but to also highlight the limitations and the legal framework in which it can act to reduce provision, which is perhaps less widely understood.

Falling School Rolls - Impact and Evidence

3. The Commission acknowledges the financial impact that falling school rolls is having across the local education system and indeed the wider community. In Hackney Education's own estimate, falling school rolls has meant that local schools are missing out on up to £30m of central government funding due to places going unfilled in local primary schools. In making the case for proposed primary school closures and mergers, the Commission would have welcomed further evidence to illustrate how falling school rolls have begun to impact on the delivery of local education. In particular further evidence would have been welcome in respect of the following:
 - The number of teaching and other support staff (classroom assistants) lost in the local educational system;
 - Impact on extra -curricular activities on local schools (visits and after school clubs etc);
 - Impact on building maintenance and other physical investments.

A more detailed narrative from schools themselves would help stakeholders and the wider community to fully understand how falling school rolls impacts on schools, teachers and of course the educational support and development provided to children themselves. Such data would help stakeholders understand the impact of falling school rolls and assist the case for change.

4. Officers presented evidence to the Commission that local proposals to close or merge schools were delayed to ensure that the impact of those local interventions to help maintain the viability of local schools were fully tested and evaluated. Whilst officers noted that a number of actions that local schools had taken to help improve financial viability and long-term sustainability (e.g. shared leadership, vertical classes, clustering/ Federation) the Commission felt it would have been useful to share further evidence of the impact of these interventions.

Understanding that the issue of falling school rolls is likely to be an ongoing issue for the medium to long-term in Hackney and other central London boroughs, it is important that there is a open and transparent evidence base about what actions are effective, not only to inform future policy and decision making but to also ensure that there is greater community awareness and understanding of the reasonings behind future decision making.

5. Recognising that falling rolls is a London wide issue where a number of other boroughs are having to make similar difficult choices about the future of local schools, the Commission believe that in future decision making, it would be helpful to understand more about the different approaches taken across these authorities (for example, why Lambeth has adopted an approach which is more focused mergers rather than closure of schools under its jurisdiction). This underlines the importance

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of the need for London boroughs to work collectively and to develop and share local innovations and solutions to the challenges of falling school rolls which can help develop and extend best practice across London. The work of London Council's on this issue is noted by the Commission as this can provide a conduit for such intelligence and information sharing.

Objectives of the Proposals and Possible Alternatives

6. Whilst the need to remove surplus places in the primary sector has been made clear to the stakeholders, further clarification was perhaps needed as to the *numbers of places* that are needed to be removed to ensure the ongoing sustainability of local education systems. Whilst assessment criteria used to assess and identify which schools fall into scope (based on financial viability, falling school rolls etc) it is not apparent if there is a 'target' figure which the planned closures or mergers aimed to achieve in reducing school places through this process.
7. The Commission would also welcome further clarification as to possible alternative models and options to reduce vacancies in the local school system. In particular, the Commission is keen to understand why it may be preferable to close rather than merge schools and why (for example) [other authorities](#) have opted for a predominantly school merger approach rather than a mixed model of closures and mergers. Given the possible liabilities to the Council, it would also be helpful to have financial assessment of the different options (noting that London wide documentation suggest that school mergers may be preferred by some authorities as the liabilities to the Council could be minimised (particularly in relation to staff redundancy costs).

Going forward therefore, the Commission felt it would be helpful in further delivery stages of the School Estates Strategy to have a clearer understanding of the number of places that need to be removed (for sustainability) and a more detailed appraisal (with costs) of the different options which may deliver the required reduction in places.

Coordinating a cross-department local response

8. Falling school rolls is a clearly systemic issue in which a range of national and regional issues (e.g. falling birth rates, Brexit and the housing crisis) have interacted to precipitate widespread migration of families from inner city areas. Whilst the Commission accepts that there is no easy solution which will resolve this problem at either national or local level, it does believe that a more coordinated and consistent local approach which seeks to utilise and align those levers over which the local authority does have control, may help to *mitigate* some of the impact of falling school rolls.

The Commission suggests that there are a number of local processes over which the Council does exert some control, which albeit on their own may appear to have

limited impact, but if aligned to this purpose may have some cumulative impact.

Examples noted by the Commission include:

- Further promotion of inclusive schools and education to ensure that more children are supported in mainstream local education settings;
- Minimise the loss of pupils through cross-border flows where neighbouring authorities may have comparatively better borough wide offers (e.g. FSM provision, wraparound school provision or holiday programme activities);¹
- Ensure that there is effective, regular and ongoing engagement with parents whose children are receiving Elective Home Education and that they are aware of the pathways back to mainstream education;²
- Further assurance that Housing and Education services are working closely together so that where possible, families can be supported to stay within the borough (e.g. particularly in relation to placements of Temporary Accommodation)
- Ensuring local development plans and other planning policies reflect the need to develop family accommodation.³

In this same vein, the Commission wishes to emphasise that falling school rolls is not an issue solely for local education and children services as the impact and repercussions of such closures and mergers are likely to be felt much more widely across the community and across the wider family of council services. Falling school rolls is an indicator of the loss of children and families from local communities which will need the local authority to maximise the use of all those levers at its disposal if it is to deliver on broader local ambitions for genuinely diverse and sustainable communities.

Plans to Support Local Secondary Schools Against Falling School Rolls

9. Falling school rolls in the primary sector will inevitably soon impact on secondary education. With demand for primary places peaking in 2019 it is likely that demand for secondary schools will peak this or next academic year. The Commission notes that there have already been recent reports of secondary school closures in other parts of London - 2 of these in Lambeth.

[Local admissions data](#) suggests that, without any reductions in PAN, surplus places in the secondary will begin to accumulate in Hackney from 2022/23. This data estimates that surplus places will increase year on year, so that in 2028 there will be an estimated 367 surplus places in secondary schools across Hackney (which is the equivalent of 12 Form Entry).

¹ 2022 [admissions data](#) suggest that **135** children were offered reception places outside of Hackney.

² Currently over **200** children (excluding those from the Charedi community) are in EHE.

³ Data submitted to the Cabinet report suggests that 70% of planned new homes for the borough comprise 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation.

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The authority's ability to act to address growing numbers of pupil vacancies in the secondary sector will however be more limited, as the majority of schools in the secondary sector in Hackney are academies, free schools or faith schools (16 out of 18 schools) over which the Council has no direct jurisdiction (in terms of reduce PANs or decision to close). In this context, the Commission is concerned that measures to reduce local places may fall disproportionately on the small number of local maintained secondary schools. The Commission would therefore welcome further assurance on how local secondary schools are being engaged in preparation for prospective falling school rolls and how the authority intends to protect the local diversity of provision in secondary settings.

Managing school deficits

10. Financial viability is clearly a key determinant in the future of local schools facing challenges from falling school rolls. Data submitted as part of the Cabinet report suggests that this is a complex and varied picture however, where some schools in the scope for closure or merger have managed to maintain a significant budget surplus whilst others have accumulated substantial deficits. Whilst wishing to avoid comment on any singular schools financial situation it was not clear to the Commission how the authority had allowed a school to have an ongoing budget deficit of around £500k for the past three financial years and what support had been provided to turn around this position. This clearly presents a financial risk / exposure to the wider DSG budget if proposals are confirmed.
11. The scale of the financial challenges facing schools is clear. The most recent data published at Schools Forum suggest a deteriorating financial position across local community schools which indicate that the number of schools carrying forward a deficit revenue balance at end 2022/23 has risen from 11 to 13 local schools and where the total budget deficit across these schools has risen from £2,254,228 in 2021/22 to £3,463,813 in 2022/23 (a 53% increase). Nine of these schools will carry forward a revenue budget deficit in excess of £200k.

In the context of the above, the Commission welcomes the establishment of a dedicated schools strategy team to support schools in face of ongoing falling rolls and make sure schools are making appropriate plans to mitigate against falling rolls, and working together to minimise disruption and for the continuation of education. In addition however, the Commission is seeking further assurance as to what specific business planning and financial support will be made available to local schools to help contain and manage budgets, and there are effective plans in place to reduce budget deficits. The Commission is also keen to understand if there will be any additional capacity within the existing business support/financial planning function in Hackney Education, given that demands upon this service are likely to increase.

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Budget impact for Hackney Education and Council (General Fund)

12. Should the proposals to close two schools and merge a further four be confirmed by Cabinet later this year, it is estimated that this will result in an estimated £3.4m cost of which £1m will be recurring (for security of vacant sites). There are a number of uncertainties about the projections and accountabilities within this budget for which the Commission would like further reassurance:
- a) How confident are officers that the projected costs and financial liabilities in administering the proposed closures and mergers are realistic given the i) expected deteriorating financial positions of schools in scope as roll numbers may decline ii) the unknown contracted liabilities of the schools in scope?
 - b) Further clarity is also needed as to the financial responsibility of these costs and which local budgets will be accountable for any occurring losses/liabilities (e.g. which will be met by Direct Schools Grant and those by the Hackney Council General Fund).
 - c) The Commission is particularly concerned about those liabilities from the proposed closure and mergers which may fall within the Council General Fund, not only in the context of the broader pressures this budget is under, but also if this may impact on the Hackney Education budget (where discretionary spending is limited and budget savings adversely impact a small number of services).

Mitigations - SEND

13. Accepting that what has been presented thus far are just proposals for school closures and mergers, along with other stakeholders, the Commission would welcome further details in respect of the possible mitigations which *may* be put in place to support affected children, families and schools should these be approved.

The impact of prospective school closures and amalgamations on children with SEND has been a key feature in many of the consultation responses, with many parents anxious about the upheaval that a school move would have on their child. In particular, parents were concerned that they would be required to move their child with SEND from a one form entry school (which had been their preferred choice) to a larger two form entry school which may be a more challenging experience.

At present, documentation proposing the closure and merger of schools notes that 'additional provision' will be provided to support children with SEND, with no illustrative examples of what that might look like. In the context of the above, further details of the mitigations which might be put in place to support transition of children with SEND to new schools may provide some reassurance to parents impacted by this change.

Impact on the diversity of schools

14. A long-standing area of interest to the Commission has been diversity of children within local schools. The Commission believes that a key aim of local education provision is not only to ensure that there is diversity of schools in terms of range and type of settings available for parents to choose from, but also to ensure that there is diversity of children within local schools which reflect the rich and vibrant social, economic and cultural mix of local communities in Hackney. [For example the Commission notes that with the exception of one school in scope for proposals for closure or amalgamation, all have significantly higher rates of Free School Meal entitlement than the Hackney average (36%) for primary schools.]

Accepting the supremacy of parental choice in this matter, the Commission is keen to understand what assurance can be provided that current and future school place planning (or admissions processes) can protect and promote ambitions for diversity *within* and across local schools.

Appendix 2

Questionnaire Used in the Consultation

Consultation on the amalgamation/closure of 6 Hackney primary schools

Introduction

1. (Optional) Your name:

2. Which of the following best describes your interest in this consultation?

(Required)

- I am a parent, carer or guardian of a child at a school included in the proposals
- I am a member of staff or governor at a school included in the proposals
- I am a parent at another school in Hackney
- I am a member of staff or governor at another school in Hackney
- I am an interested member of the public
- Other

If other, please specify:

3. Which of the proposals do you wish to comment on?

Select all that apply

(Required)

- Proposal to close De Beauvoir Primary School
- Proposal to close Randal Cremer Primary School
- Proposed amalgamation of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School
- Proposed amalgamation of Baden Powell Primary School with Nightingale Primary School

Response to the proposals

4. Do you agree or disagree with the proposals?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. Please comment on the proposal(s) in the space below:

About you

This information will help us to understand our service users and residents, allowing us to establish if the response to the questionnaire is representative of the borough. All information is used under the strict controls of the 1998 Data Protection Act and the 2016 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

This information is optional and will not be used in a way that identifies you.

6. Postcode: Please provide the first half of your postcode followed by the first number of the second half

For example, if your postcode was E8 1DY, you would write E8 1. If your postcode was N16 5HB, you would write N16 5.

Postcode:

7. Gender: Are you...

- Male
- Female
- Non Binary
- Another term

If you prefer to use your own term please provide this here:

8. Age: what is your age group?

- Under 16
- 16-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+

9. Disability: Under the Equality Act you are disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

- Yes
- No

10. Caring responsibilities: A carer is someone who spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a family member, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone?

- Yes
- No

11. Ethnicity: Are you...

- Asian or Asian British
- White or White British
- Black or Black British
- Mixed background
- Other ethnic group

Other (please state if you wish):

12. Religion or belief: Are you or do you have...

- Atheist/no religious belief
- Christian
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Secular beliefs
- Charedi
- Jewish
- Sikh

Other (please state if you wish):

13. Sexual orientation: Are you...

- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Gay man
- Lesbian or Gay woman
- Pansexual
- Asexual
- Queer
- All other sexual orientations
- Prefer not to say

Other (please state if you wish):

14. Housing Tenure: Which of the following best describes the ownership of your home?

- Being bought on a mortgage
- Owned outright
- Rented (Local Authority/Council)
- Rented (Housing Association/Trust)

- Rented (private)
- Shared ownership (part rent/part buy)
- Don't know



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Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Hackney Council is proposing to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School with effect from 31st August 2024.

The reason for this proposal is the significant fall in pupil numbers across Hackney, and at Randal Cremer Primary School. There are currently over 600 vacant Reception school places in Hackney primary schools. Fewer children in schools means less government funding for schools to operate, which over time creates significant financial pressure on schools.

The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School. Should the decision to discontinue the school be agreed, all children attending Randal Cremer Primary School will be offered a place in local schools for September 2024.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London, E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>.

If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

1a. Name, address and category of school proposed to be discontinued:

Randal Cremer Primary School (community school).
Ormsby Street, London, E2 8JG
Tel: 020 7739 8162
Email: admin@randalcremer.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

Randal Cremer Primary School will discontinue on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuation

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. More than two thirds of Hackney's maintained primary schools have budgeted for an in-year over spend at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. This trend is expected to continue as roll numbers continue to fall.

Randal Cremer Primary School has been seriously affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding. At the end of the financial year 2022/23 they reported a surplus of £310,032,

but the school has forecast a surplus at the close of 2023/24 of £189,537, meaning they project an overspend of £120,495 in the current financial year.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

Randal Cremer Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 45 in each year group, having reduced from 60 per year group in September 2022.

Randal Cremer Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	45	60	60	60	60	60	60	405
Roll (May 23)	30	27	34	43	29	35	44	242
No. of unfilled places	15	33	26	17	31	25	16	163
% of unfilled places	33%	55%	43%	28%	52%	42%	27%	40%

In May 2023, Randal Cremer Primary School had 23 children in its nursery, of which 14 were boys and 9 were girls.

SEND characteristics of children at Randal Cremer Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

We will offer each child currently attending the school a place in a primary school near to their home, that is Ofsted rated "good" or "outstanding". Where possible we will place a child at the school preferred by the parents. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at Randal Cremer Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Randal Cremer Primary School	17	16	22	18	24	21	34	152

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to Randal Cremer Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at Randal Cremer Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
Randal Cremer Primary School	18	50

No interim arrangements are required for pupils.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of Randal Cremer Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - Randal Cremer Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at Randal Cremer Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at Randal Cremer Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Randal Cremer	17	7.0%	42	17.4%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals.

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at Randal Cremer Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at Randal Cremer Primary School will be offered places at local schools. Every parent is able to make a preference for an alternative school so longer journeys to school may occur for some families that previously attended Randal Cremer Primary School. There are school places available within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>,
by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for responses to be received is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

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Bengali

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Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

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Spanish

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Kurdish

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Turkish

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Polish

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Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây.

Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

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Return to: Please send this form to Freepost EDUCATION TRANSLATIONS, by 3 November 2023, 5pm.
You can also email schoolsufficiency@hackney.gov.uk with your name, address and the language you require.

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Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Hackney Council is proposing to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School with effect from 31st August 2024.

The reason for this proposal is the significant fall in pupil numbers across Hackney, and at De Beauvoir Primary School. There are currently over 600 vacant Reception school places in Hackney primary schools. Fewer children in schools means less government funding for schools to operate, which over time creates significant financial pressure on schools.

The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School. Should the decision to discontinue the school be agreed, all children attending De Beauvoir Primary School will be offered a place in local schools for September 2024.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>.

If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at:

school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

1a. Name, address and category of school proposed to be discontinued:

De Beauvoir Primary School (community school).
80 Tottenham Rd, London, N1 4BZ
Tel: 020 7254 2517
Email: admin@debeauvoir.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

De Beauvoir Primary School will discontinue on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuance

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. More than two thirds of Hackney's maintained primary schools have budgeted for an in-year over spend at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. This trend is expected to continue as roll numbers continue to fall.

De Beauvoir Primary School has been seriously affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding. At the end of the financial year 2022/23 they reported a surplus of £140,418, but

the school has forecast a deficit position at the close of 2023/24 of £128,830, meaning they project an overspend of £269,248 in the current financial year alone.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

De Beauvoir Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 30 in each year group, having reduced from 60 per year group in September 2019.

De Beauvoir Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	30	30	30	30	60	60	60	300
Roll (May 23)	12	14	14	16	11	17	26	110
No. of unfilled places	18	16	16	14	49	43	34	190
% of unfilled places	60%	53%	53%	47%	82%	72%	57%	63%

In May 2023, De Beauvoir Primary School had 15 children in its nursery, of which 10 were girls and 5 were boys.

SEND characteristics of children at De Beauvoir Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

We will offer each child currently attending De Beauvoir Primary School a place in a primary school near to their home, that is Ofsted rated “good” or “outstanding”. Where possible we will place a child at the school preferred by the parents. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at De Beauvoir Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
De Beauvoir Primary School	6	7	8	8	10	10	17	66

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to De Beauvoir Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at De Beauvoir Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very

likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
De Beauvoir Primary School	15	40

No interim arrangements are required for pupils.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of De Beauvoir Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - De Beauvoir Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at De Beauvoir Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at De Beauvoir Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
De Beauvoir	10	9.1%	28	25.5%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals.

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at De Beauvoir Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at De Beauvoir Primary School will be offered places at local schools. Every parent is able to make a preference for an alternative school, so longer journeys to school may occur for some families that previously attended De Beauvoir Primary School. There are school places available within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for responses to be received is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

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Bengali

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Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

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Spanish

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Kurdish

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Turkish

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Polish

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Vietnamese

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Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

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Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School

Hackney Council publishes these proposals under section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013.

Hackney Council proposes to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School.

The number of children in each year group at Nightingale Primary School will increase from 30 to 60. All children attending Baden Powell Primary School will be offered a place at Nightingale Primary School and Baden Powell Primary School will discontinue. These changes will take effect from 31 August 2024. This proposal is related to the separate proposal to expand Nightingale Primary School from 1 to 2 forms of entry. This can be found on:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>

This proposal is published on 6 October 2023. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London, E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate its students with Nightingale Primary School. This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals> If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

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If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Name, address and category of school to be discontinued:

Baden Powell Primary School (community school)
Ferron Road, London, E5 8DN
Tel: 020 8985 6176
Email: admin@baden-powell.hackney.sch.uk

Name and address of school to undergo a prescribed alteration

Nightingale Primary School
Tiger Way, London, E5 8NA
Tel: 0208 985 4259
Email: eibrahim@nightingale.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

Baden Powell & Nightingale Primary schools will amalgamate on 31 August 2024. Baden Powell Primary School to be discontinued on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuance

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which

could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. More than two thirds of Hackney’s maintained primary schools have budgeted for an in-year over spend at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. This trend is expected to continue as roll numbers continue to fall.

Baden Powell Primary School has been seriously affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding. At the end of the financial year 2022/23 they reported a modest surplus of £31,768, but the school has forecast a deficit position at the close of 2023/24 of £300,820, meaning they project an overspend of £332,588 in the current financial year alone.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

Baden Powell Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 30 in each year group, giving a total of 210 places across all year groups.

Baden Powell Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210
Roll (May 23)	17	19	28	24	23	28	29	168
No. of unfilled places	13	11	2	6	7	2	1	42
% of unfilled places	43%	37%	7%	20%	23%	7%	3%	20%

In May 2023 Baden Powell Primary School had 9 children in its nursery class, of which 5 were girls and 4 were boys.

SEND characteristics of children at Baden Powell Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

Baden Powell Primary School is situated in the centre of the borough, in an area where there are four alternative primary schools. Should the proposal be agreed, all children currently attending Baden Powell Primary School would be offered places at Nightingale Primary School, if that is what they want. There is sufficient space at Nightingale Primary School to accommodate the pupils currently on roll at Baden Powell because the building can accommodate 420 pupils. This means that Nightingale will formally increase from a 1FE to 2FE school from September 2024, without the need for expansion of the premises.

Should parents not wish their children to transfer to Nightingale, there are vacancies across years Reception to Year 6 in other Hackney primary schools. Parents can also express any alternative preferences for other schools through the in-year admissions process should they wish to do so. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at Baden Powell Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now

and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Baden Powell Primary School	20	19	19	28	25	25	27	163

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to Baden Powell Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at Baden Powell Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
Baden Powell Primary School	9	40

There are no interim arrangements required for pupils at either school.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of Baden Powell Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - Baden Powell Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at Baden Powell Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at Baden Powell Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Baden Powell	8	4.8%	22	13.1%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals.

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at Baden Powell Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at Baden Powell will be offered a place at Nightingale Primary School, which is 0.1 miles away from Baden Powell Primary School. Every parent however is able to make a preference for an alternative school so longer journeys may occur as a result of parental preference. There are alternative school places within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>,

by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for responses to be received is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

For more information on the proposal and to view translated copies of this document in Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at:

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Bengali

এই দলিলে কি লেখা আছে সে সম্পর্কে যদি আপনি জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে উপযুক্ত বাক্সে টিক দিন, এই পাতার নিচে আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও ফোন নম্বর লিখুন এবং এটি নীচের ঠিকানায় ফেরত পাঠান।

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

Si vous désirez connaître le contenu de ce document, veuillez cocher la case appropriée et indiquer votre nom, adresse et numéro de téléphone au bas de cette page et la renvoyer à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous.

Spanish

Si desea saber de lo que trata este documento, marque la casilla correspondiente, escriba su nombre, dirección y número de teléfono al final de esta página y envíela a la siguiente dirección.

Kurdish

Ger hun dixwazin bizanibin ku ev dokument çî dibêje, ji kerema xwe qutîka minasib îşaret bikin, nav, navnîşan û hejmara telefona xwe li jêrê rûpel binivîsin û wê ji navnîşana jêrîn re bişînin.

Turkish

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Polish

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Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây.

Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

如果你想知道這分文件的詳細內容，請在方框內打鉤，在本頁下面寫下你的名字、地址和電話號碼並寄到下面的地址。

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Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School

Hackney Council publishes these proposals under section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013.

Hackney Council proposes to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School.

The number of children in each year group at Princess May Primary School will remain at 60. All children attending Colvestone Primary School will be offered a place at Princess May Primary School and Colvestone Primary School will discontinue. These changes will take effect from 31 August 2024.

This proposal is published on 6 October 2023. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London, E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate its students with Princess May Primary School.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>.

If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Name, address and category of school to be discontinued:

Colvestone Primary School (community school)
Colvestone Crescent, London, E8 2LG
Tel: 020 7254 1143
Email: office@colvestone.hackney.sch.uk

Name and address of school to amalgamate with Colvestone Primary School:

Princess May Primary School (community school)
Princess May Road, London, N16 8DF
Tel: 020 7254 1589
Email: admin@princessmay.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

Colvestone & Princess May Primary Schools will amalgamate on 31 August 2024.
Colvestone Primary School to be discontinued on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuance

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which

could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. Colvestone Primary School has been affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding.

Colvestone is not financially viable and ended the 2022/23 year with an extremely large deficit balance of £561,646.

In order to avoid unnecessary process duplication and to ensure efficient use of resources the council's finance department has not produced alternative financial modelling for Colvestone following the agreement with the school on the deployment of a SRMA (School Resource Management Adviser) report process. This was carried out by an independent SRMA.

Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open suggest the recent reporting supports a view that Colvestone can be financially viable in the future and has the capacity to pay down the deficit.

The local authority does not agree with this assessment, which includes a number of assumptions based on non-sustainable funding sources, and considers the school to be financially unviable. The SMRA expresses the view that the schools' "overall financial position is precarious. The school and SRMA have discussed potential ways the deficit could be reduced and the debt repaid to the Local Authority. School leadership has been and still is, very mindful of how efficiencies may impact pupil outcomes and teaching standards."

The SMRA's view is that it would be "extremely challenging" for the school to balance their budget and repay the current deficit over three/four years. They point out that "any chance of financial recovery heavily relies on strong incoming pupil numbers and current budgets are reliant on almost full cohorts of Reception children entering the school."

The local authority does not accept the statement made in the report that "the SRMA and school have discussed the pupil number forecasts with the LA, who advised that these numbers are not unrealistic." The local authority is firmly of the view that the projected number of children joining the school, on which the budget is based, are unrealistic. The budgets are based on 24 children joining reception in September 2023, 27 in 2024 and 30 in 2025. 14 children joined the school in the Reception class in September 2023.

The SRMA goes on to say "... it is evident that demand for Reception places is falling, with London Councils, the collective of London Councils, predicting a 12% decrease in demand for Reception places in Hackney between 22/23 and 26/27. Therefore, the forecasts may be unfeasible. The school can better gauge this once September 2023 numbers are confirmed."

The 3-year projected budget produced by the Senior Leadership Team (2023/24 - 2025/26) submitted in May 2023 projects a growing deficit as follows:

Year	Projected In Year deficit	Projected Cumulative deficit
2023/24	-27,615	-589,261
2024/25	-93,690	-682,951
2025/26	-110,540	-793,491

By the schools' own forecasts, despite an in year surplus in 22/23 of £28,319 (supported by a £50,000 mid year additional cash injection), they are unable to demonstrate capacity to address their outstanding deficit.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

Colvestone Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 30 in each year group, giving a total of 210 places across all year groups.

Colvestone Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210
Roll (May 23)	17	23	25	13	14	19	19	130
No. of unfilled places	13	7	5	17	16	11	11	80
% of unfilled places	43%	23%	17%	57%	53%	37%	37%	38%

In May 2023, Colvestone Primary School had 8 children in its nursery, of which 5 were girls and 3 were boys.

SEND characteristics of children at Colvestone Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

Colvestone Primary School is situated in the west of the borough in an area where there are several other alternative primary schools. Should the proposal be agreed, all children currently attending Colvestone Primary School would be offered places at Princess May Primary School if that is what they want. There is sufficient space at Princess May Primary School to accommodate the pupils currently on roll at Colvestone because the building can accommodate 420 pupils.

Should parents not wish their children to transfer to Princess May, there are vacancies across Reception to Year 6 in other Hackney primary schools. Parents can also express any alternative preferences for other schools through the in-year admissions process should they wish to do so. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at Colvestone Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Colvestone Primary School	14	16	24	26	12	13	16	121

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to Colvestone Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at Colvestone Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
Colvestone Primary School	6	37

There are no interim arrangements required for pupils at either school.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of Colvestone Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - Colvestone Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at Colvestone Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at Colvestone Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Colvestone	10	7.7%	21	16.2%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at Colvestone Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at Colvestone will be offered a place at Princess May Primary School, which is 0.4 miles away from Colvestone Primary School. Every parent however is able to make a preference for an alternative school so longer journeys may be necessary as a result of parental preference. There are alternative school places within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

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Bengali

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Somali

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French

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Turkish

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Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây.

Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

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Statutory Notice

Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)

Hackney Council publishes these proposals under section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and having regard to the DfE guidance 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools - Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers January 2023'.

This Notice is related to the separate Notice outlining the Council's proposal to amalgamate Baden Powell Primary School and Nightingale Primary School and the discontinuation of Baden Powell Primary School, which can be found at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. These Notices are published following a consultation which took place in June 2023. The proposed changes would take effect from 31 August 2024.

All children attending Baden Powell Primary School will be offered places at Nightingale Primary School, Tiger Way, London E5 8NA. Nightingale Primary School will expand from a one form entry school (30 children each year), to a two form entry school (60 children each year). The planned admission number across all year groups will be 420.

This proposal (the expansion of Nightingale Primary school from 1FE to 2FE) is published on 6 October 2023. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to amalgamate Baden Powell Primary School with Nightingale Primary School. This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estate Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal increase Nightingale Primary school from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Name and address of school to undergo a prescribed alteration:

Nightingale Primary School (community school).
Tiger Way, London, E5 8NA
Tel: 020 8985 4259
Email: eibrahim@nightingale.hackney.sch.uk

2. Description of alteration and evidence of demand

Hackney proposes to increase the number of pupils at Nightingale Primary School, Tiger Way, London E5 8NA, with effect from 1 September 2024. Baden Powell Primary School will discontinue on 31 August 2024. Children at Baden Powell Primary School will be offered a place at Nightingale Primary School. Nightingale would move from a one form entry school admitting 30 children in each year to a two form entry school admitting 60. The change is proposed due to a decrease in the demand for primary places, with considerably fewer pupils in Hackney primary schools and across London as a whole.

There are currently over 600 vacant Reception school places in Hackney primary schools. Fewer children in schools means less government funding for schools to operate, which over time, creates significant financial pressure on schools. The amalgamation is being proposed due to a fall in pupil numbers across Hackney primary schools.

The Council wishes to provide high quality school places for all school aged children in the borough. Unless action is taken to reduce the number of vacant primary places, schools with falling rolls will be affected due to diminished access to resources and funding. Further information about falling rolls across London has been published by London Councils and can be accessed at: <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/children-and-young-people/education-and-school-places/managing-surplus-school-places>

3. Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there is a sufficient number of school places in its area. There are currently over 600 vacant school places in Hackney. The Council has consulted on proposals to reduce the number of vacant places 31 August 2024, by:

- Discontinuing two primary schools (De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer primary schools, and;
- Amalgamating a further four schools, to create two schools (Baden Powell Primary School with Nightingale Primary School, and Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School).

This Statutory Notice and full proposal outlines a prescribed alteration to Nightingale Primary School which will expand from 1FE to 2FE to accommodate the pupils from Baden Powell Primary School once it is discontinued on 31 August 2024.

If the Council allows the number of surplus places to remain at the current level through inaction, this would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which will have an impact on education. The quality of education and classroom support offered for children in these schools would deteriorate over time, as the affected schools would have to deplete surplus funds or go into deficit

to maintain their current education offer, thereby reducing parental choice in terms of access to good quality, viable schools.

4. The effect on other educational institutions within the area

This proposal forms part of a related proposal to amalgamate Baden Powell and Nightingale Primary Schools, which will reduce the number of vacant places in the local area.

5. Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved

There are no associated project costs for this proposal. The current Nightingale school site was built to accommodate 2FE in 2019, however the school has been operating as a 1FE. The proposed prescribed alteration to Nightingale Primary School would see the capacity of the school increased to 2FE from 1 September 2024 and result in the current building being more fully utilised as a result.

6. Implementation plan

The proposals are to be implemented by the Local Authority. It is intended that the proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1FE to 2FE will be implemented from 1 September 2024. This will enable the school to accommodate the pupils from Baden Powell Primary School arising from an amalgamation of both schools. For the 2024/25 academic year, Nightingale Primary School will admit up to 60 pupils across all year groups (Reception to Year 6). This will increase the school's PAN from 210 to 420.

7. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for responses to be received is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

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Bengali

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Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

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Spanish

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Kurdish

Ger hun dixwazin bizanibin ku ev dokument çî dibêje, ji kerema xwe qutîka minasib îşaret bikin, nav, navnîşan û hejmara telefona xwe li jêrê rûpel binivîsin û wê ji navnîşana jêrîn re bişînin.

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Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

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Main Report

Prepared November 2023

Hackney Council

Statutory Consultation On Amalgamation Or
Closure Of Six Hackney Primary Schools



**Kwest
Research**

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1. Introduction & Background

On 25 September, Hackney Council's Cabinet decided to proceed to publishing statutory proposals to close / merge a number of schools in the borough. This decision followed an informal consultation on the proposals, which took place from 5 June 2023 to 16 July 2023.

The following proposals were published on 6 October 2023, beginning a four-week representation period of statutory consultation:

- Statutory Notice and Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School
- Statutory Notice and Full Statutory Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)
- Statutory Notice and Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School
- Statutory Notice and Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Statutory Notice and Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

The closing date for receipt of responses was 3rd November 2023 at 5pm, four weeks from the date of publication of the proposals. During the four week consultation period, any person could object to or make comments on the proposals by using any of the following feedback routes:

- Completing an online form, hosted on Citizen Space, the Council's online survey platform;
- By emailing school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk;
- Or by writing to: School Sufficiency & Estates Team, Hackney Council, Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, London, E8 1DY

The proposals were translated into Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish and were available on the Citizen Space page.

In October 2023, Hackney Council commissioned Kwest Research to analyse and report on the feedback returned during consultations on the proposals. Kwest had also previously reported on the findings from the individual paper and online responses to the informal consultation.

1.1 Response Rates

At the end of the consultation period, 164 responses had been received online via Citizen Space; 7 of these responses included no comments about any of the proposals. In addition, one letter had been submitted and 7 emails received with feedback on the proposals. A further 3 emails were submitted with PDF attachments.

The 172 responses submitted online, by email and letter were analysed and the comments categorised into key themes. Due to the extensive detail included in the PDF attachments, these are discussed separately to the other feedback and are included, in full, in appendix 3 of this report.

The majority of the feedback received related to the proposal to amalgamate Colvestone Primary School with Princess May. A small number of responses to each proposal did not appear to be making relevant comments, for example, a respondent might enter “n/a” in the comment box for a proposal they did wish to give feedback on. The following table shows the number of responses to each proposal that were received by the time the consultation closed on 3rd November 2023. Please note that these figures exclude the three PDF submissions.

Proposal	Total Number of Responses	Responses That Appeared Relevant
Closure of De Beauvoir Primary School	24	22
Closure of Randal Cremer Primary School	26	24
Amalgamation Of Colvestone & Princess May Primary Schools	146	143
Amalgamation Of Baden-Powell & Nightingale Primary Schools	30	28
Expansion Of Nightingale From 1 Form To 2 Form Entry	20	15

Table 1 Number of responses per proposal

2. Executive Summary

With the exception of the proposal to amalgamate Colvestone and Princess May Primary Schools, only a small number of comments were received in response to each of the Statutory Notices. Excluding Colvestone and Princess May, the number of replies to the other four proposals ranged from 20 to 30. Many of these responses were short words or sentences comprising a broad statement of the respondents’ views. For the proposals on the closure of De Beauvoir and expansion of Nightingale, these short comments made up half of the feedback that appeared relevant.

As a result, although there are separate sections for each Statutory Notice, this report is inevitably dominated by responses about the proposed Colvestone and Princess May merger.

2.1 Overview Of Responses

The table below gives an overview of respondents' feedback on the proposals. Please note that it was not always clear whether the respondent was in favour or against the proposal so not all the comments are accounted for.

Proposal	Number of Responses	Appeared Relevant	Number in favour	Number against
Closure of De Beauvoir Primary School	24	22	2	17
Closure of Randal Cremer Primary School	26	24	1	20
Amalgamation Of Colvestone & Princess May Primary Schools	146	143	2	138
Amalgamation Of Baden-Powell & Nightingale Primary Schools	30	28	3	24
Expansion Of Nightingale From 1 Form To 2 Form Entry	20	15	4	8

Table 2 Overview Of Responses

2.2 Information In The Statutory Notices

Members of staff from De Beauvoir and Blossom Foundation (Colvestone) sent emails expressing concern about the information in their respective Statutory Notices. There are sections the respondents considered "disingenuous" and staff from both schools expressed disappointment that they were not made aware of what would be included before the Notices were published. The leadership of Blossom are also concerned about "the risk of reputational damage" for the organisation, and for them personally, due to the way the financial information is presented in the Notice and the failure to make clear that the school's deficit is historic.

Copies of each Statutory Notice are included in appendix one.

2.3 Large Submissions To The Consultation

Three emails with large attachments were submitted in response to the consultation and these are discussed in more detail later in the report.

A response from the Hackney NEU, Unite, Unison and GMB unions highlights the benefits of small schools and class sizes as well as expressing concern about negative consequences of the proposals and whether alternatives have been fully explored. It concludes by urging the Council to "postpone the decision to close the schools while a feasibility study is conducted on the possibility of utilizing some of the spare capacity for SEND resource bases".

The two other attachments were submitted by the Save Colvestone campaign group: the first is an analysis of the current vacancy and place data; the second is a full report, including the results of that analysis. The full report, entitled "Final Consultation Submission" is a 284 page document which the authors state "challenges the proposals and their underlying claims on multiple grounds".

All these documents can be found, in full, in Appendix 3.

3. Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Close De Beauvoir

24 respondents submitted comments on the Statutory Notice to close De Beauvoir and 22 of these comments appeared relevant to the proposal. For reference, the other two comments were “n/a” and feedback saying “inspections are important if this inspection is crucial to the safety and well-being of other [sic] than I do not see why this should be discontinued.”

The key themes in the comments are shown in the table below.

Theme	Number of comments
General statements & wider context	15
Comment about existing school	4
Comment about other schools/process of moving	4
Comment about school places	4
Strategic themes	3

Table 3 Key Themes In Comments On Proposal To Close De Beauvoir

3.1 General Statements & Wider Context

Most commonly, the feedback collected comprises general statements confirming that the respondent does not want the school to close. Such feedback is usually very brief, containing only a small number of words or a short statement, for example: “disagree” or “please don’t close this school”. Such comments were made by 12 respondents. Two respondents made similarly short comments in support of the proposals and one was critical of the wording of parts of the Statutory Notice itself and saying “it would have been good to have had sight of the document and to have been able to raise these points” before the Notice was printed. The specific areas of concern are discussed further below as they relate to other themes in the comments.

3.2 Comments About Existing School

Four respondents made comments about De Beauvoir highlighting its good support for children with SEND (3 respondents), their belief that small class sizes are better for children (3 respondents) or that the school has a good reputation and staff (2 respondents). Some examples of these comments are shown below.

These schools, and the staff who work in them, have been pillars of education in our community for decades. Their closure would be a devastating loss for current and future generations. This is an opportunity to reduce class sizes and improve education in the borough, not make it worse.

Small class sizes are good for children.

All schools should remain open so excellent staff who have served the community for many years are retained, and continue to provide excellent standards of education.

The staff member who raised concerns about the information in the Statutory Notice also says:

In section 11, I think it is disingenuous to say that children with SEND may have improved outcomes as a result of a move to a more financially viable school. Sadly I think there is no school in Hackney which is in a financial position to provide the level of support which some of our highest needs pupils require – in addition, there will be a number of schools in the Dalston / Haggerston area which are going to be inundated with pupils, including pupils with EHCPs. I question that they will be able to provide a better quality of support than we have been giving them.

3.3 Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

Often in conjunction with comments about the existing school, four respondents made comments about other schools and the process of moving. This feedback focused on the negative impact on children and also the potential job losses and effect on staff. Some example comments are shown below.

Many pupils will be separated from their friends at a key time in their lives, with SEN pupils who have built relationships with staff particularly affected.

School closures are terribly disruptive for children, staff and parents.

These are not amalgamations, they are closures. Staff in these schools have worked throughout Covid, and are some of the most under-paid and overworked in the whole borough. They are being rewarded with forced redundancies and financial insecurity.

3.4 Comments About School Places

Four respondents made broader comments about school places, with two asking if the move to close De Beauvoir was “short sighted” as population demographics can change.

The member of staff from the school who emailed about the information in the Statutory Notice highlighted concerns about places available both at De Beauvoir and other local schools.

In section 4 it states that our PAN in Year 4, 5 and 6 is 60. This, and therefore the % of unfilled places, is very inaccurate. In section 4 it talks about the forecast deficit position in 23/24. It would have been preferable if this could have been contextualised i.e. the impact of further depletion of the roll as a result of consultation – I suspect many will read this as poor financial management. I still remain concerned about the ‘promise’ in Section 5 that children will be placed in a primary school near their home. Many parents are already unable to find places in the school they want and are on waiting lists. There are also a number of schools locally where PANs have been reduced so year groups are over roll with additional waiting lists.

3.5 Strategic Themes

Some of the feedback received was more strategic in nature, offering alternative approaches to the issue of falling rolls and/or suggestions on how to move forwards.

Two respondents suggest that the schools should be turned into “specialist resource bases” for SEN pupils so that they can be educated within the borough as the Council currently spends “vast amounts of money sending SEN pupils to be educated outside the borough”.

Another respondent asks if the site has “already been earmarked for housing”.

4. Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Close Randal Cremer

26 respondents submitted comments on the Statutory Notice to close Randal Cremer and 24 of these comments appeared relevant to the proposal. For reference, the other two comments were “see above” and feedback saying “inspections are important if this inspection is crucial to the safety and well-being of other [sic] than I do not see why this should be discontinued.”

The key themes in the comments are shown in the table below.

Theme	Number of comments
General statements & wider context	12
Comment about existing school	7
Comment about other schools/process of moving	7
Comment about school places	6
Strategic themes	5

Table 4 Key Themes In Comments On Proposal To Close Randal Cremer

4.1 General Statements & Wider Context

The most common themes in the feedback were general statements opposing the school closure. Often feedback comprises a short sentence of only a few words, such as “strongly oppose” or “do not close this school”. Such comments were made by 10 respondents.

One respondent made similarly a short comment, “okay”, in support of the proposals.

Another respondent, a member of staff, made broader comments about the wider context of falling enrolment, recognising that academy schools are protected from closure and stressing that “the strategy for Hackney Education needs to be shared and shaped by educators and Unions alongside the council”.

4.2 Comments About Existing School

Seven respondents made comments about Randal Cremer highlighting that the school has a good reputation and staff (6 respondents); its good support for children with SEND (3 respondents) and their belief that small class sizes are better for children (3 respondents). Some examples of these comments are shown below.

We have a high number of SEN children on roll and I know we provide an outstanding provision for them. I worry for their future as many schools do not show the inclusion and love and we do, families are heavily supported by us.

I wish Randal Cremer Primary School could stay. My two kids attend there, a very good community school with experienced and friendly staff.

Randal Cremer is an excellent school with great staff and resources.

4.3 Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

Often in conjunction with comments about the existing school, seven respondents gave feedback about other schools or the process of moving. These comments focused on the negative effect on children and also the potential job losses and impact on staff.

A member of staff at Randal Cremer expressed concern about the support available to those less able to express their opinions

Care must be taken over how some of the most marginalised residents of Hackney are kept informed and supported. More affluent and confident parents from other schools seem to have a louder voice which has made the process even more difficult for the school community.

Some other example comments on this topic are shown below.

Has there been any assessment on the impact of this in nearby schools? Sebright school is one of the closest, is there work being done with these schools to prepare for a surge in applications or increased demand?

The teaching and non-teaching staff off [sic] the proposed schools for closure should have been [sic] an opportunity to be redeployed this academic year.

4.4 Comments About School Places

Feedback from six respondents included more wide ranging comments about school places in the borough and some examples are shown below.

It is a tragedy that a school that has served the community for nearly 150 years is closed whilst schools opened within the last decade are protected because of their academy status. I appreciate Hackney Council's attempt to raise this at a governmental level. My concern is that more primary schools will take the academisation route in order to protect themselves from potential future closures. This will further weaken the Local Authority's decision making. [...] Difficult decisions do need to be made but also alongside this there need to be efforts to show parents who only seem to choose a small number of preferred schools just how amazing other local schools are. It saddens me that some schools are oversubscribed with waiting lists whereas other, equally good schools are not considered.

We still have many children on roll and local schools are at their capacity. I worry for the children who are still here and where they will end up as they cannot travel to other schools, further away.

Once closed, these schools can only be reopened as secretive undemocratic academies as opposed to democratically controlled council schools.

4.5 Strategic Themes

Some of the feedback received was more strategic in nature, offering alternative approaches to the issue of falling rolls and/or suggestions on how to move forwards.

Three respondents asked about the future plans for the school buildings in their response to the proposal and two respondents – who also commented on the other proposals – suggested that the schools should be turned into “specialist resource bases” for SEN pupils so that they can be educated within the borough as the Council currently spends “vast amounts of money sending SEN pupils to be educated outside the borough”.

5. Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Amalgamate Colvestone & Princess May Primary Schools

146 respondents submitted comments on the Statutory Notice to amalgamate Colvestone with Princess May and 143 of these comments appeared relevant to the proposal. For reference, the other three comments were “n/a”, “my answer is the same as my 2nd response” and “why doesn’t [sic] two failing schools merge to become one instead?”

In addition, two PDF submissions were received by email and these are discussed later in this section and are also available, in full, in appendix 3.

The key themes in the comments are shown in the table below.

Theme	Number of comments
Comment about existing school	78
General statements & wider context	75
Comment about school places	29
Comments about Princess May	27
Comment about the process of moving	24
Strategic themes	10

Table 5 Key Themes In Comments On Proposal To Amalgamate Colvestone & Princess May Primary Schools

5.1 Comments About Existing School

78 respondents made positive comments about Colvestone and the breakdown of this feedback is shown in the table below.

Theme	Number of comments
Provides good support for children with SEND	32
At the heart of the local community	29
Staff go the extra mile / school has a good reputation / good facilities	29
Single form entry	28
Historic nature of the school & its buildings	16
Dalston Plan / 21 st Century Street	14
Small class sizes / schools are better for children	9
Impact of Blossom Foundation	9
Financial situation	8
Other	3

Table 6 Breakdown of comments about existing school

Some examples of comments on these themes are shown below.

Good Support For Children With SEND

It is an inclusive environment, which holds true to its motto “everyone matters”. Children with additional needs thrive (as opposed to survive) at Colvestone.

*Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support, which as you may have heard from other families is not a given, [Name] has an EHCP and now a level 5 in funding which goes towards * SEN and * needs to be cared by someone all the time. [...] We know our child feels safe and happy at Colvestone, * receives a wonderful SEN support with a fantastic experienced SEN one to one [Name] and a brilliant teacher/SENCO.*

*Colvestone primary is a really good school which has contributed immensely to my [child's] ([SEND]) development. The teachers and staff are dedicated, friendly, helpful. They treat my [child] with respect and dignity. Taking my [child] from * former school to Colvestone has been a big blessing to us.*

At The Heart Of The Community

As a resident without children in the school, I would like Colvestone Primary School to remain open, as I personally appreciate the energy and community it brings to the neighbourhood.

Colvestone primary school is the beating heart of the area – it has engendered a unique sense of community among the local families and serves as an important counterpoint/softening influence to Ridley Road market.

Colvestone primary school is in a sheltered but stimulating area of Dalston which provides distance from traffic pollution but exposes our [child] to the bustling market life of Ridley Road Market and all the community and history that accompanies it.

Staff Go The Extra Mile / School Has A Good Reputation / Good Facilities

[Colvestone] is a model of what a thriving, accessible, local school should be with an excellent reputation, in particular for SEND pupils. As a parent of [SEND] child who struggled in a large two-entry Hackney primary, I understand all too well that Colvestone would have been a far better environment for my [child].

My children have just started here having moved to the area. It has been amazing and welcoming for them and they have settled with no issues and made friends. [...] For my gender non conforming child the school has been open and accommodating and normalising.

The school provides excellent education, the teachers are caring and due to the small number of classes staff can support the welfare of the students in the difficult post Covid traumas.

Single Form Entry

It is one of the very few schools in the area with a single form intake, and is being penalised for this, rather than the benefits of smaller school environment being valued as they should.

[Colvestone] is a small, welcoming, creating school with a unique feel and benefits hugely from single form entry in terms of the focus and attention this afford the teachers and pupils. In conversations with other parents the reasons they repeatedly give for choosing Colvestone Primary are exactly these.

The small, one-form entry school is especially nurturing and supportive for children who will struggle in larger, busier environments – not just children with SEND but other children who are particularly suited to a smaller school.

Historic Nature Of The School & Its Buildings

Colvestone School is a listed Victorian purpose-built [school] which should remain true to the purpose it has been fulfilling for over 150 years.

Built in 1852, Colvestone is a Grade 2 listed building, the last remaining William Ellis/Birkbeck school. Closing it would mean shutting the last surviving example of an important 19th century radical education movement. This is a loss of national significance.

Dalston Plan / 21st Century Street

Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan which says it will build family homes. Colvestone needs to be kept open as it is the closest school to this development. Colvestone Crescent is planned to turn into a 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. Crucial to this plan is that it's located next to a primary school.

It [Colvestone] is right in the heart of Dalston and close to the proposed building of 600 flats as per the Dalston plan. People with children will not want to live in Dalston if you close all the primary schools.

Small Class Sizes / Schools Are Better For Children

One form entry schools have strong advantages over multiple entry schools in almost every peer reviewed study.

Small class sizes are good for children.

Impact Of Blossom Foundation & The Financial Situation

We, as parents, carers and students, love the stability and improved facilities Blossom Federation has brought the school.

The Federation has turned a budget surplus – despite a low pupil roll – in its first 6 months in charge. So doing Blossom Federation has shown that the school can be financially viable under its new leadership.

The current financial state is a result of the incompetence of the previous management.

5.2 General Statements & Wider Context

53 respondents made general statements, often only a few words, such as “I object” or “disagree”, to confirm that they do not want Colvestone to amalgamate with Princess May. One person made a similarly short statement, “agree”, in support of the proposal.

Other key sub-themes included criticism of the council’s approach to the consultation (17 respondents) and the impact on the wider area (5 respondents). Within the feedback critical of the consultation, there were three emails from members of senior staff at the school challenging information in the Statutory Notice itself. There are concerns some of the details, which are considered disingenuous, could be damaging to the reputation of both Blossoms Federation and some of its senior leaders personally.

The notice is disingenuous and implies the deficit is the whole reason for the proposal. This was not the sole criteria at the start of this process. The notice also implies that the deficit is our making not the Council’s failure to adequately monitor and hold the school to account prior to our involvement. [...] The dropping off of the material at the gate and the notices being put up at night after everyone has gone home is incredible. The reputational damage this notice implies to our leadership of the school in ‘not managing the financial situation, not of our making’ is considerable.

As you must be aware, the deployment of a SRMA is an independent support tool provided by the DfE as part of their School Resource Management Strategy. From my understanding, it is not a replacement for the council’s finance department to undertake their duties to help support schools. As stated on the Hackney Services for Schools website, ‘the Schools Finance Support Team delivers strategic support in schools by offering a comprehensive financial management, support and advice service’. If LBH are planning to use the DfE SRMA tool as a replacement way to support schools, then this should be mentioned on the S4S website. We have so far only met twice since September 2022 so do not feel we have had adequate strategic support. I also do not feel this is ‘ensuring efficient use of resources’ as adequate time spent with schools could highlight thousands of pounds in savings (which the SRMA highlighted but has not been incorporated in the proposal report). It also needs to be noted that the school requested the SRMA visit not the LA.

Other respondents, many of whom are parents at the school, express frustration that it feels as though “no one is listening” and the evidence they have submitted has been ignored.

We demonstrated how the data, which the council is relying on, is inaccurate and unreliable, why Colvestone is crucial to the community of Dalston and a unique desirable parental choice for local families. This has all been for nothing.

As a parent who has contributed to the drafting of the Save Colvestone submission I implore you to read that report and to consider the findings and contained data within it – much of which is new. If you are an elected official, please read this with an open mind – challenge and scrutinise the claims made both in it and in the Cabinet Briefing documents.

We have had several rounds of consultation to make it look like there is a dialogue, but in fact the council has made no effort whatsoever to determine what it is Hackney parents want for their children.

The Save Colvestone submission is discussed in a subsequent section of this report and is included, in full, in appendix 3.

5.3 Comments About School Places

29 respondents made comments about school places in the borough. The key sub-themes in this feedback relate to the lack of parental choice (12 respondents) and the impact of free schools and faith schools (10 respondents). Respondents also commented that the demographics of populations can change (4 respondents), other local schools do not have many places (4 respondents) or made other comments about school places (3 respondents). Some examples of feedback on these topics are outlined below.

Lack Of Parental Choice

We have the right to choose and this proposal takes away all choice – if Colvestone closes and we don’t choose Princess May what are we left with?

The closure of Colvestone (and nearby De Beauvoir) would mean there would be no non-faith, one-form entry local authority schools within a mile of the Colvestone building.

Impact Of Free Schools & Faith Schools

I am bewildered as to why so many Free Schools and Academies have been granted permission to open with no consideration for the possibility of fluctuating pupil numbers.

Current place data suggests that Local Authority surplus is around 11% - not so far from the 10% target after all. Perhaps the problems are elsewhere in the system – in faith schools specifically.

Other Comments About School Places

Holy Trinity and Princess May have both restructured since this process began and there are no longer a surplus of places locally – in fact there is a shortage. If you continue with this proposal you will force parents to choose faith schools or out of borough, AND/OR you force Princess May to take an unknown number of pupils and put them in a difficult position.

I still do not understand why the children from the two local schools due to close are not placed on the school roll at Colvestone and Princess May to increase numbers.

5.4 Comments About Princess May

27 respondents made comments about Princess May with environmental concerns being the most common theme in the feedback (17 respondents). Some parents explicitly stated that they will not send their children to Princess May (8 respondents). Smaller numbers made other comments about the school, including two respondents who felt that Princess May would do better without the merger. Some example comments on these themes are shown below.

Environmental Concerns

Personally, I'm particularly concerned about the move to Princess May and the children being exposed to further harmful pollution. I think it's quite frankly laughable that you love [to] call yourselves a 'greener' Borough with a vision of 'low traffic neighbourhoods' and yet you clearly see no issue with our children being moved right next to the A10 with constant traffic over the fence at break times.

(Even) the Council's (own) air quality monitoring system shows Princess May had 40 percent higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO2) in 2021 than Colvestone.

Colvestone Parents Won't Send Children To Princess May

I'm not interested in sending my children to Princess May and not having a choice/option so will look at moving to a new area if Colvestone closes.

My family are seriously considering moving out of Hackney if Colvestone Primary is discontinued because we want to find a school with a similar feel and ethos and we don't think this is possible within the schools which have vacancies in our vicinity.

Other Comments About Princess May

Princess May Primary School has worked hard to bring up its standards, why derail that by amalgamating it with another school?

I think this will be a good opportunity to gain additional funding for Princess May and hopefully Hackney Education will then back the school financially to improve the premises and cater for these 2 very special communities under one roof.

5.5 Comments About The Process Of Moving

24 respondents gave feedback on the process of moving with the majority (23) focusing on the negative effect on children. Six respondents express concern about the impact on Colvestone staff and the potential loss of jobs. Some examples of these comments are shown below.

Move Will Negatively Affect Children

Moving our child to another school will be strongly difficult and disruptive in our child's education and will have consequences on her achieving long term educational goals. And it will take us years to get to where we are and by then, it will be the end of primary school. This will literally damage all the hard work we have put together for the past 5 years. I hope you realise the difficulty of what we have to do on a daily basis to get to where we are.

Seven percent of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), more than well above the 4.3% average across the borough. Many of these children would find the transition particularly challenging.

Impact On Staff & Potential Job Losses

Please think about the impact the closures of all these schools will have on the children, the staff, the parents and the communities. Hackney Council could be supporting all these people, but it is choosing not to.

I also have grave concerns over the impact that closing Colvestone would have on SEND provision and the impact on staff.

5.6 Strategic Themes

Some of the feedback received was more strategic in nature, offering alternative approaches to the issue of falling rolls and/or suggestions on how to move forwards. 10 respondents made comments about issues around the future use of school buildings (6 respondents) or using the school to address the shortage of SEN places in the borough (2 respondents). A preference to merge with De Beauvoir, rather than Princess May, was expressed by two respondents. Examples of these comments are shown below.

There have been discussion[s] as to what will happen to the Colvestone School building when it is closed as an educational establishment. The council has stated that it will not be sold and will be kept as a 'closed school' with the potential to reopen. Surely the cost of moth-balling a historic building, already undergoing remedial work, will be considerable.

It would seem a much better fit to amalgamate De Beauvoir and Colvestone keeping the friendship groups and single form entry.

These schools should remain open and form part of a wider investment in SEN pupils, by turning them into specialist resource bases, and educating children within their borough.

5.7 Save Colvestone Submission

In response to the Statutory Notice, the Save Colvestone campaign group submitted two PDFs: the first was an analysis of the current vacancy and place data; the second was a full report, including the results of that analysis. Both these documents can be found, in full, in Appendix 3.

The Final Consultation Submission from the Save Colvestone Primary School campaign is a 284 page document which the authors state “challenges the proposals and their underlying claims on multiple grounds”:

- The report presents analysis of place data in the borough to argue that the proposals will not achieve their aim of reducing the number of surplus places. In addition, the report includes an assessment of the child yield from the Dalston Plan
- The report uses data from Council and GLA tools and datasets as the requested information was not provided by Hackney Education even though the report authors feel this should have been made publically available to allow informed consultation
- The authors express concern about eliminating over 10% of local authority primary schools in one irreversible decision as the Council cannot open a new local authority school under the ‘free school presumption’.
- The report states that no cost-benefit analysis has been carried out on the individual proposals. The report identifies several additional financial costs, which the authors believe have not been budgeted for in the documentation provided by the Council.

The authors believe that parental choice will be a key factor in the success, or otherwise, of these proposals. However, the report considers that the Council has done little to understand the choices parents are likely to make.

5.7.1 CHAPTER ONE: ANALYSIS OF CURRENT VACANCY & PLACE DATA

This chapter of the report was also submitted as a standalone document and can be found in Appendix 3. The authors state that this is new and up to date analysis of the data which provides a perspective on the vacant school places in the borough. The key points from this analysis, as set out in the Save Colvestone report, are outlined below.

- The May Cabinet report sets out that the proposals to close two schools and amalgamate four others into two will lead to a total reduction of 135 reception places. In September, the Cabinet report referred to over 600 empty places across the borough in Reception classes alone (21% surplus).
- However, the Save Colvestone report observes that the Council has no control over free schools, academies and faith school nor can it control the choices that parents might decide to make about their children’s education. Therefore, although the Council is trying to reduce vacancies across the borough, “it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system”.
- Furthermore, many schools have requested a temporary reduction in their PAN number. The latest school vacancy data, provided by Hackney Education on 19th September, shows 391 surplus places in reception classes (14.5% vacancy rate) and across all year groups the overall vacancy rate is 12.7%. The vacancy rates are higher in faith schools (30% for reception classes) and the report argues that the Council target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing this. Excluding faith schools, the overall vacancy rate across all other school types is 11% and popular schools have very few vacancies.
- The report includes worked examples from each of the schools in question to argue that the proposals will reduce the surplus reception places by 60, rather than 135 places. It looks at whether there are enough vacancies in other local schools as well as whether there is parental choice for the options. In addition, it discusses the risk of further closures because the authors understand that this is only the first consultation and others are planned, potentially affecting up to 16 schools.
- As a result of this analysis, the report demands an urgent review of the latest vacancy data for each proposed school rather than on a borough wide basis. It also insists that each of the proposed school closures should be considered and assessed on an individual basis. Furthermore, it recommends not closing one of the Dalston one-form community schools but rather exploring a potential merger between them.

5.7.2 PERCEIVED FLAWS IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Pages 13-24 of the report discuss perceived flaws in the consultation process. An outline of the issues raised is shown below.

- The report states “there are multiple instances where the consultation process has failed to follow or deliberately misrepresents” the Statutory Guidance for opening and closing maintained schools and the Council’s Estates Strategy. Several examples are detailed on pages 14-17 of the report.
- The Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet is considered by the report authors to have been “ill informed and lacking detail”, whilst the design of the consultation is considered

“ineffective” for the stated purpose of determining whether to close the schools. The rationale behind this viewpoint is set out in pages 18-21 of the report.

- The report considers that the consultation was “inaccessible to some of the groups that should have been included” and the process “damaged the financial viability of the schools in scope”. The report states the consultation documents were not sent to local residents, despite the Briefing Report listing them as a group to be included. The report’s authors also criticise the lack of information provided in alternate languages and the lack of engagement with families or staff at local nurseries and other childcare settings.

5.7.3 THE CASE FOR COLVESTONE

Pages 25-97 of the report outline what the authors consider to be their “case for Colvestone”. This can be found in full in Appendix 3 but the main issues raised are summarised below.

- The report identifies a number of positive attributes of Colvestone Primary School particularly since its Federation with Blossom. This “skilled and committed financial transformation” is expected to take the school to ‘break even’ by 2027/28. Colvestone is considered a strong school, academically, due to “the excellent and effective staff and leadership team” as well as “the closeness and individual attention of the one-form entry environment”.
- The report sets out what it considers “a strong case for the financial viability” of Colvestone on pages 30-34.
- Parental choice is a key issue for those who support the Colvestone campaign and the campaigners’ research suggests that the majority of households will not send their children to Princess May. The report quotes a survey of Colvestone parents conducted by Save Colvestone, in which 54 out of 62 Colvestone households with children younger than year 5 said they would not send them to Princess May, with a further four unsure if they will do so. If both Colvestone and De Beauvoir are closed, the report’s authors state that “there would be no non-faith, one-entry form local authority schools within a mile of the Colvestone building”. Concerns about faith schools and free schools are also highlighted on pages 39-40.
- 25% of Colvestone children are on the SEND register and the report authors believe that “Colvestone is a positive choice for many SEND families, and this is a strength to build on for the future as there is increasing demand for SEND places”.
- The report also discusses the impact of closing Colvestone on the Dalston Development Plan, which is expected to bring 200+ new families into the immediate area. As Colvestone is the closest school to this development, the authors consider that demand for places in the medium to long term will increase. The report uses GLA-modelled child yield analysis to show that 76 to 100 children will be living in new homes in the immediate vicinity of Colvestone in the short to medium term. Full details can be found on pages 47-53 of the report in Appendix 3.
- The report also discusses policy commitments regarding air pollution, in Hackney and London more broadly, both in general terms and specifically in connection with schools. It looks at concerns about high levels of air pollution at the Princess May site, as well as considering plans to make Colvestone Crescent into a 21st Century Street. Given that the latter scheme will further reduce air pollution in the areas, the report states it is “impossible” to see how moving children to a site with higher levels of pollution “is

defensible on duty of care terms of commensurate with Hackney Council’s public pledge to ‘no increases in pollution at schools’”.

- Colvestone is one of the original Birkbeck schools and has been continuously used as a school for 161 years. The report considers that closing the school would be “a significant historical loss to Dalston”.
- The report also includes numerous examples of comments from parents in support of Colvestone, including from those with special educational needs.

5.7.4 CHAPTER 3: FAILURE TO CONSULT IN ADHERENCE TO HACKNEY COUNCIL’S CONSTITUTION

This section of the report, on pages 98-117, sets out the authors’ grounds for “calling-in the adverse decisions in CE S247 (Schools Estate Strategy)”. These include the failure to consider relevant evidence (specifically the current vacancy place data published on 19th September); the lack of clarity around aims and desired outcomes of both the informal and formal consultation; and the lack of consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions. One such alternative, the report suggests, would be the expansion of SEND provision at the school to accommodate demand in the borough.

The key points from this chapter are itemised below.

- The report authors argue that going ahead with the proposal would “not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted”. The six schools involved are different and should be considered separately. Amongst other options, an alternative merger of De Beauvoir and Colvestone on the Colvestone site is suggested.
- Concerns are raised in the report about whether the requirements of “a presumption of openness” have been met and whether suitable due diligence has been carried out with regard to confirming the existence of restrictive covenants believed to be included with the Colvestone title deeds.
- Additionally, the report argues “the decision-maker did not act in accordance with the budget” as no cost-benefit analysis has been conducted nor are there any costings for alternate proposals. Furthermore, the additional costs for SEND provision for pupils at the schools involved in the consultation have not been included in the potential costs for the proposals. The lack of availability of suitable places for such pupils within Hackney means that “out of borough SEND provision currently costs the LA between £35-70,000 p.a per pupil”. However, the report states that there has been no consideration of the costs that may be required to support SEND pupils in the schools affected by the consultation.

5.7.5 CHAPTER 4: FAILURE TO CONDUCT A LEGAL CONSULTATION

A Pre-Action Protocol Letter for Judicial Review was submitted to the Council on 11th September 2023 on behalf of Colvestone Family and Staff Association, a registered charity, acting on behalf of the Colvestone parents and carers who make up the Save Colvestone Primary School campaign group. This letter is included in chapter 4 of the report and can be found on pages 118-134.

The letter sets out the proposed grounds for the challenge. Save Colvestone consider the proposed amalgamation with Princess May unlawful for the following reasons:

- Failure to take into account the relevant statutory guidance
- Failure to comply with public sector equality duty
- Failure to take material considerations into account
- Failure to conduct a lawful informal consultation

5.7.6 ANNEX A OF THE REPORT

Pages 135-199 of the report include the details of responses submitted to the informal consultation, which the authors consider have not been responded to by the Council. This also includes details of the objections to the consultation authored by the Governing Body of Colvestone Primary School in July 2023.

This section also includes Informal Consultation reports, namely the Kwest report on the Consultation On Amalgamation Or Closure Of Six Hackney Primary Schools and the Hackney Council Additional Responses and Engagement Workshops report.

6. Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Amalgamate Baden-Powell & Nightingale Primary Schools

30 respondents submitted comments on the Statutory Notice to close Baden-Powell and amalgamate with Nightingale and 28 of these comments appeared relevant to the proposal. For reference, the other two comments were “n/a” and what appears to be a person’s name.

The key themes in the comments are shown in the table below.

Theme	Number of comments
General statements & wider context	12
Comment about existing school	10
Comment about other schools/process of moving	10
Comment about school places	4
Strategic themes	2

Table 7 Key Themes In Comments On Proposal To Amalgamate Baden-Powell & Nightingale Primary Schools

6.1 General Statements & Wider Context

The most common theme in the feedback relates to general statements that the respondent does not want the school to close, often this was a short sentence of only a few words, such as “do not agree” or “do not close the school please”. Such comments were made by 10 respondents. One respondent made similarly a short comment, “agree”, in support of the proposals. Another respondent was critical of the proposal objecting to the use of the word “amalgamate” because they believe this is confusing as children and parents think everyone, including the staff, will be going to Nightingale.

6.2 Comments About Existing School

Ten respondents made comments about Baden-Powell highlighting that the school has a good reputation and staff (6 respondents); is at the heart of the local community (4 respondents); and offers good support for children with SEND (4 respondents). Some examples of these comments are shown below.

Please keep it open as it helps the local community.

I feel, and from feedback from parents/carers BP being a small school can and does cater to the needs of all the students especially the students with SEND and EAL.

Baden Powell has been a school which has been loved by the community.

6.3 Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

Ten respondents gave feedback about other schools or the process of moving. These comments focused on the negative effect on children (6 respondents) and also the potential job losses and impact on staff (7 respondents). In contrast, two respondents feel the move will be beneficial for children. Some example comments are shown below.

It's terribly upsetting that the school is being CLOSED. It is not a merger of students and staff IT'S A SCHOOL CLOSURE. The staff are a community who are being forcefully separated. Many of us are suffering anxiety with the unknown. The cost of living crisis, no job.

Strongly agree with this proposal. The benefit for all the student body is far reaching, with more modern facilities, little change to the distance of travel to school, and opportunity to move to a new site with students from the same school. It is also a much better use of public funds with a dramatic reduction in overheads both office and leadership.

*Moving to Nightingale School, losing their "little safe place" (as my [child] calls it), their lovely playground in Baden Powell will have a huge impact on [Name] and I believe on other SEN children too. As * mum I know that it will take * a year to settle in and before * confusion ends * will have to go to secondary school.*

6.4 Comments About School Places

Four respondents made more general comments about school places asking whether the amalgamation is "short sighted" and expressing concerns that future schools "can only be reopened as academies".

6.5 Strategic Themes

Some of the feedback received was more strategic in nature, offering alternative approaches to the issue of falling rolls and/or suggestions on how to move forwards. Two respondents who commented about using the schools as “SEN resource bases” also responded, with the same feedback, to the Baden Powell consultation. For reference, the full quote on this topic, made by both respondents, is shown below.

Hackney council spends vast amounts of money sending SEN pupils to be educated outside the borough, due to a lack of SEN resource bases. These schools should remain open and form part of a wider investment in SEN pupils, by turning them into specialist resources bases, and educating children within their borough.

7. Analysis Of Comments On The Proposal To Expand Nightingale From 1 Form To 2 Form Entry

20 respondents submitted comments on the Statutory Notice to expand Nightingale from 1 form to 2 form entry and 15 of these comments appeared relevant to the proposal. For reference, the other comments were “n/a” (twice), “please do not close the school” and two longer comments which discuss the proposals to close the four schools under threat, not the proposal to expand provision at Nightingale. The key themes in the comments are shown in the table below.

Theme	Number of comments
General statement that do not want capacity to increase	6
Impact on existing school	4
General statement in support of proposal	3
Other	3

Table 8 Themes in the comments about increasing Nightingale to 2 form entry

The general feedback is often just a word or two either in favour of, or in opposition to, the proposals, for example, “agree” or “disagree”. Similarly, the ‘other’ feedback includes some more general comments such as “I do not know much about Nightingale to comment”. Examples of more specific comments made in response to the proposal are shown below.

Do not agree. This school works because it is small.

Is Nightingale big enough to hold 2 forms of entry?

My concerns as a parent of Nightingale is the current size of the playgrounds seem to feel over crowded already, my concerns are if a two form entry is implemented how with [sic] effect the space in which the children manoeuvre and play safely. What guidelines in terms of space assigned to facilitate safe numbers? My other concern is that year one is already mixed with year 3 and these ages are very different. How does increasing the numbers affect [sic] benefits the school apart from socially and financially? What example do we have of this work?

Nightingale has plenty of space for 2FE and the facilities are excellent, which the children from Baden Powell will enjoy.

8. Analysis Of The Submission From Hackney NEU, Unite, Unison And GMB

One of the PDF submissions to the consultation was from the Hackney NEU, Unite, Union and GMB unions. This section of the report highlights the key themes in the feedback provided which can be found, in full, in Appendix 3.

The education trade unions recognise the difficult financial situation facing schools and the problem of falling rolls, particularly in inner London boroughs like Hackney. However, they believe closing schools should only be undertaken when all other options have been exhausted.

The unions identify a number of negative consequences from closing schools including:

- Staff redundancies, in the midst of a cost of living crisis, and potential difficulties in finding new roles.
- Impact on students, especially those with SEND, as well as their parents and carers, of changing staff and school routines. In addition, there may be potential disruption to the continuity of children's education should their new school be studying a different curriculum.

Whilst recognising that the majority of school funding is allocated on the basis of pupil numbers, the unions argue that smaller class sizes and smaller schools have a number of benefits.

- Teachers are able to spend more time working with children individually, which allows them to monitor progress and tailor learning to each pupil.
- Pupils often feel more confident participating in class and there is a greater sense of community spirit.
- Better knowledge and understanding of their pupils can allow teachers to support children more, for example with regard to mental health issues.
- Smaller schools are often more inclusive and supportive of those who are less outgoing.
- It is easier for parents to be more involved in the school community.

The unions question whether alternative strategies are being developed for dealing with budget concerns and falling rolls. They suggest investigating the use of the schools as resource bases for SEND provision seeing as there is a shortage of places within Hackney, particularly within mainstream school settings. This leads to the conclusion to the union's submission, shown below.

We believe that although the financial situation is difficult and falling rolls continue to be a concern, more effort should be made to explore alternative solutions before any decision to close the school is taken. Unfortunately, the lack of any such suggestions as well as the unwillingness to discuss alternatives with concerned stakeholders such as parent campaign groups has led to a belief among parents and staff that the decision has already been made and the consultation process is a mere formality. This has led to parents removing students from the affected schools to alternative educational establishments (in some cases outside of the borough). This has compounded the problems facing these schools. We would urge you to postpone the decision to close the schools while a feasibility study is conducted on the possibility of utilizing some of the spare capacity for SEND resource bases.

9. Appendix 1 – Copies Of The Statutory Notices

Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Hackney Council is proposing to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School with effect from 31st August 2024.

The reason for this proposal is the significant fall in pupil numbers across Hackney, and at De Beauvoir Primary School. There are currently over 600 vacant Reception school places in Hackney primary schools. Fewer children in schools means less government funding for schools to operate, which over time creates significant financial pressure on schools.

The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School. Should the decision to discontinue the school be agreed, all children attending De Beauvoir Primary School will be offered a place in local schools for September 2024.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>.

If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at:

school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

1a. Name, address and category of school proposed to be discontinued:

De Beauvoir Primary School (community school).
80 Tottenham Rd, London, N1 4BZ
Tel: 020 7254 2517
Email: admin@debeauvoir.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

De Beauvoir Primary School will discontinue on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuance

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. More than two thirds of Hackney's maintained primary schools have budgeted for an in-year over spend at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. This trend is expected to continue as roll numbers continue to fall.

De Beauvoir Primary School has been seriously affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding. At the end of the financial year 2022/23 they reported a surplus of £140,418, but

the school has forecast a deficit position at the close of 2023/24 of £128,830, meaning they project an overspend of £269,248 in the current financial year alone.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

De Beauvoir Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 30 in each year group, having reduced from 60 per year group in September 2019.

De Beauvoir Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	30	30	30	30	60	60	60	300
Roll (May 23)	12	14	14	16	11	17	26	110
No. of unfilled places	18	16	16	14	49	43	34	190
% of unfilled places	60%	53%	53%	47%	82%	72%	57%	63%

In May 2023, De Beauvoir Primary School had 15 children in its nursery, of which 10 were girls and 5 were boys.

SEND characteristics of children at De Beauvoir Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

We will offer each child currently attending De Beauvoir Primary School a place in a primary school near to their home, that is Ofsted rated “good” or “outstanding”. Where possible we will place a child at the school preferred by the parents. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at De Beauvoir Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
De Beauvoir Primary School	6	7	8	8	10	10	17	66

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to De Beauvoir Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at De Beauvoir Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very

likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
De Beauvoir Primary School	15	40

No interim arrangements are required for pupils.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of De Beauvoir Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - De Beauvoir Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at De Beauvoir Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at De Beauvoir Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
De Beauvoir	10	9.1%	28	25.5%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals.

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at De Beauvoir Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at De Beauvoir Primary School will be offered places at local schools. Every parent is able to make a preference for an alternative school, so longer journeys to school may occur for some families that previously attended De Beauvoir Primary School. There are school places available within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for responses to be received is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

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If you would like to find out what this document says please tick the appropriate box, put your name, address and phone number at the bottom of this page and return it to the address below.

Bengali

এই দলিলে কি লেখা আছে সে সম্পর্কে যদি আপনি জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে উপযুক্ত বাক্সে টিক দিন, এই পাতার নিচে আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও ফোন নম্বর লিখুন এবং এটি নীচের ঠিকানায় ফেরত পাঠান।

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

Si vous désirez connaître le contenu de ce document, veuillez cocher la case appropriée et indiquer votre nom, adresse et numéro de téléphone au bas de cette page et la renvoyer à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous.

Spanish

Si desea saber de lo que trata este documento, marque la casilla correspondiente, escriba su nombre, dirección y número de teléfono al final de esta página y envíela a la siguiente dirección.

Kurdish

Ger hun dixwazin bizanibin ku ev dokument çî dibêje, ji kerema xwe qutîka minasib îşaret bikin, nav, navnîşan û hejmara telefona xwe li jêrê rûpel binivîsin û wê ji navnîşana jêrîn re bişînin.

Turkish

Bu dökümanda ne anlatıldığını öğrenmek istiyorsanız, lütfen uygun kutuyu işaretleyerek, adınızı, adresinizi ve telefon numaranızı bu sayfanın alt kısmına yazıp, aşağıdaki adrese gönderin.

Polish

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Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây.

Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

如果你想知道這分文件的詳細內容，請在方框內打鉤，在本頁下面寫下你的名字、地址和電話號碼並寄到下面的地址。

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Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Hackney Council is proposing to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School with effect from 31st August 2024.

The reason for this proposal is the significant fall in pupil numbers across Hackney, and at Randal Cremer Primary School. There are currently over 600 vacant Reception school places in Hackney primary schools. Fewer children in schools means less government funding for schools to operate, which over time creates significant financial pressure on schools.

The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School. Should the decision to discontinue the school be agreed, all children attending Randal Cremer Primary School will be offered a place in local schools for September 2024.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London, E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>.

If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

1a. Name, address and category of school proposed to be discontinued:

Randal Cremer Primary School (community school).
Ormsby Street, London, E2 8JG
Tel: 020 7739 8162
Email: admin@randalcremer.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

Randal Cremer Primary School will discontinue on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuation

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. More than two thirds of Hackney's maintained primary schools have budgeted for an in-year over spend at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. This trend is expected to continue as roll numbers continue to fall.

Randal Cremer Primary School has been seriously affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding. At the end of the financial year 2022/23 they reported a surplus of £310,032,

but the school has forecast a surplus at the close of 2023/24 of £189,537, meaning they project an overspend of £120,495 in the current financial year.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

Randal Cremer Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 45 in each year group, having reduced from 60 per year group in September 2022.

Randal Cremer Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	45	60	60	60	60	60	60	405
Roll (May 23)	30	27	34	43	29	35	44	242
No. of unfilled places	15	33	26	17	31	25	16	163
% of unfilled places	33%	55%	43%	28%	52%	42%	27%	40%

In May 2023, Randal Cremer Primary School had 23 children in its nursery, of which 14 were boys and 9 were girls.

SEND characteristics of children at Randal Cremer Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

We will offer each child currently attending the school a place in a primary school near to their home, that is Ofsted rated “good” or “outstanding”. Where possible we will place a child at the school preferred by the parents. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at Randal Cremer Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Randal Cremer Primary School	17	16	22	18	24	21	34	152

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to Randal Cremer Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at Randal Cremer Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
Randal Cremer Primary School	18	50

No interim arrangements are required for pupils.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of Randal Cremer Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - Randal Cremer Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at Randal Cremer Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at Randal Cremer Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Randal Cremer	17	7.0%	42	17.4%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals.

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at Randal Cremer Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at Randal Cremer Primary School will be offered places at local schools. Every parent is able to make a preference for an alternative school so longer journeys to school may occur for some families that previously attended Randal Cremer Primary School. There are school places available within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>,
by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for responses to be received is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

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If you would like to find out what this document says please tick the appropriate box, put your name, address and phone number at the bottom of this page and return it to the address below.

Bengali

এই দলিলে কি লেখা আছে সে সম্পর্কে যদি আপনি জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে উপযুক্ত বাক্সে টিক দিন, এই পাতার নিচে আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও ফোন নম্বর লিখুন এবং এটি নীচের ঠিকানায় ফেরত পাঠান।

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

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Kurdish

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Vietnamese

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Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

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Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School

Hackney Council publishes these proposals under section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013.

Hackney Council proposes to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School.

The number of children in each year group at Princess May Primary School will remain at 60. All children attending Colvestone Primary School will be offered a place at Princess May Primary School and Colvestone Primary School will discontinue. These changes will take effect from 31 August 2024.

This proposal is published on 6 October 2023. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London, E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate its students with Princess May Primary School.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>.

If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Name, address and category of school to be discontinued:

Colvestone Primary School (community school)
Colvestone Crescent, London, E8 2LG
Tel: 020 7254 1143
Email: office@colvestone.hackney.sch.uk

Name and address of school to amalgamate with Colvestone Primary School:

Princess May Primary School (community school)
Princess May Road, London, N16 8DF
Tel: 020 7254 1589
Email: admin@princessmay.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

Colvestone & Princess May Primary Schools will amalgamate on 31 August 2024.
Colvestone Primary School to be discontinued on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuance

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which

could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. Colvestone Primary School has been affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding.

Colvestone is not financially viable and ended the 2022/23 year with an extremely large deficit balance of £561,646.

In order to avoid unnecessary process duplication and to ensure efficient use of resources the council's finance department has not produced alternative financial modelling for Colvestone following the agreement with the school on the deployment of a SRMA (School Resource Management Adviser) report process. This was carried out by an independent SRMA.

Those in favour of keeping Colvestone open suggest the recent reporting supports a view that Colvestone can be financially viable in the future and has the capacity to pay down the deficit.

The local authority does not agree with this assessment, which includes a number of assumptions based on non-sustainable funding sources, and considers the school to be financially unviable. The SMRA expresses the view that the schools' "overall financial position is precarious. The school and SRMA have discussed potential ways the deficit could be reduced and the debt repaid to the Local Authority. School leadership has been and still is, very mindful of how efficiencies may impact pupil outcomes and teaching standards."

The SMRA's view is that it would be "extremely challenging" for the school to balance their budget and repay the current deficit over three/four years. They point out that "any chance of financial recovery heavily relies on strong incoming pupil numbers and current budgets are reliant on almost full cohorts of Reception children entering the school."

The local authority does not accept the statement made in the report that "the SRMA and school have discussed the pupil number forecasts with the LA, who advised that these numbers are not unrealistic." The local authority is firmly of the view that the projected number of children joining the school, on which the budget is based, are unrealistic. The budgets are based on 24 children joining reception in September 2023, 27 in 2024 and 30 in 2025. 14 children joined the school in the Reception class in September 2023.

The SRMA goes on to say "... it is evident that demand for Reception places is falling, with London Councils, the collective of London Councils, predicting a 12% decrease in demand for Reception places in Hackney between 22/23 and 26/27. Therefore, the forecasts may be unfeasible. The school can better gauge this once September 2023 numbers are confirmed."

The 3-year projected budget produced by the Senior Leadership Team (2023/24 - 2025/26) submitted in May 2023 projects a growing deficit as follows:

Year	Projected In Year deficit	Projected Cumulative deficit
2023/24	-27,615	-589,261
2024/25	-93,690	-682,951
2025/26	-110,540	-793,491

By the schools' own forecasts, despite an in year surplus in 22/23 of £28,319 (supported by a £50,000 mid year additional cash injection), they are unable to demonstrate capacity to address their outstanding deficit.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

Colvestone Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 30 in each year group, giving a total of 210 places across all year groups.

Colvestone Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210
Roll (May 23)	17	23	25	13	14	19	19	130
No. of unfilled places	13	7	5	17	16	11	11	80
% of unfilled places	43%	23%	17%	57%	53%	37%	37%	38%

In May 2023, Colvestone Primary School had 8 children in its nursery, of which 5 were girls and 3 were boys.

SEND characteristics of children at Colvestone Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

Colvestone Primary School is situated in the west of the borough in an area where there are several other alternative primary schools. Should the proposal be agreed, all children currently attending Colvestone Primary School would be offered places at Princess May Primary School if that is what they want. There is sufficient space at Princess May Primary School to accommodate the pupils currently on roll at Colvestone because the building can accommodate 420 pupils.

Should parents not wish their children to transfer to Princess May, there are vacancies across Reception to Year 6 in other Hackney primary schools. Parents can also express any alternative preferences for other schools through the in-year admissions process should they wish to do so. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at Colvestone Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Colvestone Primary School	14	16	24	26	12	13	16	121

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to Colvestone Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at Colvestone Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
Colvestone Primary School	6	37

There are no interim arrangements required for pupils at either school.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of Colvestone Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - Colvestone Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at Colvestone Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at Colvestone Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Colvestone	10	7.7%	21	16.2%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at Colvestone Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at Colvestone will be offered a place at Princess May Primary School, which is 0.4 miles away from Colvestone Primary School. Every parent however is able to make a preference for an alternative school so longer journeys may be necessary as a result of parental preference. There are alternative school places within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>,

by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for responses to be received is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

For more information on the proposal and to view translated copies of this document in Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at:

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Bengali

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Somali

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Spanish

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Kurdish

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Polish

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Urdu

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Chinese

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Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School

Hackney Council publishes these proposals under section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013.

Hackney Council proposes to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School.

The number of children in each year group at Nightingale Primary School will increase from 30 to 60. All children attending Baden Powell Primary School will be offered a place at Nightingale Primary School and Baden Powell Primary School will discontinue. These changes will take effect from 31 August 2024. This proposal is related to the separate proposal to expand Nightingale Primary School from 1 to 2 forms of entry. This can be found on:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>

This proposal is published on 6 October 2023. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London, E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate its students with Nightingale Primary School. This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals> If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>

If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Name, address and category of school to be discontinued:

Baden Powell Primary School (community school)
Ferron Road, London, E5 8DN
Tel: 020 8985 6176
Email: admin@baden-powell.hackney.sch.uk

Name and address of school to undergo a prescribed alteration

Nightingale Primary School
Tiger Way, London, E5 8NA
Tel: 0208 985 4259
Email: eibrahim@nightingale.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

Baden Powell & Nightingale Primary schools will amalgamate on 31 August 2024. Baden Powell Primary School to be discontinued on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuance

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which

could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. More than two thirds of Hackney’s maintained primary schools have budgeted for an in-year over spend at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. This trend is expected to continue as roll numbers continue to fall.

Baden Powell Primary School has been seriously affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding. At the end of the financial year 2022/23 they reported a modest surplus of £31,768, but the school has forecast a deficit position at the close of 2023/24 of £300,820, meaning they project an overspend of £332,588 in the current financial year alone.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

Baden Powell Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 30 in each year group, giving a total of 210 places across all year groups.

Baden Powell Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210
Roll (May 23)	17	19	28	24	23	28	29	168
No. of unfilled places	13	11	2	6	7	2	1	42
% of unfilled places	43%	37%	7%	20%	23%	7%	3%	20%

In May 2023 Baden Powell Primary School had 9 children in its nursery class, of which 5 were girls and 4 were boys.

SEND characteristics of children at Baden Powell Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

Baden Powell Primary School is situated in the centre of the borough, in an area where there are four alternative primary schools. Should the proposal be agreed, all children currently attending Baden Powell Primary School would be offered places at Nightingale Primary School, if that is what they want. There is sufficient space at Nightingale Primary School to accommodate the pupils currently on roll at Baden Powell because the building can accommodate 420 pupils. This means that Nightingale will formally increase from a 1FE to 2FE school from September 2024, without the need for expansion of the premises.

Should parents not wish their children to transfer to Nightingale, there are vacancies across years Reception to Year 6 in other Hackney primary schools. Parents can also express any alternative preferences for other schools through the in-year admissions process should they wish to do so. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at Baden Powell Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now

and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Baden Powell Primary School	20	19	19	28	25	25	27	163

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to Baden Powell Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at Baden Powell Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
Baden Powell Primary School	9	40

There are no interim arrangements required for pupils at either school.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of Baden Powell Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - Baden Powell Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at Baden Powell Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at Baden Powell Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Baden Powell	8	4.8%	22	13.1%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals.

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at Baden Powell Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at Baden Powell will be offered a place at Nightingale Primary School, which is 0.1 miles away from Baden Powell Primary School. Every parent however is able to make a preference for an alternative school so longer journeys may occur as a result of parental preference. There are alternative school places within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>,

by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for responses to be received is 3 November 2023 at 5pm.

For more information on the proposal and to view translated copies of this document in Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>

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Bengali

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Somali

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French

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Spanish

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Kurdish

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Polish

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Vietnamese

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Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

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Statutory Notice

Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)

Hackney Council publishes these proposals under section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and having regard to the DfE guidance 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools - Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers January 2023'.

This Notice is related to the separate Notice outlining the Council's proposal to amalgamate Baden Powell Primary School and Nightingale Primary School and the discontinuation of Baden Powell Primary School, which can be found at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. These Notices are published following a consultation which took place in June 2023. The proposed changes would take effect from 31 August 2024.

All children attending Baden Powell Primary School will be offered places at Nightingale Primary School, Tiger Way, London E5 8NA. Nightingale Primary School will expand from a one form entry school (30 children each year), to a two form entry school (60 children each year). The planned admission number across all year groups will be 420.

This proposal (the expansion of Nightingale Primary school from 1FE to 2FE) is published on 6 October 2023. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to amalgamate Baden Powell Primary School with Nightingale Primary School. This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at: <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the previous consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>. If you need this document to be translated into another language, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing us at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estate Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal increase Nightingale Primary school from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Name and address of school to undergo a prescribed alteration:

Nightingale Primary School (community school).
Tiger Way, London, E5 8NA
Tel: 020 8985 4259
Email: eibrahim@nightingale.hackney.sch.uk

2. Description of alteration and evidence of demand

Hackney proposes to increase the number of pupils at Nightingale Primary School, Tiger Way, London E5 8NA, with effect from 1 September 2024. Baden Powell Primary School will discontinue on 31 August 2024. Children at Baden Powell Primary School will be offered a place at Nightingale Primary School. Nightingale would move from a one form entry school admitting 30 children in each year to a two form entry school admitting 60. The change is proposed due to a decrease in the demand for primary places, with considerably fewer pupils in Hackney primary schools and across London as a whole.

There are currently over 600 vacant Reception school places in Hackney primary schools. Fewer children in schools means less government funding for schools to operate, which over time, creates significant financial pressure on schools. The amalgamation is being proposed due to a fall in pupil numbers across Hackney primary schools.

The Council wishes to provide high quality school places for all school aged children in the borough. Unless action is taken to reduce the number of vacant primary places, schools with falling rolls will be affected due to diminished access to resources and funding. Further information about falling rolls across London has been published by London Councils and can be accessed at: <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/children-and-young-people/education-and-school-places/managing-surplus-school-places>

3. Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there is a sufficient number of school places in its area. There are currently over 600 vacant school places in Hackney. The Council has consulted on proposals to reduce the number of vacant places 31 August 2024, by:

- Discontinuing two primary schools (De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer primary schools, and;
- Amalgamating a further four schools, to create two schools (Baden Powell Primary School with Nightingale Primary School, and Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School).

This Statutory Notice and full proposal outlines a prescribed alteration to Nightingale Primary School which will expand from 1FE to 2FE to accommodate the pupils from Baden Powell Primary School once it is discontinued on 31 August 2024.

If the Council allows the number of surplus places to remain at the current level through inaction, this would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which will have an impact on education. The quality of education and classroom support offered for children in these schools would deteriorate over time, as the affected schools would have to deplete surplus funds or go into deficit

to maintain their current education offer, thereby reducing parental choice in terms of access to good quality, viable schools.

4. The effect on other educational institutions within the area

This proposal forms part of a related proposal to amalgamate Baden Powell and Nightingale Primary Schools, which will reduce the number of vacant places in the local area.

5. Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved

There are no associated project costs for this proposal. The current Nightingale school site was built to accommodate 2FE in 2019, however the school has been operating as a 1FE. The proposed prescribed alteration to Nightingale Primary School would see the capacity of the school increased to 2FE from 1 September 2024 and result in the current building being more fully utilised as a result.

6. Implementation plan

The proposals are to be implemented by the Local Authority. It is intended that the proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1FE to 2FE will be implemented from 1 September 2024. This will enable the school to accommodate the pupils from Baden Powell Primary School arising from an amalgamation of both schools. For the 2024/25 academic year, Nightingale Primary School will admit up to 60 pupils across all year groups (Reception to Year 6). This will increase the school's PAN from 210 to 420.

7. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

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Bengali

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Somali

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French

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Spanish

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Kurdish

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Turkish

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Polish

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Vietnamese

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Urdu

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Chinese

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Appendix 2 – Copy Of Consultation Form

Response

Please use the comment boxes provided if you wish to comment on the proposals.

1. Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School

2. Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)

3. Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School

4. Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

5. Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Appendix 3 – Copies Of Large Submissions

Submission from Hackney NEU, Unite, Unison and GMB re school closure proposals.

As education trade unions we are aware of the difficult financial situation facing all schools due to inadequate central funding from government. We are also aware of the problem of falling rolls which is particularly acute in inner London boroughs such as Hackney. However, we are also acutely aware of the negative consequences resulting from closing schools and believe that this should be a last resort undertaken only when all other alternatives have been exhausted.

Negative consequences of closing schools.

These schools, and the staff who work in them, have been essential pillars of education in our community for decades. Their closure would be a big loss for students, parents, staff, and the local community.

Staff will be made redundant in the midst of a serious cost of living crises that has persisted for over two years. Many of these staff are low paid and nearing retirement and may not be able to find alternative employment in the short term. Given continuing high levels of inflation (food inflation is running at 8.8 percent at present) any period of unemployment will be very problematic.

Pupils who have built up relationships with staff and friendship groups with other students will be extremely distressed to lose these in what are their formative years in education. This will be especially traumatic for SEND students.

They will also suffer from a break in continuity of education as primary schools will develop their curriculum maps to cover all key stages. It is likely that other primary schools will have a different curriculum, and this could result in topics not being continued or being repeated.

Parents and carers will have developed a working relationship with their school and the staff within it. Routines, expectations, and relationships will have to be relearned and rebuilt. This will be a stressful and difficult experience for some of our parents and carers.

Benefits of smaller schools and smaller class sizes

The council report Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy – falling Rolls (May 23rd 2023) correctly states that “In accordance with DfE funding regulations, the majority of school funding must be allocated on the basis of pupil numbers. The impact of surplus places can be significant to a school’s overall budget” and that can lead to cuts in educational provision.

However, the positive implications of having reduced class sizes have been omitted from the report. As a recent Sutton Trust report has stated the UK has the largest class sizes in Europe* and all efforts should be made to arrest this trend. Research by the Education Endowment Federation suggests that “The average impact for reducing class size is around 2 months additional progress over the course of an academic year.”

As well as improved academic progress we would argue that smaller schools and smaller class sizes have the following benefits.

Tailored learning: With small classes, teachers can more easily monitor every pupil’s progress and tailor learning to each pupil. Teachers get to spend more individual time with each child, so they have a better idea of what they may need some extra support with. Pupils will also feel more confident talking to their teacher about any issues they are facing or areas of work they need some help with.

More social confidence: In smaller classes, pupils will usually feel more confident talking in front of a group. You also find with small schools, there is a greater sense of community and less cliques. The

community spirit between pupils helps children to socially interact better and feel safe to try new things and discover new interests.

Improved staff pupil relationships: At a school with a smaller community, teachers know more about their pupils, across their academic, emotional, and even medical needs. Sometimes at larger schools, problems impacting a child's mental health or other aspects of their life can be missed.

More inclusive: At smaller schools, unique characteristics are embraced more, and students who are less outgoing can feel more relaxed about being around peers and have a better chance of enjoying their school experience.

Improved parental-school relations: It is easier for parents to be more involved in the school community, whether that is having a quick chat with their child's teacher about their progress or getting involved with school events and social events. Many parents make friends with other parents or getting involved with events related to their hobbies.

Are alternative strategies being explored?

We have yet to see any evidence of any serious alternative strategies being explored beyond the schools attempting to deal with budget concerns and falling rolls individually in particular the use of the schools as resource basis for SEND provision within the mainstream.

There is a shortage of places for the SEND provision within Hackney and especially within mainstream settings. This trend is expected to continue as outlined in the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy 2023-2030 which predicts that "by 2023 we will require an additional 336 places in special provision by 2023 and a further 168 annually after that through to 2026 council has developed a forward thinking and inclusive strategy to deal with this." Furthermore, the report states that "Hackney currently sends 460 pupils out of the borough to independent provision and non-maintained special schools. These placements are expensive, and it is not always in the best interests of pupils when compared to attending local provision in their communities."

The council has developed a forward looking and inclusive strategy to deal with this which includes "Partnership working with mainstream Primary schools whose rolls are falling to seek viable solutions."

This could potentially alleviate some of the financial implications of falling rolls within these schools.

Conclusion

We believe that although the financial situation is difficult and falling rolls continue to be a concern more effort should be made to explore alternative solutions before any decision to close the school is taken. Unfortunately, the lack of any such suggestions as well as the unwillingness to discuss alternatives with concerned stakeholders such as parent campaign groups has led to a belief among parents and staff that the decision has already been made and the consultation process is a mere formality. This has led to parents removing student from the affected schools to alternative educational establishments (in some cases outside of the borough). This has compounded the problems facing these school.

We would urge you to postpone the decision to close the schools while a feasibility study is conducted on the possibility of utilizing some of the spare capacity for SEND resource bases.

Save Colvestone Campaign– Analysis of vacancies for each school Oct 23

The School Estates Strategy report seeks viable sustainable solutions and work with existing primary schools with falling rolls (2.1). The May Cabinet report highlighted that in January 2023 Reception vacancies were 21% and were projected to rise to 25% over the next few years (without taking any action). It stated that Hackney Council aims to operate with overall vacancy rates (across all year groups) between 5 - 10%. The May Cabinet report states that the proposal to close four schools (close two and merge four into two) will lead to a total reduction of 135 Reception places per year:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| • De Beauvoir closure | 30 places |
| • Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate | 30 places |
| • Baden Powel and Nightingale amalgamate | 30 places |
| • Randal Cremer closure | 45 places |

The September Cabinet report still refers to over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (21% surplus). This is based on the School Organisation Plan (SOP) which represents the formal Published Admissions Number for all schools. However, schools can request a temporary cap on their admissions and many schools are choosing to do this in response to falling rolls and to address potential deficit budgets. The Council process has acted as a catalyst for many schools to make those changes. In addition, it is important to acknowledge that school vacancy rates are rapidly changing as;

- Pupils move in and out of the borough
- Pupils move between schools.

The Council is trying to rationalise schools to reduce vacancies across the borough but it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system – free schools, academies, faith schools and even parents.

Parents can make choices within the school system and the Council does not have control of this. Parents will not necessarily take up the offer of guaranteed places. Children are not widgets and cannot simply be moved from one place to another.

The latest school vacancy data (circulated by LB Hackney Education on 19th September) shows very different figures than the May Cabinet report. It shows that there are 391 empty places in Reception classes which has reduced the vacancy rate to 14.5%. Across all year groups, the overall vacancy rate has reduced to 12.7% which is getting close to the target level.

The failure to account for up to date pupil numbers in the September Cabinet Report invalidates many of the suppositions in the report;

- The proposed outcomes (to reduce PAN) will not be achieved
- The vacancy rates are significantly higher in faith schools and the overall target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing vacancies in these schools
- There are insufficient places at the nearby schools to accommodate all the pupils being forced out of closing schools.

1. Proposed Outcomes

These proposals will not be as effective at reducing school places as initially anticipated, with a further reduction of only 60 places rather than 135 places.

a) De Beauvoir closure

SOP states that the PAN here is 30 for 2022-23 and 2023-24 but the school is actually operating with a temporary PAN of 15 per year - this is reflected in the latest vacancy rates. Therefore the proposed closure will only lead to a further reduction of 15 places.

b) Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Colvestone and 60 for Princess May so that closing Colvestone would reduce PAN by 30 places. However Princess May has already agreed a temporary reduction in its PAN from 60 to 30. If two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places!**

c) Baden Powell and Nightingale amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Baden Powell and 30 for Nightingale. The May Cabinet report states that the amalgamation of these two schools would reduce PAN by 30 places. However as stated above, if two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places.** This is acknowledged in the September Cabinet report as the PAN for Nightingale increases from 30 - 60 so no overall reduction.

Therefore this proposal seems to be about the better utilisation of school premises.

d) Randall Cremer closure

SOP states that the PAN for Randall Cremer is 45 and this is reflected in the latest school vacancy data. This proposal will lead to a reduction of 45 places.

2. Vacancies in Faith Schools

The latest school vacancy figures show that the vacancy rates in faith schools are significantly higher than in other schools. Across the borough there are 391 empty Reception places across all schools, and the vacancy rate is 14.5%. In the 14 faith schools, there are 136 empty Reception places - over $\frac{1}{3}$ of empty places in only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the schools. The vacancy rate for Reception places in faith schools is 30%!

For all year groups, the vacancy rate across the whole borough is 12.7%. When considering just faith schools, the vacancy rate for all year groups doubles to 24%.

If the poorly performing faith schools are excluded, then the overall vacancy rates across all other Hackney school types (free/community/academies) reduces to 11%, which is nearly at the target figure.

The Cabinet report acknowledges that the faith schools have responded to the crisis by reducing their Published Admissions Numbers (as other schools have done). It

also highlights that the Council has limited powers in relation to the faith schools - they can suggest reductions in PAN but cannot enforce any stronger measures such as closure or merger (as they have done with the community schools).

Looking at the above figures, the Council will not achieve its stated aim of 5 - 10% vacancy rate across the borough unless further action is taken in faith schools. It is neither sufficient nor appropriate to only take action in community schools. They must encourage the relevant faith bodies to have these conversations and make difficult decisions about their schools in Hackney as well, but there is no evidence of this in the Cabinet report.

3. Insufficient Places

The Cabinet report Appendix H presents useful information about the nearest schools and vacancies for each of the four schools proposed for closure. Appendix I to O presents a heat map of the families addresses against school vacancies for each year group. It concludes that across the borough there are sufficient vacancies for all children who need places.

The latest vacancy data shows that both Princess May and Holy Trinity school have restructured into one-form throughout all year groups and have minimal vacancies, which is a significant change to Appendices H - O.

A detailed analysis of vacancies at the nearby schools for all of the schools proposed for closure. It shows that parents are being forced to make very difficult decisions. There may be too many vacancies across the whole borough but in south west Hackney and Dalston there are not enough places at local community schools;

- The popular schools have very few vacancies which makes it very difficult for a family with children in different year groups
- Many of the vacancies are at faith schools which families do not want (evidenced by falling rolls and the Council's own survey where 84% respondents want non-faith schools).
- Some of the closest schools are out of borough – in Islington or Tower Hamlets.

4. Conclusion

This situation across Hackney schools has changed over the last six months The Council has announced that this is just the first wave of potential closures/mergers, and that more schools will be in scope soon. Schools are taking action to manage falling roll and ensure they do not deliver deficit budgets. Parents are also aware now that other schools will be selected for merger/closure in the 12 – 18 months so are very nervous about choosing a school with a lot of vacancies because it might be under threat in the future.

Despite the public engagement and feedback during the informal consultation this proposal has remained the same since it was first announced but;

- It is no longer based on the latest information
- It assumes that vacancies in community schools and faith schools are interchangeable (when they are not)
- It is forcing parents to choose faith schools or go out of the borough.

This proposal does not consider the specific circumstances for each of the proposed school closures. They are different and it is important that each proposal is assessed individually, in terms of the impact it will have on the Council target of reducing Reception places AND the affect on school options/ parental choice in that part of the borough.

5. Our Response

DEMAND: Urgently review latest vacancy data for each proposed school closure and not the borough as a whole.

DEMAND: Each of the proposed school closures is considered and assessed as a separate recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION: Do not close one of the Dalston one-form community schools but explore a potential merger ASAP.

Appendix One: Detailed Analysis of vacancy data for each affected school

a) Proposed Closure of Baden Powell

Here is the latest vacancy data for the schools closest to Baden Powell. The data has not changed significantly since report was published. Although Benthall appears to have restructured Year 2 as vacancies have reduced from 30 to 1, and maybe considering this for other year groups, (ie Y5) as well. The table below shows data for the seven closest schools as those are sufficient to meet the demand for places and provide a range of choices.

School	Distance as crow flies	Walking Time	Type of School	Forms	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Baden Powell PUPILS			LA	One	20	19	19	28	25	25	17
Nightingale	0.1	2 mins	LA	One*	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
St Scholastica's	0.22	6 mins	RC	One	2	11	1	0	4	13	1
Millfield's	0.31	8 mins	LA	Three	1	0	2	7	3	1	0
Benthall	0.33	10 mins	LA	Two	23	31	1	26	18	33	21
Northwold	0.43	15 mins	LA	Two	27	23	25	16	15	11	16
Southwold	0.43	14 mins	LA	Two	13	3	8	9	5	15	15
Rushmore	0.49	13 mins	LA	Two	0	0	2	2	3	2	2

- The proposal is to increase Nightingale to two form school and take all the pupils from Baden Powell.

Are there enough vacancies in local schools? YES

The expansion of Nightingale means that all children can have a place there. There is sufficient capacity to accommodate larger families with children in multiple year groups and friendship groups. Also there are spaces in most year groups in other nearby schools if parents want to choose a different option.

Is there parental choice for the options?

Baden Powell is a one-form community school. Most of the neighbouring schools are also community schools although they are larger – two or three form entry. The only one form school is a Roman Catholic school. The nearest CofE school is St John and St James which is 0.75 miles and a 16 minute walk although this has minimal vacancies.

Risk of future closure

If Nightingale increase to two-form but not all the children from Baden Powell take the places on offer then it places Nightingale in a difficult situation. It may have increased its capacity to two-form provision (including having additional staff) but be operating well below capacity with high vacancy rates – this may not be financially sustainable.

Based on the figures above, there is clearly still an issue with high level of vacancies in this area of the borough as three of the two form schools nearby are struggling to fill vacancies. Benthall and Northwold are both NW of Baden Powell and Southwold is NE, and it is highly likely that one or more of these school may be under threat in the future.

b) Proposed Closure of Randel Cremer

Here is the latest vacancy data for the schools closest to Randell Cremer. The data has not changed significantly since report was published. Although St John the Baptist appears to have restructured Year 3 and Year 6 into single forms as vacancies have reduced from 30 to 3 (Y3) and 30 to 0 (Y6), and maybe considering this for other year groups (ie Y Rec) as well.

There are still 118 pupils (excluding Year 6) who need to find new school places if this proposal goes ahead. During the last 12 months, 89 pupils have left the school – presumably most of them in the last six months since these proposals were announced.

	School	Distance as crow flies	Walking Time	Type of School	Forms	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
	Randal Cremer PUPILS			LA	Was Two	17	16	22	18	24	21	34
1	Hoxton Garden	0.26	8 mins	LA	Two	4	12	0	6	7	13	18
2	Columbia	0.34	12 mins	LA - TH	Two	2	2	0	3	7	4	0
3	St Monica's	0.39	13 mins	RC	One	15	7	5	5	5	3	4
4	Sebright	0.4	11 mins	LA	Two	0	1	0	0	7	3	7
5	St John the Baptist	0.41	13 mins	CofE	Two	37	21	21	3	24	25	0
6	Virginia	0.45	13 mins	LA - TH	One	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
7	Queensbridge	0.46	14 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	0	0	10	2
8	Shoreditch Park	0.48	16 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
9	St Pauls with St Michael's	0.52	14 mins	CoFE	One	0	3	5	1	3	8	11
10	Hackney New	0.56	13mins	Free	Two	0	2	0	0	0	10	6
						58	48	31	18	54	79	53
11	Elizabeth Selby Inf/ Lawdale Junior	0.6	19 mins	LA - TH	Two	9	4	4	0	13	4	7
12	St Matthias	0.65*										
13	Thomas Fairchild**	0.69	20 mins	LA	One	3	0	5	6	1	34	30
14	William Davis	0.7	20 mins	LA- TH		12	12	0	1	14	3	1
15	London Fields	0.72	23 mins	LA	Two	0	1	0	0	0	4	5
16	Rotherfield	0.76	23 mins	LA - Is		22	15	12	11	18	16	18

17	Holy Trinity	0.8	24 mins	CofE	One	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
18	St Luke's	0.84	28 mins	CofE - IS		5	1	0	0	0	2	0
19	Gayhurst	0.85	24 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
20	Our Lady & St Joseph	0.86	23 mins	RC		0	0	5	0	0	0	0
	Colvestone	1.09	28 mins	LA	One	18	14	5	3	5	1	14

- * St Mattias is not 0.65 miles but 1.32 miles away so this should not be included as a nearby, unless it was the similarly named school in Bethnal Green, TH but this closed in August 2021.
- ** Thomas Fairchild has Ofsted rating Requires Improvement so not an attractive choice and has also restructured the school from two form to one (except Y5 & Y6?).

Are there enough vacancies in local schools? JUST

There are no schools very close to Randal Cremer but there are lots of schools within a 10 – 15 minute walk in all directions and the top ten are shown above. Looking at just the numbers, then there are sufficient spaces in the nearby schools for all the Randal Cremer pupils – but only just in the case of Year 3.

Is there parental choice for the options?

Randal Cremer is a two-form community school. The closest school is also a two-form community school but surprisingly it has not yet filled up suggesting that local families are not keen on it for some reason. The other local two-form community Hackney schools (Sebright, Queensbridge, and Shoreditch Park) only have a few vacancies and mostly in Year 5 and Year 6 – the lower years are almost full. There are also a small number of vacancies in Tower Hamlets community schools (Columbia and Virginia).

The largest number of vacancies are in faith schools – one Roman Catholic and two Church of England.

Are there other schools further away that provide options (the ten closest schools)?

- Two Tower Hamlet community schools (Elizabeth Selby/Lawdale and William Davis) have vacancies in most years but only 1 in Year 3
- Thomas Fairchild has vacancies in most years inc Year 3 but Ofsted has this as Requires Improvement
- London Fields and Gayhurst has minimal vacancies
- Holy Trinity, Our Lady and St Josephs RC and St Luke's (Islington) are much church schools but have minimal vacancies
- Rotherfield a community school in Islington has plenty of vacancies
- Colvestone is further away but both schools are close to the A10 and the regular buses (13 mins by public transport) means this could be a realistic alternative.

Based on the above list, parents will be forced to choose between a faith school fairly close by or to travel further away to a non-faith school. It is likely that quite a lot of families will choose schools out of borough.

Risk of future closure

This is more uncertain as it depends on where Randal Cremer pupils move to. There are church schools that have high levels of vacancies and may be under threat in the future. Personally, I would also be very concerned about Rotherfield in Islington as we know that other London Boroughs are also looking at school capacity.

c) Proposed Closure of De Beauvoir and Colvestone

Here is the latest vacancy data for the schools closest to De Beauvoir and Colvestone schools. They have similar catchments areas so the top ten closest schools for both of them has led to a list of 13 schools in total. **The vacancy data has changed significantly since the Appendices to the report were produced as Holy Trinity and Princess May have recently restructured.**

	School	Walking Time (De B)	Walking Time (Colv)	Type of School	Forms	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
	De Beauvoir PUPILS		8 mins	LA	One	6	7	8	8	10	10	17
	Colvestone PUPILS	8 mins		LA	One	12	16	24	26	12	13	16
	TOTAL PUPILS					18	23	32	34	22	23	33
2	Our Lady & St Josephs	2 mins	10 mins	RC	One	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
2	St Jude & St Paul's	6 mins	10 mins	CofE - Islington	One	14	10	11	8	28	6	11
3	Halley House	16 mins	7 mins	Free	One*	0	9	4	0	2	13	9
4	Holy Trinity	8 mins	8 mins	CofE	One**	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
5	Shacklewell	18 mins	9 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
6	Princess May	16 mins	8 mins	LA	One***	0	11	13	0	9	0	1
7	St Matthias	16 mins	11 mins	CofE	One	10	17	5	7	9	9	6
8	Newington Green	12 mins	13 mins	LA - Islington	Two	5	6	7	12	2	15	15
9	Hackney New	12 mins	20 mins	Free	Two	0	2	0	0	0	10	6
10	Mossbourne Parkside	20 mins	12 mins	Academy	Two****	0	10	0	0	3	4	5
11	Queensbridge	17 mins	19 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	0	0	10	2
12	Grasmere		20 mins	LA	One	0	0	0	0	0	8	0
13	Gayhurst		20 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
	Total Vacancies					29	68	45	29	53	75	61
	Total Vacancies					10	52	27	9	23	54	35

(exc two Islington)														
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- * Halley House has reduced to one form except Year 5 which still has two forms
- ** Holy Trinity has restructured from two forms to one form for all year groups
- *** Princess May has restructured from two forms to one form for all year groups
- **** Two form throughout the school but reduced to one form for Year R

Are there enough vacancies in local schools? NO

Based on current vacancy figures, then there are not enough vacancies at local schools to accommodate all the pupils from Colvestone and De Beauvoir, particularly in Year 3. If you exclude the two Islington schools, then situation is significantly worse with a shortage of places in Reception, Year 2, Year 3, and Year 4 (see yellow highlights above).

Is there parental choice for the options?

De Beauvoir and Colvestone are both one-form community schools. If they both close, then there are NO similar schools nearby. There are four faith schools in the above list (one Roman Catholic and three Church of England) and a large number of the vacancies are at two of them. The five Hackney community schools (Shacklewell, Princess May, Grasmere, Gayhurst and Queensbridge) have some (often very limited) in each year but would not be able to accommodate a family with children in different year groups. There are three academy or free schools which all have small number of vacancies and two Islington schools which both have a higher number of vacancies.

Parents cannot all choose a community school (even a larger one) and will be forced to make compromises. Without alternative options, many will be forced to send their children out of borough.

Risk of future closure

The current proposal guarantees a place at Princess May for Colvestone pupils, if they want it. Many Colvestone families have clearly indicated that they are not interested in Princess May so it is unknown how many places would be needed. After restructuring at Princess May, they are already oversubscribed in Year 3, which is the year group with the least spaces.

continues to struggle to retain pupils and even if Colvestone pupils move there, it seems as though there will be a risk that this school will be under threat in the future.

Looking at the above figures, it seems very likely that the London Diocesan School Board will be looking at potential mergers and it is likely that both St Jude and St Pauls and St Matthias schools would be suggested.

Save Colvestone Primary School



**Final consultation
submission**

3 November 2023

Should you have any
queries, please email:
colvestonesos@gmail.com

Written and
prepared by
Colvestone
parents and
carers

The following report refers to the following documents in these abbreviated forms:

Statutory Guidance for opening and closing maintained schools (Central Government, published January 2023) – referred to here as ‘Statutory Guidance’

Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy 2021-2031 (Hackney Council, adopted February 2022) – referred to as ‘Estate Strategy’

“Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy – falling rolls” Briefing Report (Hackney Education / Deputy Mayor Bramble, May 2023) – referred to as the ‘Briefing Report’

“Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission – Response to Informal Consultation” (Cllr Conway and Cllr Gordon authors, July 2023) – referred to as ‘CYP Scrutiny Report’

“Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy – falling rolls” Briefing Report (Hackney Education / Deputy Mayor Bramble, September 2023) – referred to as the ‘Briefing Report – Informal Consultation’

“Statutory Notice: Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School and accompanying letter to parents”, published 6th October (author: David Court, Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy) – referred to as ‘Statutory Notice’

Introduction

This document challenges the proposals and their underlying claims on multiple grounds (and identifying the risks should the Council continue with its proposals) and responds to current data not made available either to the public or elected decision makers through the consultation process. Whilst it incorporates evidence presented for the 'pre-informal' and 'informal' stages of the consultation, it augments this evidence with new research to consolidate challenges and rebuttals to claims made by Hackney Education in the *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* and the *Statutory Notice*. Crucially this submission includes up-to-date analysis of place data in the borough that significantly challenges the underlying rationale of the proposals and the capacity of the proposals to achieve their stated aims. It also includes, for example, an assessment of the child yield from the Dalston Plan developments (and the relevant timeframes) that are of specific relevance to Colvestone as the nearest primary school provision to all sites – data that Hackney Council have consistently refused to produce or to address its specific impacts on potential place demand at Colvestone in the short, mid- and long-term (as required by Statutory Guidance).

Throughout this process it has been extremely difficult to get underlying data for claims made in the public consultation documents produced by Hackney Education for this consultation, often despite repeated requests (written, in public meetings, at Cabinet meetings, at the CYP Scrutiny Commission, etc.). Where these have not been forthcoming, Council and GLA tools and datasets have been used to produce this data such that it can be scrutinised – forming the basis for many of the rebuttals and challenges to Hackney Education claims in this document. This new research represents vital data that should have been made publicly available, such that the consultation of stakeholders and elected officials could have been conducted in an informed way. It is our conclusion that the way that the consultation has been framed, the limited information available and the failure to address the specific contexts, locality and circumstances of each school in frame as a separate proposal have made informed consultation and scrutiny of each of the proposals impossible.

We agree that Hackney Council has to address the issue of falling rolls, but we insist that this should be done in an informed, holistic and consultative fashion. Parental choice will be a key determinant in the success or failure of any proposed re-organisation of education in the borough; attempting to understand what families will do if faced with a number of possible proposals is vital in assessing which combination of *potential* proposals will achieve the desired aims. Throughout this consultation, no alternatives have been offered or consulted on, even when directly requested: the consultation has been presented from the outset as a set of fixed proposals (apparently bound to one-another) with only a limited number of alternative proposals already discounted at the outset without evidence of research to be conducted to assess viability (or to sufficiently justify their dismissal). This, and the timings of each stage of the consultation process, appear designed to be as damaging as possible to the schools in frame (a claim supported by the *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation*, p.32 – 'Impact of the proposals on current enrolment' – though of course these figures fail to account for the chilling effect of the public consultation on transfers and enrolments into the schools in scope).

It should not be understated how fundamental a change in Hackney's education provision it is that these proposals represent. Councillor Bramble, statutory Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care in whose name these proposals are made, stated at Cabinet that none of her team had working experience of closing a single school: the proposed closure of four local authority schools at the same time in Hackney is, as far as we can make out, unprecedented in the borough. It constitutes the elimination of over 10% of local authority primary schools in the borough in one decision, whilst at the same time denying the possibility of learning from the consequences of successive, individual closures (not least in understanding choices that families make). This slashing of education provision in the borough also foreshadows further closure proposals forthcoming in the borough should these be carried out – a list that contains 16 further schools, we are told. The place data analysis in this document shows how these proposals will already fail to have the desired consequences – *if* the desired consequences are, as stated, the reduction of surplus places and the strengthening of remaining LA schools in the borough. Increasing flight of families from the borough and the education provision share of academy and free schools run for-profit, we are told, is not a policy aim of Hackney Labour – but if this is what the proposals do, what then?

Because the gravity of the re-organisation of education in Hackney represented by these proposals is underscored by one further danger: there is no going back. Under 'free school presumption' a local authority cannot open a local authority school – new schools will automatically be free schools run by the for-profit sector, with Hackney Council forced to give over the historic (or modern) school buildings to the private company, along with all oversight on how the school is managed and what they teach, on a long lease without generating any rental income (and yet incurring costs) for the Council: in the case of Haggerston School (2023), the academy trust was granted a 125 year lease on the school's Grade II listed buildings on a peppercorn rent. 'Free school presumption' also prevents the Council from merging and amalgamating schools, as it cannot close two schools and open a new one with integrated staff, ethos, and a new identity. It can only close schools (or protect them). It is unclear therefore, after references to 'mergers' and 'amalgamations' of schools was eliminated in the *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation*, why that language has been re-introduced in the *Statutory Notice* letter sent to parents. This danger is clearly outlined in the Council's own Estate Strategy (that frames this consultation) that warns against such actions, and why it advocates protecting schools that may have increased demand in the future.

This report incorporates new data, analysis and the specific case for the preservation and protection of Colvestone Primary School that follows from it. For clarity, this submission also includes a detailed report itemising the numerous instances and contexts in which the consultation has failed to follow the Constitution of Hackney Council, which protects the interests of its constituents, and that would be the basis for Calling In any decision made at Cabinet. Further, it includes a Pre-Action Protocol Letter for Judicial Review prepared for the Save Colvestone campaign group by their legal representation that outlines the basis for taking any adverse decision made in respect of Colvestone Primary School by Hackney Council to Judicial Review. It also includes a point-by-point responses to the Council's 'Response to consultation feedback (Informal Consultation)' document included as an Annex to the *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* alongside representations made to the informal formal consultation and the summary document produced by Kwest for the consultation process.

In high-level summary, this submission shows that:

- Lack of local places (the proposals cut provision in a local area too deep, leaving displaced pupils without non-faith, in-borough local authority provision / flight from borough.
- Unprecedented cuts, ill-informed, not meaningfully consulted, will not achieve aims
- Despite persistent requests, there remains no cost-benefit analysis of each of the individual proposals. The Council-produced Briefing Reports make clear that the schools in frame are academically strong and that the quality of education provision is not a determining factor of the schools being in scope: the underpinning rationale for the proposals must therefore be financial (unless there exists some undisclosed ideological motivation). As the 'Bases for Calling In' (Chapter 3) chapter makes clear, closing a school is hugely costly, and this report identifies multiple additional costs not budgeted for in any of the consultation documents prepared by the Council – revealing the likely costs declared by the Council for realising the proposals to be a substantial under-estimation.
- This report fundamentally disputes the conclusions claimed by Hackney Education as to the financial viability of the school, asserting that selective reading and quoting has failed to give the true picture of Colvestone's finances and future viability.
- New research establishes the short, medium and long term need for primary school places in the immediate vicinity of Colvestone Primary School.

The chapters that follow establish the financial, educational, legal and social case for keeping Colvestone Primary School open, and establishes why this path would best serve the declared aims of the Proposals under consultation.

Chapter Index

1. Analysis of current vacancy and place data: consequences, recommendations, underlying data
2. The Case for Colvestone
3. Failure to consult in adherence to Hackney Council's Constitution: bases for Calling In any adverse decision on Colvestone Primary School.
4. Failure to conduct a legal consultation: Pre-Action Protocol Letter for Judicial Review prepared for the Save Colvestone campaign group by our legal representation
5. Annex A: Informal Consultation responses including expert testimony
6. Annex B: Summary of informal consultation findings, prepared by Kwest (Appendix P, Briefing Report, Informal Consultation)

Chapter 1. Analysis of current vacancy and place data: consequences, recommendations and underlying data

The School Estates Strategy report seeks viable sustainable solutions and work with existing primary schools with falling rolls (2.1). The May Cabinet report highlighted that in January 2023 Reception vacancies were 19% and were projected to rise to 23% by 2025/6, falling back to 20% prior to 2031 (without taking any action, and without accounting for Council / borough housebuilding projects, and assuming the current proposals don't cause further family flight from the borough. Figures: *Statutory Notice*). It stated that Hackney Council aims to operate with overall vacancy rates (across all year groups) between 5 – 10%. The May Cabinet report states that the proposal to close four schools (close two and merge four into two) will lead to a total reduction of 135 Reception places per year:

- De Beauvoir closure 30 places
- Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate 30 places
- Baden Powel and Nightingale amalgamate 30 places
- Randal Cremer closure 45 places

The September Cabinet report still refers to over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (21% surplus). This is based on the School Organisation Plan (SOP) which represents the formal Published Admissions Number for all schools. However, schools can request a temporary cap on their admissions and many schools are choosing to do this in response to falling rolls and to address potential deficit budgets. The Council process has acted as a catalyst for many schools to make those changes. In addition, it is important to acknowledge that school vacancy rates are rapidly changing as;

- Pupils move in and out of the borough
- Pupils move between schools.

The Council is trying to rationalise schools to reduce vacancies across the borough but it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system – free schools, academies, faith schools and even parents.

Parents can make choices within the school system and the Council does not have control of this. Parents will not necessarily take up the offer of guaranteed places. Children are not widgets and cannot simply be moved from one place to another.

The latest school vacancy data (circulated by LB Hackney Education on 19th September) shows very different figures than the May Cabinet report. It shows that there are 391 empty places in Reception classes which has reduced the vacancy rate to 14.5%. Across all year groups, the overall vacancy rate has reduced to 12.7% which is getting close to the target level.

The failure to account for up to date pupil numbers in the September Cabinet Report invalidates many of the suppositions in the report:

- The proposed outcomes (to reduce PAN) will not be achieved
- The vacancy rates are significantly higher in faith schools and the overall target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing vacancies in these schools
- There are insufficient places at the nearby schools to accommodate all the pupils being forced out of closing schools.

1. Proposed Outcomes

These proposals will not be as effective at reducing school places as initially anticipated, with a further reduction of only 60 places rather than 135 places.

a) De Beauvoir closure

SOP states that the PAN here is 30 for 2022-23 and 2023-24 but the school is actually operating with a temporary PAN of 15 per year – this is reflected in the latest vacancy rates. Therefore the proposed closure will only lead to a further reduction of 15 places.

b) Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Colvestone and 60 for Princess May so that closing Colvestone would reduce PAN by 30 places. However Princess May has already agreed a temporary reduction in its PAN from 60 to 30. If two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places!**

c) Baden Powell and Nightingale amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Baden Powell and 30 for Nightingale. The May Cabinet report states that the amalgamation of these two schools would reduce PAN by 30 places. However as stated above, if two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places.** This is acknowledged in the September Cabinet report as the PAN for Nightingale increases from 30 – 60 so no overall reduction.

Therefore this proposal seems to be about the better utilisation of school premises.

d) Randall Cremer closure

SOP states that the PAN for Randall Cremer is 45 and this is reflected in the latest school vacancy data. This proposal will lead to a reduction of 45 places.

2. Vacancies in Faith Schools

The latest school vacancy figures show that the vacancy rates in faith schools are significantly higher than in other schools. Across the borough there are 391 empty Reception places across all schools, and the vacancy rate is 14.5%. In the 14 faith schools, there are 136 empty Reception places – over $\frac{1}{3}$ of empty places in only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the schools. The vacancy rate for Reception places in faith schools is 30%!

For all year groups, the vacancy rate across the whole borough is 12.7%. When considering just faith schools, the vacancy rate for all year groups doubles to 24%.

If the poorly performing faith schools are excluded, then the overall vacancy rates across all other Hackney school types (free/community/academies) reduces to 11%, which is nearly at the target figure.

The Cabinet report acknowledges that the faith schools have responded to the crisis by reducing their Published Admissions Numbers (as other schools have done). It also highlights that the Council has limited powers in relation to the faith schools – they can suggest reductions in PAN but cannot enforce any stronger measures such as closure or merger (as they have done with the community schools).

Looking at the above figures, the Council will not achieve its stated aim of 5 – 10% vacancy rate across the borough unless further action is taken in faith schools. It is neither sufficient nor appropriate to only take action in community schools. They must encourage the relevant faith bodies to have these conversations and make difficult decisions about their schools in Hackney as well, but there is no evidence of this in the Cabinet report.

3. Insufficient Places

The Cabinet report Appendix H presents useful information about the nearest schools and vacancies for each of the four schools proposed for closure. Appendix I to O presents a heat map of the families addresses against school vacancies for each year group. It concludes that across the borough there are sufficient vacancies for all children who need places.

The latest vacancy data shows that both Princess May and Holy Trinity school have restructured into one-form throughout all year groups and have minimal vacancies, which is a significant change to Appendices H-O.

A detailed analysis of vacancies at the nearby schools for all of the schools proposed for closure. It shows that parents are being forced to make very difficult decisions. There may be too many vacancies across the whole borough but in south west Hackney and Dalston there are not enough places at local community schools;

- The popular schools have very few vacancies which makes it very difficult for a family with children in different year groups
- Many of the vacancies are at faith schools which families do not want (evidenced by falling rolls and the Council's own survey where 84% respondents want non-faith schools).
- Some of the closest schools are out of borough – in Islington or Tower Hamlets.

4. Conclusion

This situation across Hackney schools has changed over the last six months. The Council has announced that this is just the first wave of potential closures/mergers, and that more schools will be in scope soon. Schools are taking action to manage falling roll and ensure they do not deliver deficit budgets. Parents are also aware now that other schools will be selected for merger/closure in the 12 – 18 months so are very nervous about choosing a school with a lot of vacancies because it might be under threat in the future.

Despite the public engagement and feedback during the informal consultation this proposal has remained the same since it was first announced but;

- It is no longer based on the latest information
- It assumes that vacancies in community schools and faith schools are interchangeable (when they are not)
- It is forcing parents to choose faith schools or go out of the borough.

This proposal does not consider the specific circumstances for each of the proposed school closures. They are different and it is important that each proposal is assessed individually, in terms of the impact it will have on the Council target of reducing Reception places AND the affect on school options/ parental choice in that part of the borough.

5. Our Response

DEMAND: Urgently review latest vacancy data for each proposed school closure and not the borough as a whole.

DEMAND: Each of the proposed school closures is considered and assessed as a separate recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION: Do not close one of the Dalston one-form community schools but explore a potential merger ASAP.

Appendix One: Detailed Analysis of vacancy data for each affected school

a) Proposed Closure of Baden Powell

Here is the latest vacancy data for the schools closest to Baden Powell. The data has not changed significantly since the report was published. Although Benthall appears to have restructured Year 2 as vacancies have reduced from 30 to 1, and maybe considering this for other year groups, (ie Y5) as well. The table below shows data for the seven closest schools as those are sufficient to meet the demand for places and provide a range of choices.

School	Distance as crow flies	Walking Time	Type of School	Forms	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Baden Powell PUPILS			LA	One	20	19	19	28	25	25	17
Nightingale	0.1	2 mins	LA	One*	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
St Scholastica's	0.22	6 mins	RC	One	2	11	1	0	4	13	1
Millfield's	0.31	8 mins	LA	Three	1	0	2	7	3	1	0
Benthall	0.33	10 mins	LA	Two	23	31	1	26	18	33	21
Northwold	0.43	15 mins	LA	Two	27	23	25	16	15	11	16
Southwold	0.43	14 mins	LA	Two	13	3	8	9	5	15	15
Rushmore	0.49	13 mins	LA	Two	0	0	2	2	3	2	2

- The proposal is to increase Nightingale to two form school and take all the pupils from Baden Powell.

Are there enough vacancies in local schools? YES

The expansion of Nightingale means that all children can have a place there. There is sufficient capacity to accommodate larger families with children in multiple year groups and friendship groups. Also there are spaces in most year groups in other nearby schools if parents want to choose a different option.

Is there parental choice for tptts that closing and amalgamating all six schools will cost £3.5 million in the first year alone. It warns that those costs are likely to go up, and in fact they already have, as the report fails to account for £100k in retention bonuses for Colvestone. Amongst multiple other costs detailed in Chapter 3, the Briefing Reports fail to account for the possibility of increased out-of-borough SEN provision (£35/50-70,000 per student per year) if SEND students in Colvestone are not able to make the transition or thrive in a busier, larger environments. No budgetary provision has been made for the costs of facilitating (even successful, Hackney local authority) SEN and EHCP transfers and access. While Hackney Education did estimate redundancy costs at £1.6 million, it has only belatedly reached out to the schools to get HR data (therefore not informing the public Briefing Reports), so the accuracy of the estimate is highly questionable (carrying 'significant risks of being higher...', p.43, *Briefing Report*). It also does not account for loss of revenue to the borough if families leave the borough or go to free schools, academies or private schools, or the effect this has on the stated aim of reducing surplus places in the LA system. Colvestone's deficit and restrictive covenants on the building make it a particularly expensive school to close, one that could cost the borough for years to come (moth-balling a school site is estimated at between £250-300,000), and for which non-education repurposing is extremely difficult – if not explicitly forbidden in the case of Colvestone – see discussion of protections in this Chapter and Chapter 3. The only other alternatives (i.e. the creation or gifting of the site to a for-profit free school / academy MAT operating outside of local authority control) for the site appear to run explicitly contrary to all of the declared aims of the proposals under consultation.

Colvestone provides strong SEND support and is well situated on a quiet street for SEND children. By losing this school, SEN Children who struggle with the transition to Princess May (a much larger school on a busy main road) and may have to be sent out of the borough to private schools (at cost of £35-70,000 per pupil per year) and some will be at risk of being lost to education provision altogether.

In discussions with Planning officials at recent Dalston Plan engagement events it was clear that Colvestone, as the closest primary school provision, was central to the infrastructure for these major homebuilding sites. Why have Planning not been more actively engaged by the Education department in the drawing up of these proposals – specifically as they relate to Colvestone?

It is not clear in either the Briefing Report or the risk assessment why absolute faith is being placed in GLA projections population figures when in 2017 the projections were wrong. Predictions of a shortfall of provision that led to the disastrous greenlighting of free schools in the Borough largely produced the current problem. Shouldn't, following Estate Strategy, viable schools be supported through this period to see what actually happens particularly, in Colvestone's case, given the scale of housebuilding projected in central Dalston?

If the consultation process demonstrates strong objections to the Council's plans (90% of the hundreds of responses received to the Informal Consultation are explicitly against the proposals), but those plans go forward without change, it will appear the Council was lying when it said repeatedly, publicly, that no decision had been made. People will see that the Council consultation was phony because the Council never had any intention of listening to the community, which could significantly erode people's faith in democratic process generally and in this Council and in the Labour Party in particular.

Finally, there is the damage that closing Colvestone would do to the community. The impact of this is hard to quantify, but in a time of continual loss and stress—COVID, the deterioration of public services, the threat of climate change and the associated weather extremes—closing institutions that function as social binders will further exacerbate exactly the kind of social atomisation and flight of families from the Borough that the closures are meant to address. It threatens the mental well being of children in particular, driving phenomena such as Emotionally Based School Avoidance.

Dalston is in the eye of this storm, and closing one of the institutions that is integral to people's connection to the area for generations proposes to initiate a death spiral of lost identification, lost provision and further flight. Small local schools and the generations with attachments to them are key to holding communities together. If the Labour Council moves to destroy this alongside the closure of nearby De Beauvoir, it commits to generations of damage to Dalston – and to the Council's persistent claims to be a Council and Mayoralty that listens to its residents and acts in their best interests.

Flaws in the consultation process

There are multiple instances where the consultation process has failed to follow or deliberately misrepresents both the Statutory Guidance (Statutory Guidance for opening and closing maintained schools, published January 2023) and the Council's own Estate Strategy (Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy 2021-2031, adopted February 2022) under which the consultation is held. Many of these errors have been repeated in the public forums where the consultation has been discussed by elected officials and representatives of Hackney Education. In addition, both the informal and formal consultation process has been inaccessible and ineffective as well as financially and emotionally damaging to the schools. Examples of these flaws are highlighted below, and are detailed in greater detail where they relate to adherence to Hackney Council's constitution (Chapter 3) and the legal responsibilities inherent upon the Council when conducting a public consultation (Chapter 4). Many of these criticisms are also raised by the Council's own Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission Report to the Informal Consultation which as yet has not been responded to in detail by the Council.

Key flaws in the process

- The consultation failed follow the statutory guidance and estate strategy
- The Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet was ill informed and lacking detail
- We were told the consultation was intended to help the Council determine whether to close the schools, but its design made it ineffective for that purpose
- The consultation was inaccessible to some of the groups that should have been included
- The consultation process itself damaged the financial viability of the schools in scope

Failure to follow Statutory Guidance and / or the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy 2021-2031 under which this consultation is proposed

The “Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy – falling rolls” Briefing Report (subsequently referred to here as the “Briefing Report”) produced by Hackney Education / Deputy Mayor Bramble describes, frames and justifies the current consultation to both the public and to the key officials in Cabinet who voted to enter into the current ‘informal consultation’ phase. Instances where it fails to follow the Statutory Guidance or the adopted Estate Strategy that empowers the consultation are therefore highly problematic. It should also be noted that these misrepresentations and/or failures have not been corrected when challenged and frame the ‘informal consultation’.

In the Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet members prior to the vote to proceed to informal consultation, clause 3.5 addresses the need to consider “school place demand in the short to medium term”; however both the Statutory Guidance (p.23) and the Council’s own Strategy document that incorporates it (p.16, also quoted in our own submission during the pre-informal consultation) state that potential demand for places must be considered in the “mid- to long-term”. The original *Briefing Report* prepared by Hackney Education misrepresents the terms of reference required when considering potential demand for places to both elected officials charged with decision-making and the public, and subsequently fails to include any mid- to long-term modeling in its report contrary to the demands of both Statutory Guidance and its own Estates Strategy. The *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* changes the terminology used (from ‘short to mid-’ to ‘mid- to long’) but fails to detail in high level or granular fashion any of that modelling, how it was arrived at, and how the stated conclusions were derived from it.

When considering this future demand for places the *Briefing Report* and subsequent *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* fail to account for the specific impacts of local development (the Dalston Plan) for Colvestone Primary School – the closest primary school provision for all the main sites (p.16). Both because the Briefing Report (p.16, 3.5) identifies the wrong time frame and fails to address the specific proximity of Colvestone to the development sites, an accurate assessment is not made to the mid- to long-term impacts of these major homebuilding projects. When the quoted timeframe is changed, there is still a lack of underlying data that would support or justify such a claim.

The Briefing Reports also fail to account for financial opportunities provided for by Section 106 / CIL investment levies from major local developments (Estate Strategy – p.19). As the local primary school provision for all of the major Dalston Plan sites, Colvestone would reasonably be expected to benefit financially from this significant infrastructural investment. By failing to address the centrality of Colvestone Primary School to the Dalston Plan and both the financial and demographic benefits of that proximity, the Briefing Report therefore fails to address significant future benefits to the school (identified in the Estates Strategy, p.19) in it's summary of the effect of new housing / regeneration.

The Estates Strategy states that all proposals will “consider land ownership and potential restrictions or impact on future opportunities and any additional land requirements and approvals or consents needed.” (p.14) The Council and Hackney Education have been persistently warned that there are educational use covenants on the Colvestone site. These have been confirmed by campaigners who worked on a previous campaign to save the school (1980) when, in addition to these protections, Hackney Council was shown to be deliberately diverting pupils to other schools to suppress student numbers. Despite being warned about these protections, the Council continues to rely on Land Registry documents based on registration documents from 1912 when the school site was expanded through purchase of additional land at the north of the site (then known as ‘Birkbeck Works’) and not the original deeds (1906) that detail the restrictions on the site – a consequence of the school being acquired from a still-existing educational trust under license from the Charities Commission. It has been confirmed with Land Registry that the Title Registration for the school site does not list the precise nature of the restrictions and covenants on the site, only that they exist. Whilst research is ongoing to locate secondary copies of these documents, Hackney Council (through a detailed FOI request) and Strategic Property Services (through direct approach) have failed to provide copies of the original deeds that transferred to the London Borough of Hackney from the ILEA through the London Residuary Body in 1990. Both have been sent the receipt for the documents (including relevant filing references) produced in 1990 to expedite this search, but no commitment to do so has been received in return, with the FOI request unfulfilled (and now subject to ICO review) and legal requests for this highly relevant material rebuffed without justification.

In addition, the Council has refused to supply requested allocation data to assess whether Council allocated places in preceding years have artificially suppressed pupil numbers at Colvestone. High level analysis of allocations data suggests that Free Schools and Academies have been artificially favoured in this allocation process over recent years with disproportionate allocations going to those schools. The refusal to release this data even as requested as case work to local ward Councillor Zoe Garbett as case work for non-public review (given the sensitive nature of postcode data) leaves open the possibility that admission numbers for Colvestone (and possibly other schools in frame) have been artificially suppressed.

Though further details are given in Chapters 4 and 5, The deeds to the buildings (original, 1906 amended, and all subsequent) were requested in April. As the campaign has consistently stated (since the announcement of the pre-informal consultation, April 2023) we have been informed that there is an educational use protection on the deeds (likely specifically on the deeds produced in 1905/1906 when the ownership of the original school buildings was transferred from an educational charity to the LCC, in a transfer of ownership overseen by the Charities Commission). We have provided the Council with a copy of the receipt from Hackney Council for the deeds from the London Residuary Body dated Dec 1990. These documents are of clear relevance to the consultation as:

1. If restricted by covenants standard disposal of the buildings would not be possible and so consideration of the buildings as an asset in the general Council holdings (and therefore potential source of revenue) as described in the briefing reports / consultation meetings etc. / Cabinet would have been in error.
2. The buildings might potentially be forfeited to the (still extant) educational charity who sold them under restriction should the educational use cease – a clear source of jeopardy for the pursuit of the current proposals, of which public / Cabinet have not been made aware.
3. Should such a covenant be contained within the deeds it limits the reuse of the buildings significantly and would likely force the Council to reopen a school on the site – having paid hundreds of thousands of pounds in retention contracts, redundancies of staff, building protection, and associated costs of transferring pupils (potentially out of Borough at great expense) for SEN provision currently being provided by the school. It would also jeopardise student numbers in the new school as the current pupils would have relocated elsewhere. (N.B. as repeatedly insisted upon by the Council, there is no academic attainment argument for closing the school – it is performing very well). This path would be an egregious waste of public funds. There is recent precedent in Hackney for this wastage – the closure of Hackney Downs School / discovery of covenanted deeds / establishment of Mossbourne Academy.
4. The Estates Strategy is clear about the jeopardy posed by ‘free school presumption’. Closing the school and reopening it would result in a free school where control of the school and land would be forfeit to a private enterprise. This would be a direct consequence of the covenant – and manifestly changes the consequences of the proposals on which decisions are being made.

The requested additional data on place allocation (school place allocation by the local authority where no preference is given or available) is of high relevance to the consultation: as the criteria for selecting schools in scope of the consultation is driven heavily by pupil numbers (specifically in Reception intakes, see scoping criteria) this allocation data is required to check that places have been allocated appropriately and not artificially suppressed by the Council. We have also been told that, as recently as the early 90s, there is precedent within the borough of artificial pupil suppression through the allocations process. See Chapter 3 for further details on this request and the centrality of these materials to the effective consultation on these proposals.

Regarding access to the original deeds, held by Hackney Council, there is clear precedent that establishes the jeopardy that the Estates Strategy is attempting to guard against concerning due diligence on land, sites and protective covenants: in 1995 Hackney Downs School was closed at

great expense to the London Borough of Hackney – local campaigners have told us an estimated £3m was paid in redundancy payments) and the Borough's intention was to sell the land. When the original deeds were addressed however the educational use covenants that protect the school site were discovered (not at that point recorded on the Land Registry Title documents which were subsequently amended) and the Council forced to embark on the project that would become Mossbourne Academy.

To embark on a similar project represents a catastrophic waste of public funds. This jeopardy is increased by 'Free School Presumption' (see Estates Strategy p.15) which dictates that any new school would automatically be a Free School, outside of Local Authority control, which has "key implications for the educational property assets as the building and site would be handed over to the Academy Trust of Free School under a lease agreement." The Council would also be responsible for delivering the capital programme for the new school, incurring yet further costs. In addition to the waste of public money and the loss of one of the area's major heritage sites, the Estates Strategy explicitly advises to support alternate options to this path to avoid "the delivery of a free school" (p.16).

In addition, the Grade 2 listed status of the building, which makes repurposing difficult, the protections against disposal (if possible) that would require Secretary of State approval (Estates, p.19) are similarly unaccounted for in the Briefing Document as required.

Contrary to Statutory Guidance (p.29) the consultation proposals were made public two days before a school holiday (the Easter break), deliberately limiting stakeholder response.

The consultation continues to use the terms 'merger' and 'amalgamation', implying a new school with a new school name, number and continuity of staff and senior leadership from both schools. This impression was also explicitly given in SLT / Governor meetings with the school before the consultation was made public. Both the Briefing Report (p.17) and Estate Strategy ('free school presumption', p.15/16) make clear that this is not possible – the proposals in the consultation are to close four schools as all staff in those schools will lose their jobs and sites will be closed. There would be no continuity of staff, ethos or curriculum. This has led to much confusion publicly as to the ramification of the proposals. To be genuine, consultations should clearly state the ramifications of the proposals being consulted upon. Here this has not been the case.

Briefing Report ill-informed and lacking in detail

Whilst the school satisfied some of the broad determinants for inclusion in the consultation, it fails to satisfy the qualitative determinants and the narrative description of schools considered to be most at risk. In the Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet the intention given was to identify schools under “serious financial pressure” where options to reduce expenditure had already been exhausted and where “efficiency”, “financial stability and education outcomes” have begun to deteriorate (p.11). None of these criteria have been met in the case of Colvestone.

The financial modeling used to assess the financial health and projected finances of Colvestone Primary School was a draft SMRA report commissioned by the school business manager of the Blossom Federation and Senior Leadership team of the school to test the school’s conservative 3-year budget projections (submitted to Hackney Education in November 2022) and to identify further reasonable savings. This budget projection (and in year surplus guarantee for the subsequent two years) remains unchallenged. Indeed, the full independent SMRA report commissioned by the school identifies over £614,000 of ‘high achievability’ savings (and a further £167,00 in ‘medium achievability’ savings) over the next three years. Not only does the complete version of the independent report, used as the Council’s only financial modelling for Colvestone Primary School, suggest financial viability, it proposes a full deficit reduction plan to break-even over five years. Even if this independently-produced data is taken to be optimistic (though it constitutes the only financial projection data the Council has for the school for the purpose of this consultation) it clearly states financial viability with the projection to pay down the deficit accumulated under previous management over time. See this Chapter (A: Financial Viability) and Chapter 3 for further details on this and the SMRA report projections on which Hackney Council signed off as recently as April 2023 (well after the commencement of the consultations on these proposals and yet in contradiction of the proposals underlying rationale.)

The consultation failed to establish a holistic approach to the challenge of maintaining optimal education provision appropriate to the stated desire of the population of the Borough. Why isn’t the whole of an area’s Primary provision being considered at the same time – including Faith / voluntary-aided schools? The Briefing Report goes to great lengths (by using inappropriate metrics to suggest they are at capacity) to mask the fact that vacancy rates are much worse in the borough’s faith schools (local authority 80% capacity, faith/VA schools 60%) and that Hackney data shows that 84% of residents want non-religious educational settings. When other boroughs, Lambeth and Southwark for example, have closed faith schools, why is the Council not taking a more holistic approach that consults on all settings as decisions about local provision mutually affect one another.

In responses given to the Scrutiny Committee it was stated that, as opposed to local authority schools, VA / faith schools are being afforded a more holistic set of criteria in relation to their evaluation – not simply financial viability (or pupil numbers). Why is there a difference in evaluation metrics for faith schools – particularly when there is clearly overprovision (and accordingly low occupancy) in the borough and specifically, as it applies to Colvestone, around

central Dalston? By consulting only on local authority provision, faith / voluntary-aided schools are being given preferential treatment. (See Chapter 1 on Place analysis).

The target of surplus capacity of 5-10% is an advisory figure. Why is the council pursuing this for all schools regardless of financial viability, academic achievement, specific character / social make-up of the school and the well-known and tangible benefits of smaller class sizes (for all pupils, with particular advantages for SEN children accessing integrated teaching)? Staff-pupil ratios vary with need already through TA and support staff provision, and these variations are not reflected in the data provided in the Briefing Report. In addition the consultation fails to make any distinction between large and small schools and their relative merits, or indeed the difference between non-faith and faith schools in regards to available local provision (despite the overwhelming majority of Hackney residents desiring non-faith education). As such the consultation attempts no modeling or research that would identify the significant role of parental choice in pupil movement.

Ineffective

It is not clear how the consultation document will inform the decision. At the May Cabinet meeting Cllr Bramble said that financial viability was key to determining if a school can stay open. But there were no questions on the document related to the financial viability, nor is there underlying data in the consultation documents that address viability on a school by school basis – data presented relates only to ‘lost revenue’ and figures are presented without context (for example: lost revenue is not discussed in relation to overall budget, or in relation to school/site-specific operating costs). Because these questions went unanswered in ‘engagement events’, it has been impossible for stakeholders to understand, let alone scrutinise the Council’s logic or proposals. Councilors and council staff have not been able to explain to us (or the Scrutiny Committee) how the consultation will inform a decision whether to close a school. If, as stated, this is a consultation on *whether* to close schools, not *how* to close schools, why has the Council thus far done no work with schools to develop alternatives to closure? Failure to allow for alternatives or modification within the consultation process – that is, meaningful consultation – the framing of the consultation denies any meaningful learning process or capacity for optimisation. A simple yes-no decision has been presented with scant underlying data. The lack of any framing criteria for the Informal or Formal Consultation is criticised in the *CYP Scrutiny Report*, Chapter 3 (Bases for Calling In), and Chapter 4 (Failure to Conduct a Legal Consultation).

Key decision makers did not participate in the consultation. Repeated attempts by parents and governors to meet with the Mayor and/or Cllr Bramble to discuss alternatives to closure were rebuffed or ignored – a belated meeting was arranged at short notice but only on the explicit condition that it took place *after* the end of the Informal Consultation period. The school engagement meeting offered a repetition of information shared (and previously challenged) at the pre-consultation phase, but did not engage in discussion about alternatives to closure or challenges related to adherence to the Council's own strategy documents, the contents of the presentation or to specific questions concerning underlying data.

Headteachers were not asked for their advice or expertise about how a process to address low enrollment might work. Headteachers were informed of the school closure consultation plan in advance of a public announcement, but never asked about potential consequences, leading to a process that was more damaging than it needed to be.

The staff at Colvestone Primary are Hackney Education employees. There has been no consideration of them in the decision to 'merge/amalgamate' – indeed in initial school discussions prior to the 'Pre-Informal Consultation' staff were told that merging schools (pupils *and staff*) was possible – an indication that key officials failed to understand the Statutory Guidance incorporated into the Council's own Estate Strategy that clarifies the impossibility of merging schools and staff under 'free school provision'. At the initial meetings, even though questions were asked, there were no answers or reassurances given to what the proposal would mean for staff.

It is now clear that staff would have to apply *if* there were vacancies at Princess May and have no guarantee that they would be employed. It is also probable that Princess May, which has recently gone through a staffing restructure, would employ support staff or teachers who are more experienced with UPS or TLRs as they would already have these positions in school and also by employing support staff and teachers in higher pay scales and with TLR's they would be increasing their staffing costs. Colvestone staff are dedicated and experienced professionals which makes them on a higher pay scale therefore at a disadvantage for a school who has restructured recently. There is also no consideration of office staff, cleaners, premises managers and catering staff. These positions will also be in place at the proposed site for merger and there will be no deployment of these positions.

In addition, with three other schools closing and many schools restructuring, there will be a glut of staff on the market, meaning there is no guarantee of any job vacancies for staff.

There were no separate consultation documents for staff and there was no communication made that the consultation documents and websites were for them.

The consultation documents had no mention of staff in them at all. The fact that the words 'merger and amalgamation' were used has led to confusion. Would their jobs be safe? Were they being moved to Princess May? Would they have to reapply for jobs? None of these questions were considered or answered until the second HR meeting and none of these factors were considered in the initial proposal to Cabinet.

The timeline has also been challenging for teaching staff; the resignation date was the end of May – the cabinet decision was not published until the end of that week therefore staff had no time to find a job or resign.

There is also no consideration of the children at Colvestone who have built relationships with the staff at Colvestone. They will move (if they choose too) to a school that has no familiar staff. For children with SEND there are no guarantees or reassurance that their 1:1 LSA will be moving with them, a stressful and concerning issue for both families and the school.

Parents were not consulted about their preferences with regards to potential school mergers. Colvestone parents were never surveyed about the likelihood that they would attend Princess May in the event of a merger. Parents at De Beauvoir asked about the possibility of a merger during their pre-consultation meeting, but they were never surveyed about their preferences. With approx. 70 pupils still on roll at De Beauvoir, this is now a viable merger on the Colvestone site that would accommodate all pupils (maintaining family and friendship groups as intended).

Inaccessible

All published documents up to and including that voted upon and the Decision Paper published after the Cabinet vote to proceed to the 'informal consultation' stage has a clear list of stakeholders to be consulted in this phase of the consultation. This list consistently contains 'all residents. When the printed Consultation document was circulated 'all residents' had been removed as a group being consulted.

The Briefing Report says that local residents are a key group to consult, but the document was not sent to local residents. The Council made token efforts to publicize the consultation—a page on the website, in the Council's own free paper and a couple of tweets—but did not send materials to houses in the vicinity of the school. The infographic leaflet that was to be 'delivered to key stakeholders' was printed (midway through the informal consultation) in a print run of 825 copies (FOI request data). Of these, 100 were circulated to Town Hall staff. Of the remaining 725, not one was sent to a local resident. For comparison, there are approximately 250,000 residents in Hackney, and even minor changes to local parking restrictions results in glossy publications delivered to individual residents in an impressively wide area local to the proposed alterations. It appears clear on this basis that the Council has been keen not to engage relevant stakeholders in the local and wider Hackney community on this issue: the fundamental reorganisation of local authority education provision in the borough and the potential closing of over 10% of the borough's local authority, non-faith primary school provision.

Although Colvestone's consultation meeting was interpreted into different languages at the school's request, the consultation document was not provided in any language other than English even though multiple languages represented in the school community were requested. Alternate language versions have been available for the current stage of the consultation as far as we are aware, but no discernable work appears to have been done by the Council to encourage engagement with this stage of the process.

There was no attempt to get feedback from local organisations that may be impacted by school closures, nor was there any tangible attempt to engage with clear stakeholders in education provision, for example: families and staff at local nurseries, childrens' centres, childminders, playgroups, drop-in play centres, the family sections of the local libraries etc. outside of a single email (to the provision manager) announcing the informal consultation midway through its consultation period. We are unaware of any engagement activities conducted by the Council in relation to the Formal Consultation.

Damaging

We warned the Council before the Cabinet voted to move all six schools to the information consultation stage that the consultation itself would damage the financial viability of the schools and asked what mitigating measures were being put into place. The consultation is supposed to determine whether a school should be closed, which means it should be possible for schools to survive consultation. However, no measures were established and as a result, two of the schools have lost so many they are probably financially unsustainable. In essence the consultation, which was meant to determine whether they should close, has created a situation where they are forced to close.

Because Colvestone is under the consultation, it is not picking up pupils it would normally expect to from families who did not receive offers from the first preference(s), in-year transfers and parents considering leaving local schools undergoing structural turmoil because also in frame (De Beauvoir), about to enter a phase of massive staff turnover (Halley House) or experiencing highly disruptive staffing issues (Shacklewell for example, where one Reception class has had 8 teachers in a year). This damage is particularly acute when Colvestone has recently resolved many of the temporary issues that had made the school less attractive (at the time of visits and application).

We have also recently been made aware of at least one parent attempting to apply for a place at Colvestone since the announcement of the consultation being advised by officials on the Hackney Council Admissions and Pupil Benefits Team Helpline explicitly that the school was closing. This suggests further artificial suppression of pupil numbers, the extent of which is hard to quantify (see Chapter 4: Failure to Conduct a Legal Consultation).

The consultation process has been hugely damaging to school finances because of pupil movement (albeit limited in the case of Colvestone) and potential staff retention payments for 23/24 that have been designated to come from school budgets rather than central funding. There has been a complete absence of mitigation planning or financial support put in place to protect schools damaged by the consultation process itself, or to support them should they go through the consultation process and not be closed (which has to be an option in a genuine consultation).

The consultation has been hugely destabilising for SEN / EHCP parents and pupils for whom promised individual advice and support has been entirely lacking.

These damages are particularly galling at a time where Hackney Council, in partnership with Blossom Foundation and a new senior management team at the school have worked hard to formulate and commence a plan that was working (in the 6 months it was given) to increase financial health (income, savings, structure, oversight and projections), parental offer addressing recent falling rolls and staff and parental satisfaction. The Labour Council should be owning and celebrating their part in this success story that would be given a chance to continue if the school was pulled out of scope.

Because the Council cannot close free schools and academies, there is a possibility that this aggressive schedule of local authority closures and the knowledge that there are more closures to come will scare people away from local authority schools in general and into free schools and academies, which they may view as safe from closure.

As raised in the Scrutiny Commission, schools with higher free school meal uptake, proportion of SEND pupils and greater diversity will overwhelmingly fall into scope of the proposed closures under the current metrics. How can the framework for considering scope of this and future consultations be adjusted such that it will not always be these children whose lives (and access to education, which is often already difficult) are constantly disrupted?

This report and the analysis which follows paint a compelling picture of a 'constantly improving' (Ofsted) and genuinely diverse village school in the heart of Hackney's vision for a vibrant Dalston: the meeting of the affordable, family-focussed new homebuilding of the Daston Plan with the area's historic, academically progressive past in the setting of the Borough's first 21st Century Street – the vision of a greener, more inclusive public space that connects the youth of the community with the vibrant market and bustle of contemporary Dalston. All of this future planning, to which the school is its academic provision (the Dalston Plan) or direct inspiration (21st Century Street), would be undermined by the closure of the school that is the beating heart of this community.

Reports and underlying data

What follows in this Chapter builds on and expands research submitted for earlier stages of the consultation period that are still pertinent and are augmented by new research and data analysis.

Positive:

- Strong improvements made by the school since Federation with Blossom
- Positive financial outlook
- Continual academic success
- Specific advantages to Colvestone of the Dalston Plan and the 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent

In addition the report shows:

- that the Council fails to follow the Statutory Guidance and their own Strategic Plan when planning for future demand for places
- Data showing that parents won't move to Princess May and which identifies key determinants of parental choice for Colvestone families
- Specific SEND impacts of the proposal
- Impacts on local developments
- the Council's briefing report deliberately masks the far worse problems in voluntary aided / faith schools, where capacity is at 60% compared to 80% in local authority schools
- Fails to account for significant increase in pollution (+40%) at the proposed merger site
- Identifies a range of historical protections on the site (and its use) that make re-purposing extremely difficult and risky
- Identifies a failure to follow the Strategic Plan when proposing to close and open school sites rather than to support and protect local authority provision (check clear in report)
- Strongly evidences community support for the school and its protection amongst other conclusions, analysis and recommendations.

Colvestone: A village school in the heart of Hackney

Colvestone Primary School offers a unique opportunity to showcase the future for Hackney Council's ambition for education. The current vibrant, buzzing community – rich in history and local association – has relevance to all the borough's needs for families now, and the future.

Financial viability

Following more turbulence than many other schools have battled over the last 3-4 years, the new school leadership team and partnership with Blossom Federation has turned around the financial position and viability of Colvestone. That transformation is *not solely* as a result of any 'additional investment' made above statutory funding from Hackney Council, but can be attributed to some excellent planning, prudent financial acumen and skilled resource management.

This efficient use of resources – and in some areas – a budget surplus, are a solid commercial reason for Colvestone to remain open. Blossom partnership should be given a chance to continue their skilled and committed financial transformation implementing the deficit recovery plan, taking the school to 'break even' by 2027/28 [1].

Vacant places

Well-documented falling pupil numbers across the borough, and vacancies at schools like Colvestone, can impact the efficient running of a school. But it has *not impacted* the quality of education – and contrary to predictions, Colvestone is proud of its newly found financial stability. These unexpected, but positive outcomes, are because a small school like Colvestone can be nimble, it can be flexible, and it can be quick to adapt and change when needed.

When is a merger a closure?

When planning any proposed merger, many factors clearly need to be considered – this is an exercise in efficient use of public money and Council resources, so due diligence is a critical part of the process. However, regardless of the size of either Princess May or Colvestone, and regardless of the suitability of either site to host the merger – if 87% of those parents (who responded) from one school in the merger, refuse to send their child(ren) to the other site – what happens then? The main reasons people gave for not wanting to send their child(ren) to Princess May were due to its location on a main road (81.5%). So rather than a proposed merger, this plan will effectively close down Colvestone Primary School without necessarily improving the situation at Princess May.

The need for Colvestone

Part of Hackney Council can actually see how special, unique and essential Colvestone is to the development of Dalston, as the school forms part of the planning of a new-build neighbourhood proposed over the road. The Dalston Development Plan includes building more than 600 new homes in the area around the school with around 30% of the housing being family sized units. This could bring 200+ families into the immediate area (see new analysis, this Chapter).

Offering real parental choice and an attractive proposition for families in these ambitious plans for 'genuinely affordable' new homes in Dalston *have to be supported by local infrastructure* – Colvestone Primary School was specifically identified as such key infrastructure in recent Dalston Plan / Hackney Planning engagement events. This is a school that will suffer less from pollution and that can be safely walked to. It appears extremely short-sighted therefore to shut down a well-performing school that could form the heart of a family-focussed, community-led Dalston vision.

Ofsted rating and projected outcomes

Colvestone is academically strong. This is due to the excellent and effective staff and leadership team, the closeness and individual attention of a one-form entry environment and the high standards and expectations across the school.

The last Ofsted inspection paid tribute to the school's excellent community focus, in addition to the effective teaching: "You have a relentless focus on improving the quality of the curriculum. You are providing the pupils with a creative and diverse curriculum which broadens their minds and helps them think critically. The curriculum often focuses pupils' learning on the community around them. This provides pupils not only with good subject knowledge, such as the geography and history of the area, but also with a strong sense of identity and connection to where they live." What parent would not want that rich and diverse learning environment for their child(ren)?

Summary

Colvestone Primary School brings together the best of Hackney in a non-denominational, local authority school – and it shows the way forward, by putting a small, well-run financially viable school at the heart of the borough's future.

Colvestone is a village school, at the heart of a 21st Century Street, in the centre of Hackney. It's a school where every child matters, and we implore Hackney Council to take Colvestone off the list of schools to merge or close.

Footnotes

[1] School Resource Management Adviser Comprehensive Report for Colvestone Primary School 2042120 Hackney. Education and Skills Funding Agency. 16.03.2023

Context for Colvestone

After a period of instability Colvestone has entered into a successful partnership with Blossom Federation, which is seeing rapid impact on all areas: quality of education, finances, premises, leadership and have kept the community at the forefront of the changes they make. The dynamic and proactive approach has resulted in positive changes that will only continue. The governors have recommended that this partnership continues for the next 1-2 years and a decision about Colvestone's future after that would be made swiftly to ensure stability, continuity and success.

A successful partnership with Blossom Federation

Colvestone has had three years of instability alongside the pandemic. There has been a challenging restructure of support staff, defederation of Soaring Skies and the restructuring of the Senior Leadership Team which led to the unexpected resignation of the Executive Head and resignation of the Head of school in May/June 2022. As a result, Hackney Education asked the governors to seek partnerships with other schools to support Colvestone rather than externally recruiting a Headteacher. At a meeting with parents in May 2022, the then Director of Education Annie Gammon explained this approach and talked about the process. During the meeting, she was asked about the future of Colvestone and she confirmed that there was no intention to close the school.

Altogether 5 partnerships were proposed, which included a proposal from the Princess May leadership team, and 3 were selected for interview – 1 pulled out because of capacity and the other 2 were interviewed. Blossom was selected for many reasons:

- Successful partnership with other schools before their schools joined the federation
- Capacity and experience of Executive Headteacher
- Capacity to have a dedicated and experienced Head of School with a focus on teaching and learning and wellbeing
- An experienced federation school Business Leader which was paramount for the financial management of the school.

This successful partnership is in place and from the start Blossom have bought clear direction both with regards to finance and resources and also the teaching and learning. They have managed to keep the stability of a highly dedicated staff with minimal change to the school and the community.

Building on the success

The Partnership with Blossom Federation only started in September 2022 so it is still very much in its infancy. By proposing the amalgamation (closure) for Colvestone there has been no opportunity to continue to build the successful partnership and see the impact.

With hard work, there have been rapid changes and developments with impact already being seen in only 6 months most notably in:

- Finance: There is an improved financial picture and the team are on their way to bringing the school back to financial health. The school has a clear understanding of the finances with an in year surplus achieved in the school budget.
- Safeguarding: Safety and safeguarding within the school has dramatically improved. The building is compliant and has seen significant cosmetic and structural improvements
- Marketing and Communication: New website and increased use of social media to raise the profile of the school.

Despite the uncertainty around the change of leadership, the staff and parent community are largely stable and overwhelmingly supportive of the partnership and the school development.

Prior to the Council's announcement, the governors had decided to continue to partner with Blossom Federation for another year to continue building a stable and successful school.

Footnotes – Context for Colvestone

Soaring Skies Federation Governing Board minutes September 2020 – July 2021

Colvestone Primary School Governing Board minutes September 2021 – April 2023

A. Financial viability

Through the successful partnership with the Blossom Federation, in only 6 months the new Senior Leadership Team have demonstrated that they can return the school to financial health despite the reduced pupil numbers. We believe there is a strong case for the financial viability of Colvestone for the following reasons:

- New strong financial leadership led by Senior Leadership Team with experienced Senior Business Manager with proven track record of successfully returning schools to financial health.
- The new SLT have delivered a surplus school budget for Colvestone for the years since its arrival (2021/22, 2022/23). This financial modelling has been submitted to Hackney Education by the school and which, viewed in tandem with the independent SMRA report commissioned the school, projects considerable savings and surplus potential (even on reduced pupil numbers).
- The new SLT have worked closely with the Local Authority over the last 6 months to identify detailed cost savings and provided a viable budget deficit recovery plan based on detailed forecasted pupil numbers, evidenced efficiencies and cost saving measures.
- Hackney Funding: whilst significant investment has already gone into the building over the last 12 months, Mr Senior implied at the Colvestone engagement meeting on 24 April that the surplus in the school budget was a result of that investment, but we don't agree with Mr Senior's assumption. The Council invested £50k last year as part of the Schools Contingency Fund and £25k as part of the Supported Schools Programme. Firstly, Colvestone is entitled to de-delegated school contingency funding as much as any other school in financial need so implying that it is only funding from Hackney that has kept Colvestone in surplus is not a fair point. This could also be said of other schools in the borough and historically. Colvestone had received contingency funds from Hackney last year yet were not in further deficit. See below and Chapter 3.
- The deficit situation of Colvestone should have been more closely managed by Hackney Council over the last 6 years. Colvestone's cumulative school deficit has **not** been added to in the last 2 years (School financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23). The deficit has not entirely been caused by falling roll of pupil numbers over the last 2 years (the school has historically been far more resilient to these effects) so the deficit narrative as a result of the falling roll is inaccurate.
- Low reception numbers for Sept 2023: we think the unusually low reception preference numbers were a blip, the result of a building that was under extensive repair during the time when school tours were taking place, a leadership team that was new and unproven in the eyes of a prospective parent, and a reputation that may have taken a hit due to the turbulence of defederation and restructure. We believe the improvements to the physical

building and the new equipment, the increased social media presence, the strong academic performance, the embedding of successful leadership, and the construction of the 21st Century Street will restore sustainable numbers to the school. In addition, an independent report has been commissioned by the Education & Skills Funding Agency titled the School Resource Management Adviser Comprehensive Report for Colvestone Primary School written in March 2023 working with the Local Authority and SLT in which pupil numbers are forecast to rise by 15% [1] from now until 2025. This SRMA report and the pupil projections contained within it were signed off on as recently at April 2023. The claims not to recognise or agree with these projections (Briefing Report – Informal Consultation, 4.22) are therefore both contradicted by this officially-stated position and without substantiating evidence that contradicts the claims produced with, and signed off by, Hackney Education.

- Partnering with the Blossom Federation (that includes Daubeney, Sebright and Lauriston) allows Colvestone to share some costs and deliver cross-federation financial efficiencies. Only incremental costs are being charged to Colvestone by the Blossom Federation for cross-federation support to help the school financially and also realise the benefits of economies of scale through this type of collaboration/structure.
- In the case of closing/amalgamating Colvestone, the historical debt would have to be swallowed by Hackney, making Colvestone an extremely expensive school to close. There may be less risk-taking to first see if the school can be financially viable and run down its own debt fairly rapidly.
- Through proactive marketing measures including social media the new leadership has increased Colvestone's profile and with the recent upgrades in the premises and new hall, we believe Colvestone will further prove it's financial viability by attracting new pupils cementing it's position in the community and establishing new revenue streams through lettings and community events.

Specific rebuttals of claims made in the Briefing Report – Informal Consultation (4.22, p.17, 18, repeated pp.775-6), challenged at Cabinet (Sept 25th, 2023) and repeated in the Statutory Notice.

See also Chapter 3 for where these challenges intersect with a failure to follow the Constitution.

Questions raised at Cabinet challenged the selective representation of financial modelling for one of the schools in frame in the Briefing Report and the conclusions reached in the LA's summary of its resources, underlying data and analysis. It is unclear how these differences can be dismissed by the Cllr without full disclosure of the documents that underpin the conclusions of the LA, disputed by members of the public with access to the same documents, such that decision makers, Council and the public can inform their own evaluation of the situation. The

bases of these challenges to the LA's conclusions are outlined below (and in **Chapter 3 – Appendix A – misrepresentation of financial data – 1.2 (a) – a presumption of openness**): The Briefing Report, Responses to the Consultation (Appendix S, pp. 775-6) and subsequent references to its conclusions at Cabinet, misrepresent the content of the independent SRMA report on Colvestone by omission, and the overall financial analysis on the school presented in the Report – the analysis that concludes with the stark claim that Colvestone is “particularly financially unsustainable” (Briefing Report, 4.22, pp.11/12) – fails to accurately represent the data on which it is based: the school's own conservative budget projections and the savings (and conclusions) of the independent SMRA report “proactively requested” by the school's Senior Business Manager “to support him in improving the financial outlook of CPS (Colvestone Primary School)” (SRMA Report on Colvestone School, p.4). Viewed in combination, the two sources of modelling data the Council are using suggest “highly achievable” savings (SRMA Report) leading to budget surpluses and debt repayment, albeit over a longer period than that modelled in the SRMA report. This is achievable on lower pupil numbers than those used in the SRMA report – lower pupil numbers reflected in Colvestone's own financial modelling.

By referencing a table in the Briefing Report of school deficits as evidence of “financial unsustainability” the Briefing Report conflates debt and financial sustainability. The SRMA Report claims that the rapid running down of the school's deficit in 3-4 years would be “extremely challenging” – a comment the Briefing Report extracts – *but not impossible*. What the SRMA report does not do is suggest that a longer term of deficit reduction would not be viable, or that the running of surpluses be achieved and sustained through the identification of “highly achievable” savings as the deficit is run down over time and pupil numbers improve. The SRMA lists a number of reasons for this recent drop in pupils, many of which have been reversed (see 1.2(a) above). The specific points of misrepresentation are outlined below:

‘High achievability’ of surplus and longer-term deficit reduction

The Colvestone Senior Business Leader produced a 3-year budget projection for the Council, the headline figures of which are included in the Briefing Report for Cabinet (p.11/12). Omitted from the reporting of this highly conservative budget projection produced by the school are a series of caveats to these budget figures that suggest sources of additional funding that would improve the financial projections (as has been the case in 22/23 when the school ran a surplus – see ‘Notes / Assumptions’ in the 3-year budget produced by the Colvestone SLT). Further, when this highly conservative budget projection (that relies on far fewer numbers of pupils joining the school than the SRMA report – see below) is viewed in the context of the SRMA report commissioned by, and to support, the school's Senior Business Leader, a huge volume of additional savings are identified: £614,000 in ‘high achievability’ efficiency savings (and a further £167,000 in ‘medium achievability’ savings) over the next three years. (Note: only £30,000 p.a. is speculative in the form of grant targets). This suggests a ‘high achievability’ of in-year surplus and progressive deficit reduction over time. The Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet fails to reflect the savings identified in a report that is their best financial modelling and on which it signed off, and therefore fails to disclose the positive financial outlook that results from viewing these two documents together (as the Briefing Report purports to do).

Pupil projections

The Briefing Report (4.22, p.11) disputes rising pupil forecasts contained within the SRMA report in which it is quoted “the SRMA and school have discussed the pupil number forecasts with the LA, who advised that these numbers are not unrealistic.” The report states: “The local authority is firmly of the view that the projected number of children joining the school, on which the budget is based, are unrealistic.” It is unclear on what grounds this claim is made as it obscures the Local Authority’s role in producing the SRMA report, including during the pre-publishing review phase of its production, and signing off on its conclusions (without challenging this specific point) in April/May 2023. The relevant section of the Briefing Report for Cabinet (4.22) also fails to disclose that the financial projections produced by the school are not based on such steep rises in enrollment, as projected by the SRMA report, and are therefore far more conservative on this point – in line with what appears to be Hackney Council’s current position.

That the school, as is subsequently pointed out, had 14 new enrollments in Reception in 2023 whilst the school had been under the public threat of closure for several months, and Hackney Education had advised at least one parent (that we are aware of and have signed dispositions from) looking to apply to the school that the school was to be closed and not to transfer, is, frankly, remarkable. The true extent of pupil number suppression due to the consultation will be hard to gauge, but is likely to be considerable – p. 32 of the Briefing Report documents the considerable damage done by the consultation to many of the schools in frame. Further, the allocations data for previous years has been requested (both as casework and through the Pre-Action legal correspondence) but not produced by the Council. By failing to disclose this information it is impossible to ascertain whether pupil numbers enrolling at Colvestone may already have been artificially suppressed through the allocations process over preceding years. (We understand that there is precedent for this mode of artificial suppression by the LA in the borough from education campaigners in the 1990s).

Deficit Reduction

By focussing on a rapid paydown of the deficit the Report fails to model for a more manageable deficit reduction plan that could be sustained by the school. It is unclear from the Report, and from responses received in Cabinet, why this would not be more desirable for the overall Council budgets – a budget that would have to absorb the whole of the deficit were the school to be closed. Indeed, in its responses, the Council appear to focus purely on attempting to produce additional arguments as to why the school should be closed, rather than on possible alternatives (advocated for in the Estates Strategy, p.7) that might enable the protection of a single-form intake LA school.

The comment in the Briefing Report that Colvestone ran a surplus in 22/23 because of ‘a mid year additional cash injection’ suggests that Colvestone was only in surplus in the last financial year because of emergency Council intervention. This insinuation was repeated at Cabinet (25th September). The school received funding from the Schools Contingency Fund, the de-delegated fund to which all schools contribute and to which all are eligible to apply. This money was applied for to help improve the school building and in particular ensure that it was statutorily safe and compliant. The school had a right to apply and were eligible for this funding which is why it is there. One might suggest that the Management Team would have been remiss not to have applied for it – as is the case for all monies that the school applies for and receives from the Council and other funds. To imply that this an emergency intervention by the Council, or the only reason for running a surplus, is highly subjective and contestable at best. Many schools (both in frame of this consultation and outside) apply for and receive this funding, as they are entitled to do. To suggest that it was a vital intervention fails to disclose the nature of the Council funding and its purpose, and thereby misrepresents it as emergency funding.

Without greater clarity it is unclear how Cabinet (and the general public / stakeholders in the further consultation) might be expected to make financially-based decisions on the proposals. Note that the Briefing Report identifies ‘financial sustainability’ as a key metric for both determining schools in scope and for the evaluation of the proposals outlined in the consultation.

Footnotes – Financial viability

[1] School Resource Management Adviser Comprehensive Report for Colvestone Primary School 2042120 Hackney. Education and Skills Funding Agency. 16.03.2023
Soaring Skies Federation Governing Board minutes September 2020 – July 2021
Colvestone Primary School Governing Board minutes September 2021 – April 2023

B. Academic record

Education standards at Colvestone have been consistently high. This is a successful school with children receiving a high quality of education.

Colvestone has a 'Good' Ofsted rating and this has been in place for the last 15 years. There have been three Full Inspections (2008, 2011 and 2014) and a Short Inspection in 2018 that confirmed the on-going rating.

Colvestone achieved excellent KS2 SATs results in 2022 that were well above the national average AND the Hackney average. For instance, 81% of children at Colvestone achieved expected attainment in all three subjects – this is 12% points above the Hackney average of 69% of children.

The attached attainment data for the last three years shows that Colvestone has been improving its outcomes for children, despite challenges at the national level.

RWM	2018	2019	2022 *
	EXS	EXS	EXS
Colvestone	71%	76%	81%
Hackney	71%	66%	69%
National	65%	65%	59%

Reading	2018	2019	2022 *
	EXS	EXS	EXS
Colvestone	71%	79%	88%
Hackney	78%	72%	80%
National	76%	73%	75%

Writing	2018	2019	2022 *
	EXS	EXS	EXS
Colvestone	89%	83%	81%
Hackney	84%	84%	79%
National	79%	78%	70%

Maths	2018	2019	2022 *
	EXS	EXS	EXS
Colvestone	86%	79%	81%
Hackney	79%	78%	78%
National	76%	79%	72%

Colvestone has been noted as a school that centres diversity effectively in its curriculum and that this is a strength which is important in the current climate and Hackney's dedication to Anti-Racism.

A letter of support to keep Colvestone Primary School open has been sent by Hackney National Education Union (see [Appendix](#)).

Summary

In its statement announcing the potential closures and mergers, Hackney Education states that part of the purpose is "to ensure all our schools continue to provide excellent education for our children, with the very best resources and facilities." If the intent of closing schools is to ensure educational excellence, **it doesn't make sense to close a school that is consistently delivering above average performance in the borough.**

C. Parent choice

The merger of Colvestone with Princess May and the closure of De Beauvoir would erode parent choice in two ways:

- It would directly undermine the choices Colvestone parents have made for their children
- It would severely reduce the choices local parents have for educating their children

Impact on current Colvestone families

Hackney Education is proposing merging two schools that are very different. Princess May is a two-form entry school in an imposing Victorian building that sits on a busy main road.

Colvestone is a one-form entry school in a small, intimate building that sits on a quiet side street.

A recent poll of Colvestone parents, in which $\frac{2}{3}$ of households responded, **showed that 95.7 % of respondents did not list Princess May as one of their top 6 choices** when they originally selected a primary school. Out of 70 households, only 3 had originally placed Princess May on their elective list, with only 2 having it in their top 3.

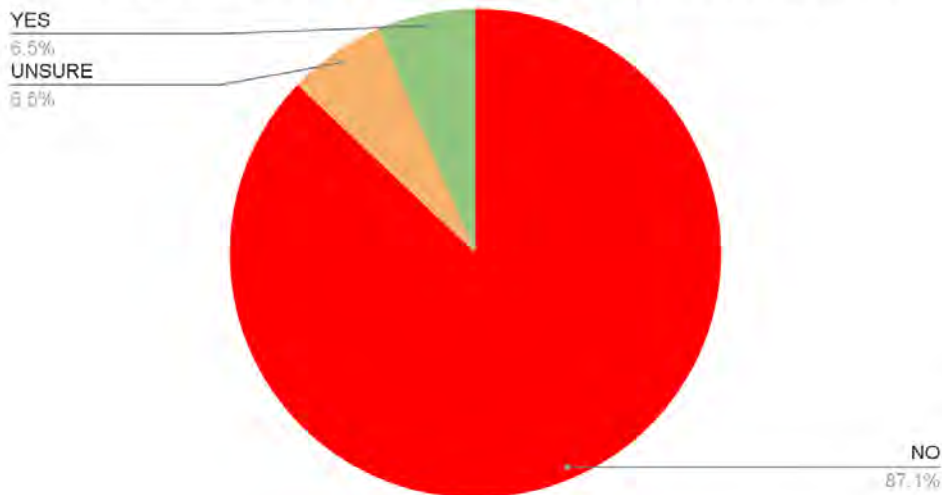
When parents questioned Paul Senior very directly at the Colvestone engagement meeting on 24 April as to what would happen if the Council went ahead with this decision to merge the schools and a majority of parents **chose not** to send their children to Princess May, no clear answer was provided. It doesn't seem Hackney Education has prepared for this scenario.

Colvestone parents then conducted a second survey of our parent and carer community, to provide Hackney Education with some more detailed insight about parental school choices. In our second survey, we reached again approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of Colvestone households. We were very careful to ask for only one response per household so that we were not doubling up on opinions. **There are 104 households with children at Colvestone and 73 took part in the survey.**

Our first question was very simple: "If the Council were to go ahead with the proposed merger of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May in September 2024, **would you agree to sending your child(ren) to the Princess May Site.** (Please answer as honestly as possible – Please don't answer (this question only) if you only have a child in year 5 or 6.)"

Out of 73 answers, 62 have children who would be affected by the proposed merger in 2024. Of these 62 households, 54 answered **NO, they will not agree to send their child to Princess May. This is 87%.** A further 4 households were unsure at this point. Only 4 households said they would agree to sending their children to Princess May.

WILL YOU SEND YOUR CHILD(REN) TO PRINCESS MAY?



The main reasons people gave for not wanting to send their children to Princess May were around:

- Location on a main road (81.5%)
- Pollution levels (77.8%)
- Not liking the school itself (66.7%)
- Not wanting to send their children to a bigger school (63%)

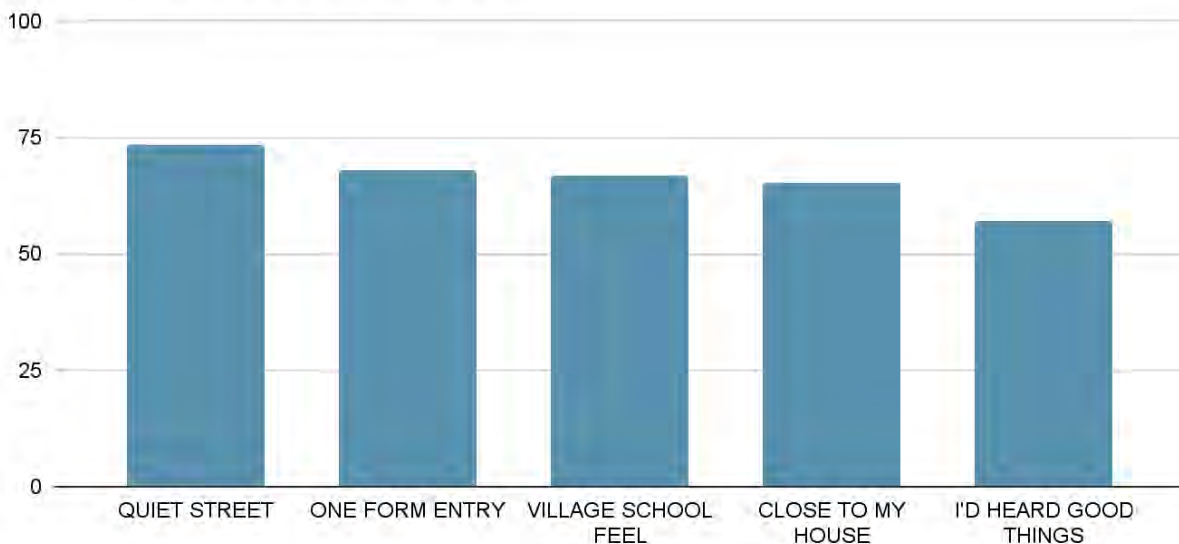
We also asked our families what the principal factors were that they took into consideration when choosing a primary school for their children. **Distance from home** was overwhelmingly the most important (chosen by 70.8% of families). A close second were **pollution levels around the school** (65.3%) and the **size of the school** (63.9%), coming in at **more important** than **academic performance and Ofsted ratings** (58.3%). The **quiet location of the school** was also considered important by over 50% of the parents. Another very important factor for many parents (40.3%) was being able to choose a **non-faith** school. **SEN** support and community feel of school were also repeated themes (22.5% of respondents to our survey have a child with SEN). Most of these categories, such as quiet street, distance and one-form entry, are not qualities that can be fulfilled at Princess May, hence Princess May barely featured on families' radars when they were making their initial choices.

Comments from the survey:

"I sent my eldest son to Princess May 8 years ago and had to change schools after a few months because we were really unhappy with the standards of the school. We visited the school again a couple of years ago, whilst going through the selection process for my youngest child, who currently attends Colvestone and we were disappointed to discover that Princess May is still not a viable option for us to send our children. We would not send our child to Princess May, our child is very happy at Colvestone and we're it to close we would look at finding a similar school to Colvestone probably outside the borough."

We proceeded to ask parents and carers, what were the **specific appeals of Colvestone itself**. See the graph below:

WHY WE CHOSE COLVESTONE



Other important reasons were of course the wonderful staff, and the architecture and layout of buildings, the SEN support, the experience of older siblings, and the strong community feel.

We thought it would also be useful for the Council to know **which schools parents are actually interested in**, should they no longer be able to send their children to Colvestone. Here are the responses, ranked in order of preference:

- 1) Shacklewell Primary (35.3%) – yet this school is oversubscribed
- 2) Out of borough (22.1%) – a clear risk of losing even more school funding for the borough
- 3) None of the closest schools but staying in borough (16.2%)
- 4) Halley House / Queensbridge / Mossbourne Parkside (all 14.7%)

The local faith schools all attracted much lower numbers. The remaining survey results are in the [Appendix](#).

When reviewing what Colvestone Primary School has to offer, it is clear from the factors listed above that parents are choosing it very deliberately. **It is simply not acceptable to ignore all of the factors that go into making this choice.**

Also, please note that at the 24 April meeting, parents asked Paul Senior if they were to send their children to Princess May what guarantees they would have that Princess May, which is

also struggling with under enrollment, would not be closed in the next 5 to 6 years. Mr. Senior replied that he could make no such assurances.

If a minority of parents send their children to Princess May, the merger could do little to improve the enrollment problem at Princess May. In addition, Colvestone children who move there could have the deeply traumatic experience of having their school closed twice. **If the Council can't ensure the stability of the Princess May/Colvestone merger, it should not be undertaking this plan.**

Reduction of choice for local families

The closure of Colvestone and nearby De Beauvoir Primary School would mean there would be no non-faith, one-form entry local authority schools within a mile of the Colvestone building.



Our local area would have three religious schools, Holy Trinity, St Matthias, and Our Lady and St. Joseph. According to a 2017 consultation report, **84% of respondents agreed that they would like Hackney's schools to be non-denominational.**[1] But the closure of Colvestone and De Beauvoir could force parents to choose between sending their child to a religious school or travelling further for school. And the further they are from a school, the less likely they are to get in.

The area also has an academy, Mossbourne Parkside Academy, and a free school, Halley House.

Halley House has deeply troubling ownership. It is run by the Bellevue Place Education Trust, (BPET) which operates 10 primary schools mostly in London and which is a joint venture of the Bellevue Education Trust and a company called the Place Group. Bellevue Education Trust is owned by GEMS Education, the largest operator of private kindergarten to grade 12 schools in the world, whose founder and chairman is based in the UAE. A consortium led by the private equity firm CVC Capital Partners owns a 30 percent share of GEMS Education including its stake in Bellevue Education Trust. BPET and its related companies have been the subject of several newspaper articles questioning their ownership and business practices. The articles include:

- Trustees of BPET own substantial shares in companies, including the Place Group, to which BPET has awarded large contracts. [2]
- In 2016 the Sunday Times revealed that a Saudi oil tycoon was the largest investor, via a British Virgin Island's company, in Bellevue Education. [3]
- The Good Law Project threatened to issue legal proceedings after the Place Group won a contract to run tender competitions on behalf of public sector bodies to procure services to reach their net zero goals. The framework was valued at £70 billion and the Place Group was the only bidder. The agreement was withdrawn after the Good Law Project exposed this shoddy procurement deal. [4]

It should be noted that although Hackney Council says now it was against the establishment of free schools, in fact BPET says it was fully supported by the Council to open up Halley House.[5] A 2014 article in the Hackney Citizen about the opening of free schools in Hackney states, "Hackney Council's newly-appointed Cabinet Member for Children's Service, Councillor Antoinette Bramble said: 'We've always been very open to innovation within education, and the phenomenal improvements seen in our schools over the last decade are testament to that.'

'We work closely with all of the schools in Hackney and *we look forward to supporting any free schools which open in our borough*. They join a family of schools with high aspirations for all of Hackney's young people.'" (emphasis added) [6]

It appears rich people are using schools, including Halley House, to become richer. Parents in the area should not feel forced to send their children there due to limited options in the area.

The only nearby local authority options would be Shacklewell, which is currently full, and Princess May. Hackney Council is proposing sending students from Colvestone to Princess May. However, as indicated above, Princess May is a very unpopular choice for Colvestone families.

The reduction of choice in the Dalston area also threatens to jeopardise the Council's ambitions for the new development in Dalston Plan (see [Impact on local development](#)). While the Council claims that it wants to attract families to the new flats, **those flats may not be attractive to**

families if the only choices in the area are three religious schools, a free school owned by remote and global corporations, an academy, a school on the busy A10 and a school that is oversubscribed.

The Hackney Labour Party 2022-26 Manifesto states, “We will continue to oppose the forced academisation of schools... and campaign for an education system that is democratic and inclusive.”[7] However, the current proposal could lead to academisation via the back door. **If Hackney closes local authority schools and later demand requires new schools to be built or reopened, the government’s Free School Presumption policy means the Council will be under pressure to reopen them as free schools/academies, further reducing the proportion of local authority schools.** [8]

Hackney Education has already been disproportionately allocating students to free schools, academies and faith schools. In 2022 although academy, faith and free schools represent 33 percent of schools, they received 40 percent of allocations and in 2021 received 46 percent of allocations.[9] Using current per pupil funding figure (£6,484), that means that in 2022, Hackney gave more than £162,000 per year to academy, faith and free schools and in 2021 more than £233,000 per year that might have gone to local authority schools.[10]

In the 24 April Council engagement meeting with Colvestone parents/carers, Hackney Education said that students are allocated to their closest school. In a time of dropping enrollment Hackney Education is allocating students and hundreds of thousands of pounds to schools that it says it has no or limited authority to close. That practice undermines local authority schools, and is based on a presumption that academy, faith and free schools are the same as local authority provision, which this current situation has clearly demonstrated is not the case. **If Hackney were genuinely committed to ensuring local authority schools can survive this period of decreasing enrollment and remain a viable choice for parents now and in the future, it would allocate students to their closest local authority school.**

Summary

The consequences of this proposed merger have not been fully considered. In merging Colvestone and Princess May, the Council is attempting to send families to a very different education environment and our evidence suggests a majority of parents do not want to go to Princess May. In a choice system the Council has limited control over where parents send their children and the question of which school parents will choose is hard to predict. Parents may go to free schools or academies, which doesn't help the Council's finances. They may leave the borough altogether.

The Council appears to have no plan in the event that only a minority of parents send their children to Princess May, which seems likely therefore leaving Princess May in a similar vulnerable position. In the absence of a plan, those who do send their child(ren) to Princess May, run the risk of having their school closed twice.

The proposed merger and closure plan also severely reduces choice for all local parents and prospective parents and increases the proportion of faith, academy and free schools both now and in the future.

Colvestone offers families of this area a choice that should continue to be available. This community deserves to have a non-denominational, local authority school they can walk to, one that has a strong academic record and that offers the closeness and individual attention of a one-form entry environment.

Footnotes – Parent choice section

- [1] Hackney: schools for everyone, Consultation Report, Dec. 2017, page 30. See: https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/communications-engagement/hackney-schools-for-everyone/user_uploads/hackney-schools-for-everyone-survey-report.pdf
- [2] "Will government plans lead to 1,000 academy chiefs paid £150,000+?," The Guardian, 26 Apr. 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/apr/26/academy-chiefs-pay-bromley-schools-rachel-de-souza>
- [3] Saudi oil tycoon revealed as investor in schools company, The Sunday Times, 10 April 2016. See: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/f53a9274-fe97-11e5-b5b9-5f40d4ddd6f6?shareToken=06209c7b9c1b19f09b17eec896f6d00b>
- [4] Transparency has prevailed this time, the Good Law Project, 11 November, 2022. See: <https://goodlawproject.org/update/transparency-has-prevailed-this-time/>
- [5] Bellevue Place Education Trust—the free school group you've never heard of, Schools Week, 22 Apr. 2016 See: <https://schoolsworld.co.uk/bellevue-place-education-trust-who-are-they/>
- [6] Three new free schools approved for Hackney, Hackney Citizen, 19 June 2014 See: <https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2014/06/19/three-new-free-schools-approved-hackney/>
- [7] Hackney Labour Party 2022-26 Manifesto, page 26. See: <https://www.hackney-labour.org.uk/hackney-labour-2022-26-manifesto/>
- [8] The free school presumption, Jan. 2023. See: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/113056/5/Free_school_presumption_guidance.pdf

[9] Applications and Offers at Hackney Primary Schools 2018-22, See:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/sites/default/files/document/Applications%20and%20Offers%20at%20Hackney%20Primary%20Schools%202018-22.pdf>

[10] Primary schools potential closure / merger plans, See:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/primary-schools-potential-changes#:~:text=Hackney%20Council%20is%20considering%20consulting,September%202024%20at%20the%20earliest.>

D. Impact on children with special educational needs

Colvestone has a high proportion of children who are on the SEND register (25%).

Seven percent of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), above the 4.3% average across the borough and significantly above the national average of 2.2%. This is 10 individual children with a range of identified needs.

In addition, there are another 25 children who have identified as needing additional support due to their special educational needs. This 17% is similar to the Hackney average but much higher than the national average.

This proposal will affect the majority of children on the SEND register as they are concentrated in the lower year groups (rather than Year 5 and Year 6 who will not be directly affected).[1]

Year Group	EHCP	SEN Support
Reception	0	6
Year 1	3	6
Year 2	2	2
Year 3	1	2
Year 4	1	1
Year 5	1	4
Year 6	2	4
Total	10	25

There were 16 SEND families who responded to the second parental survey about parental choice. ALL of those families affected (14 families) stated that they would NOT send their child(ren) to Princess May.

For SEND families the main reasons people gave for not wanting to send their children to Princess May were around:

- Not wanting to send their children to a bigger school (71%)
- Pollution levels (64%)

We also asked our families what the principal factors were that they took into consideration when choosing a primary school for their children. For SEND families, the **size of the school** was significantly more important (chosen by 81%) than **distance from home** (chosen by 38% of SEND families but 71% of all families). In second place were **pollution levels around the school** (63%).

“Colvestone is the ideal school for my 6-year-old autistic son,” said one parent. “As a one-form entry school, tucked away from busy roads, it provides a calmer, less overwhelming environment, which is of utmost importance to children that are autistic and struggle to process overstimulating surroundings. I could never imagine him settling into a two-form entry school and being as happy as he is at Colvestone. Losing this school would be devastating for him.”

We also asked SEND parents which schools they are interested in. Again there are very broad responses:

- Queensbridge (25%)
- Out of borough (25%)
- Shacklewell Primary (19%) – yet this school is oversubscribed
- None of the closest schools but staying in borough (19%)
- Halley House / Mossbourne Parkside (both 13%)

The local faith schools were not chosen by faith schools at all. Two SEND families stated that they would not choose another school and would consider home-educating instead. The remaining survey results are in the [Appendix](#) to this Chapter.

Once again, it is clear from the factors listed above that parents are choosing Colvestone very deliberately. At the public meeting, a parent talked about how they travel from Newham with their SEND child because it is a small, friendly, inclusive school where her son is supported and encouraged rather than feeling excluded from the other pupils. We are aware of another family who travels from Islington for similar reasons.

This informal proposal to close/amalgamate Colvestone, places these SEND children in a very vulnerable situation as they would have to move to another school. The parents are particularly concerned about potential transitions as these children need stability and routine.

It should be stressed that Colvestone’s position with regards to children with SEND (and the excellent access to education and provision that it provides) differentiates it from other schools in scope. It should be noted that the new Equality Impact Assessment accepts this (*Briefing Report – Informal Consultation*, pg 68); the response is that the level of support provided by Colvestone will inevitably fall because of the financial impact of low pupil numbers. There is no evidence provided that this would be the case, or concern from the school that given future projections that it would be impacted as is suggested in the future. Also it should be noted that an Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team responded to the consultation with concerns about the proposed closure (*Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* p.345), highlighted by Kwest, but unresponded to by Hackney Education in the report.

Two example letters from parents of children with special education needs can be found in the [Appendix](#).

The Council should understand that Colvestone is a positive choice for many SEND families, and this is a strength to build on for the future as there is increasing demand for SEND places.

Footnotes – Impact on children with special educational needs

[1] Colvestone SENCO presentation to SEND parents in October 2022

E. Impact on local development

Impact on the Dalston Development Plan

The Draft Dalston Plan has ambitious plans for Dalston with Hackney's population set to increase by 16% [1], which, as the Mayor stated, was created so that "Residents' priorities will be put at the heart of the Council's work in Dalston". The Dalston Plan forms parts of commitments made and adopted in 2020 as part of the Hackney Local Plan (LP33). These proposals would benefit Colvestone by delivering new children to the immediate locality in need of primary school provision in the short to mid-term, and long term place demand downstream from these projects. These committed projects would be harmed by the closure of Colvestone Primary School.

In summary, these plans include:

- [Building more than 600 new homes in Dalston](#) [2]. For all of the major new developments, Colvestone would be the closest primary school provision. There is no similar development plan near Princess May.
- Turning Colvestone Crescent into the [first 21st Century Street](#) [3], the borough's first permanent play street.

Most of the development would be concentrated at the [Kingsland Shopping Centre](#) [4] (see reference image below) with around 30% of the proposed housing being 3 bedroom family sized units and the aim of 50% of the development to be affordable housing (as well as smaller residential developments at surrounding sites) [5]. This could bring 200+ new families into the immediate area. See the new, specific analysis included below. If Colvestone and De Beauvoir schools were closed, parents in that development would have to travel almost half a mile to get to a non-denominational school. And even the closest one, Princess May, sits next to the A10 (see map in [Air pollution](#)).



Reference image: Hackney Local Development Plan 2033 – opportunity site D5 – Kingsland Shopping Centre

[Government guidance](#) [6] on school closures advises that local authorities can close schools when “there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils and there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium to long term”. The Dalston Plan makes it clear that there is demand for Colvestone’s school places in the medium to long term, because of the large number of new housing which the SPD will encourage in the immediate vicinity, and for which Colvestone will be the nearest primary school. The specific impact for Colvestone for the homebuilding projects are detailed in the following GLA-modelled child yield analysis.

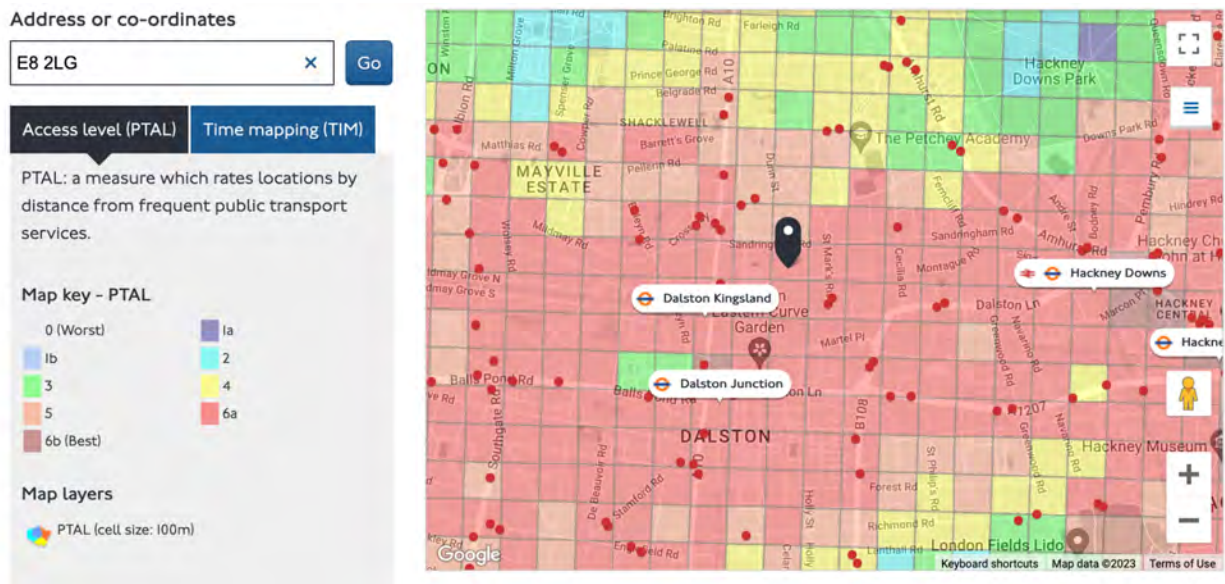
New expected child yield data from the Dalston Plan and homebuilding commitments made by Hackney Labour for new housing delivery (2019-2029)

Despite housing, and affordable family housing being identified as a key driver, very little attention or scrutiny is given to the question of housing in the Briefing Reports. Where the *Briefing Report - Informal Consultation* addresses housing development – §§4.37-4.43 - the references are generic and don’t respond to the specific position of Colvestone in relation to particular proposed growth – this is why the response in Appendix S §43 / p.776 is not convincing. Despite repeated requests for the underlying planning materials for the specific

allocations close to Colvestone (for all of the Dalston Plan developments Colvestone is the nearest primary school provision), with details of the mix of housing (ie how much is family housing), and the necessary underlying data / population calculations necessary to arrive at the conclusion in the Briefing Reports that homebuilding - and specifically the Dalston Plan and its proximity to Colvestone - would have negligible effect, none of these resources have been produced by Hackney Council for the consultation. This is particularly alarming as the recent Dalston Plan engagement events repeatedly identified Colvestone as key infrastructure for the project and further, that responses in Cabinet to questions regarding this that 'children wouldn't arrive soon enough' (Sept. 25th, 2023) suggests that either this data was being withheld, the elected official failed to understand the necessary timeframes that should be respected when considering future demand for places ('mid- to long term', Statutory Guidance), or to understand that the Dalston Plan developments are scheduled for delivery in the 'short to medium term' (Dalston Plan planning documents). In the absence of these materials from the Council, we have used Council figures and the GLA Population Yield Calculator to predict the child yield from the developments.

Dalston Plan Analysis

The following child yield figures for the Dalston Plan (delivery: short to mid term) were calculated using the projected housing mix for each of the developments identified in the Draft Dalston Plan and using the GLA's current Population Yield Calculator (v3.2). For this, the location of Colvestone Primary School was identified as Inner London (Geographic Aggregation) and with a PTAL of 5-6 (confirmed by TfL's WebCAT PTAL identification tool, as pictured below:



Source:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/urban-planning-and-construction/planning-with-webcat/webcat?lat=51.54912&lon=-0.07257&type=Ptal&locationId=ChIJSbNPHY0cdkgR3dziaXv3R8s&input=E8+2LG&>

[zoomLevel=15&places=Stations+stops+and+piers&places=Stations+stops+and+piers&comparePtaYear=&scenario=2021+%28Forecast%29&name=2011](https://www.google.com/maps/@51.525,0.115,15z/data=!3m1!1e3!3m2!1sStations+stops+and+piers&places=Stations+stops+and+piers&comparePtaYear=&scenario=2021+%28Forecast%29&name=2011)

For each of the Development Sites the number of proposed 1, 2 and 3 bed units were identified from the planning documents (Draft Dalston Plan). Using the LP33 (Hackney Local Plan) the target dwelling mixes were identified as 50% affordable housing. These mixes are accessible here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HRu0A_fdoWUi3OBfzUT03TT4S9gYwHDq/view

Of these, the affordable housing is split 60% social rent / 40% Intermediate 'affordable'. For the GLA calculations, 'intermediate' dwellings are classed as the same class as 'market rent'.

One development site, D5, has upper and lower values of dwelling yields, and so the following total numbers of dwellings (market / intermediate and social) have a higher and lower set of values. Child yield figures were produced for both.

Once each of the proportional values are applied (market / affordable, then subdivided social / intermediate) the following number of total units for the Dalston Plan by size, type, and GLA class are as follows:

Using the upper unit value of D5, the Development yield totals are:

1 bed: 62 social, 146 market and intermediate
2 bed: 67 social, 157 market and intermediate
3 bed: 67 social, 155 market and intermediate

Using the GLA Population Yield Calculator with the above criteria, this dwelling mix would deliver:

Children aged 0 - 4: 132.7
Children aged 5-11: 103.4

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Market and Intermediate Units	146	157	155	0
Social Units	62	67	67	0

Total Units	654
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Geographic Aggregation	Inner London
------------------------	--------------

PTAL	PTAL 5-6
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Notes

Sample size of 23 sites

Shaded cells require user input

Select both geography and PTAL

For developments in Outer London with PTAL 5-6 use [London/PTAL 5-6] or [Outer London/3-4] to calculate yield

Yield from Development (persons)

	Market & Intermediate	Social	Total
Ages 0, 1, 2, 3 & 4	41.0	91.7	132.7
Ages 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11	29.5	73.8	103.4
Ages 12, 13, 14 & 15	11.0	38.6	49.6
Ages 16 & 17	5.8	20.4	26.2
18-64	873.7	313.7	1187.5
65+	20.9	7.3	28.1
Total Yield	981.8	545.6	1527.4

For the lower unit value of D5, the Development yield totals are:

1 bed: 46 social, 107 market and intermediate

2 bed: 50 social, 116 market and intermediate

3 bed: 49 social, 113 market and intermediate

Using the GLA Population Yield Calculator with the above criteria, this dwelling mix would deliver:

Children aged 0 - 4: 97.6

Children aged 5-11: 76

GLA Population Yield Calculator

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Market and Intermediate Units	107	116	113	0
Social Units	46	50	49	0

Total Units	481	
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Geographic Aggregation	Inner London
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PTAL	PTAL 5-6
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Notes

Sample size of 23 sites

Shaded cells require user input

Select both geography and PTAL

For developments in Outer London with PTAL 5-6 use [London/PTAL 5-6] or [Outer London/3-4] to calculate yield

Yield from Development

(persons)

	Market & Intermediate	Social	Total
Ages 0, 1, 2, 3 & 4	30.0	67.6	97.6
Ages 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11	21.6	54.4	76.0
Ages 12, 13, 14 & 15	8.0	28.4	36.4
Ages 16 & 17	4.2	15.0	19.2
18-64	640.5	231.8	872.3
65+	15.3	5.4	20.7
Total Yield	719.7	402.6	1122.2

As can be seen from the above figures, the Dalston Plan developments (planned for delivery in the short to medium term) will deliver 76 and 100 children to the immediate vicinity of Colvestone primary school - between 2.5 and 3.5 entire year groups of school aged children within very short (most sites, less than 100m), fully pedestrianised access to primary school provision. This is anything but negligible, and the proportion of 0-4 year olds suggests an even healthier future demand for places downstream. This data draws a compelling picture of future demand for places in the short to medium term.

Note, all of the Dalston Plan sites are scheduled for completion in the short to medium term, timeframes identified by the Planning documents in the Draft Dalston Plan. With the exception of site D2, this short or medium timeframe designation projects completion by 2029. D2 is still classed as a 'Medium Term', for completion by 2033, but is a much smaller proportion of the total dwelling mix.

Closing Colvestone could impede the success of the development by making it hard for developers to sell those apartments to families, given the limited schooling options. The closure of so many local authority schools, and particularly one close to a new development, threatens

to lock Hackney into a death spiral when it comes to families living in the area--a reduction in families leads to the closure of schools and reduction of choice, which makes the area unappealing to families, which leads to more closed. If Hackney wants to get out of that pattern, it has to fight to keep as many schools afloat as possible during these difficult times, especially ones near new family-friendly developments, in order to make it possible to bring families back to the area.

Additional Hackney Council Homebuilding Commitments in Dalston

Hackney Council have committed to delivering 1330 new homes per year to Hackney over ten years, 10% of which are designated in Hackney (i.e. 1330 over 10 years). Assuming all houses are sold at market rates (the Hackney Planning document above states that the borough struggles to enforce affordable provision in dwellings of 0-9 units, but this should be assumed to be a low estimate), and using the guideline planning size guidelines (equal 1/3rd proportions of 1, 2 and 3 bed dwellings) the new homebuilding will add:

Dalston plan upper limit subtracted from 1330 = 676 new homes.

Of which 226 x 1 bed, 225 x 2 bed, 225 x 3 bed.

Child yield:

Children aged 0 - 4: 56.6

Children aged 5-11: 41.2

Dalston plan lower limit subtracted from 1330 = 849 new homes.

Of which 283 x 1 bed, 283 x 2 bed, 283 x 3 bed.

Children aged 0 - 4: 70

Children aged 5-11: 51

Note these are additional children to the numbers generated by the Dalston Plan developments: new to Dalston, in the immediate vicinity of Colvestone, in need of education provision.

Impact on Hackney's first 21st Century Street

Colvestone Crescent is slated to become the first 21st Century Street, a long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, spaces for congregating and a small playing field. A key tenet of the 21st Century Street is that it is located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without the school, that plan makes less sense.

[The plan](#) [7][8] says “The first phase – positioned directly next to Colvestone Crescent Primary School presents an opportunity to create a permanent school street. It will expand the existing school playground into the street, creating a safe space for children to play on the street itself”

(see more about 21st Century Street in [Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street](#)).

Summary

The proposed closure of Colvestone could be potentially damaging to Hackney's plans for Dalston's future, making the new developments a harder sell to parents and ripping out the heart of the first 21st Century Street.

Footnotes – Impact on local development section

[1] 16% Hackney's population to increase by 2033, LP33 Supplementary Planning Document – Draft Dalston Plan – Summary Doc – Buildings 2021.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WNNYPAJPzAIDtg3nOnJDWtwbQOtyl8LI/view>

[2] Hackney Local Plan 2033 – Development Plan – Dalston Opportunity Sites.

<https://dalstonplan.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/opportunity-sites-in-dalston/step1>

[3] Hackney's 21st Century Street consultation – Colvestone Crescent, Dec 2020.

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/streetscene/21cstreets2/>

[4] Hackney Local Plan 2033 – Opportunity Site D5 – Kingsland Shopping Centre.

<https://dalstonplan.commonplace.is/proposals/opportunity-sites-in-dalston/step6>

[5] DfE paper on Opening and closing maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, Jan 2023,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1131568/Opening_and_closing_maintained_schools_Jan_2023.pdf

[6] LP33 Supplementary Planning Document – Draft Dalston Plan, Hackney, 2021.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ARhuxFDHuwAC8_sYifs7LhSkdgbJFqYk/view

[7] LP33 Supplementary Planning Document – Hackney Draft Dalston Plan – Implementation Strategy May v13, 2021. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GDFSBDiMkl5cz5g-XMebwQxjYvvzhqIF/view>

[8] Colvestone Crescent Engagement Pack prepared by 00SW for London Borough of Hackney, Nov 202.

https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/streetscene/21cstreets2/user_uploads/266_221129_cc_consulationpres.pdf

F. Air pollution

This section details London-wide and London Borough of Hackney policy commitments regarding pollution generally and specifically in relationship to schools, the problems inherent to proposals to merge Colvestone Primary School with Princess May School on the Princess May site, and landmark planning commitments to make Colvestone Crescent the first London Borough of Hackney 21st Century Street.

Background

The Mayor of London and the London Borough of Hackney have both made commitments to reducing pollution generally and the Mayor of London has made reducing pollution specifically around schools a key policy focus. As identified by the Mayor of London: 'There are two main air pollutants of concern in London, based on their impact on human health: nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). Poor air quality stunts the growth of children's lungs and worsens chronic illness, such as asthma, lung and heart disease. There is also emerging evidence of impacts on mental health and an increased vulnerability to the most severe impacts of COVID-19. For particulate matter the challenge is even greater still. All schools in London still exceed the World Health Organization guideline for PM_{2.5}.' [1]

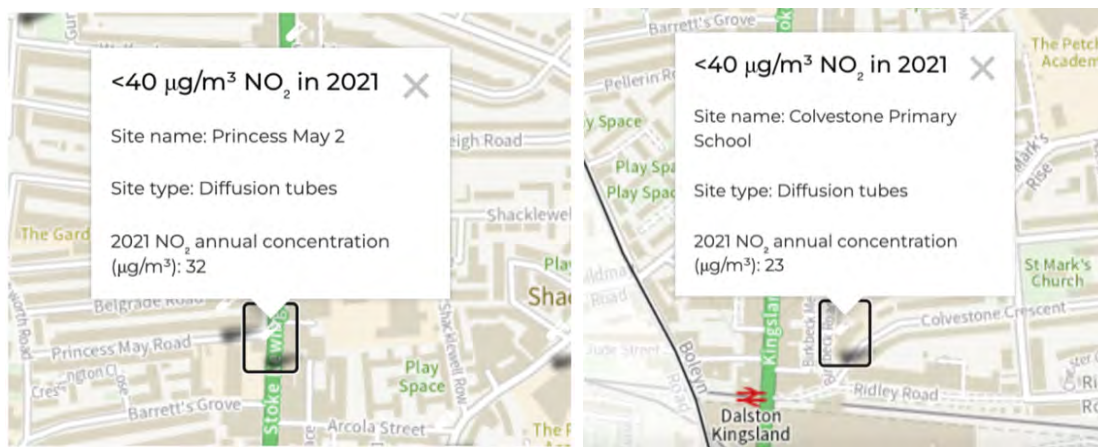
Each year, 'the capital's poor air quality contributes to around 1,000 emergency hospital admissions for children with asthma and other respiratory conditions.' [2] Furthermore, 'children growing up in polluted areas in London showed significantly smaller lung volume, with a loss of approximately five per cent in lung capacity – equivalent to two large eggs – compared to their peers in the rest of England...[and] research shows that *those exposed to the worst air pollution are more likely to be deprived Londoners and from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities*.' [3] Furthermore, pollution has been shown to 'also affect [children's] working memory and hence their ability to learn' [4]

In 2018 the Mayor of London launched the School Air Quality Audit, a scheme in which the London Borough of Hackney took part and committed to further measures across the Borough [5] – a pledge to expand these schemes borough-wide is an explicit commitment to funding received under the Mayor of London's Clean Air for Schools Audit. As part of these initiatives, a greater number of pollution monitoring sites have been installed enabling us to see clear disparities between sites across the borough.

Hackney's own Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2025 identifies school communities as amongst the most susceptible groups to the serious health impacts of air pollution within its strategy to improve air quality throughout the borough. [6]

Proposed merger of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May School on the Princess May site

The Council is proposing to send students from Colvestone Primary School to Princess May Primary, whose playground is right next to the A10. To get to and from Princess May many Colvestone students would be forced to walk along the A10.[7] As [Hackney's Local Plan 2033](#) states, "Kingsland High Street (A10) is the main route through this area and is heavily traffic dominated. As a result of this, it suffers from high noise and air pollution levels." [8] The Council's [air quality monitoring system](#) shows that the Princess May site had 40 percent higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO₂) in 2021 than the Colvestone Primary School site.

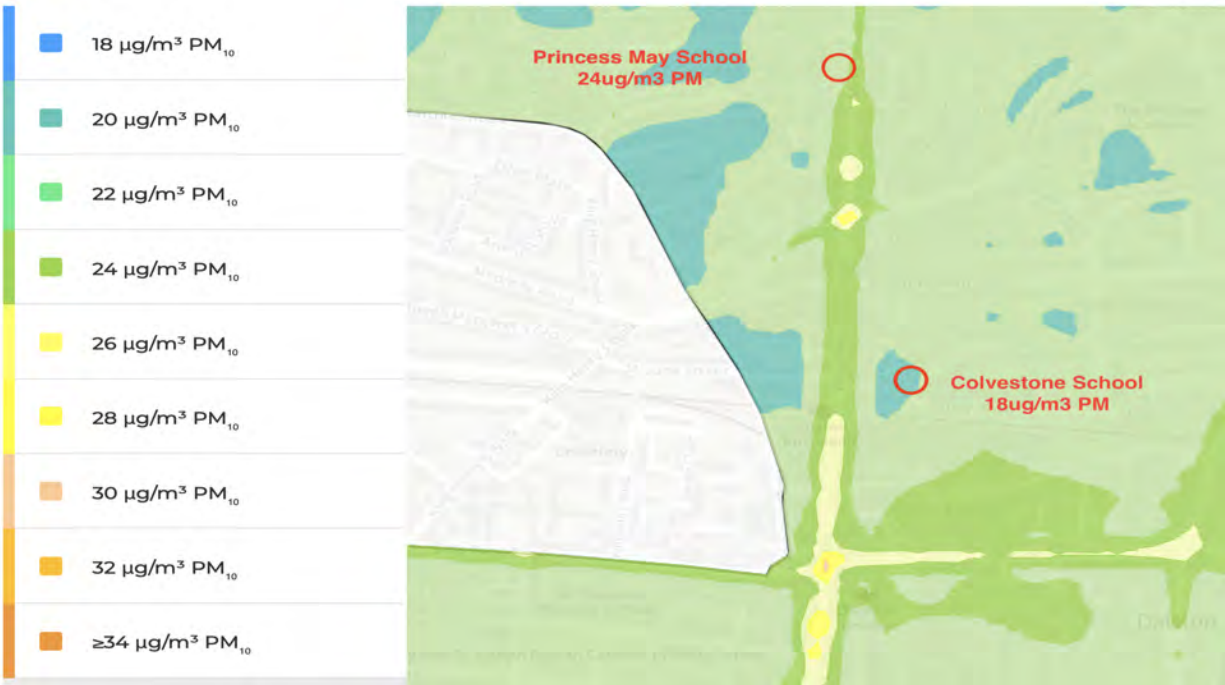
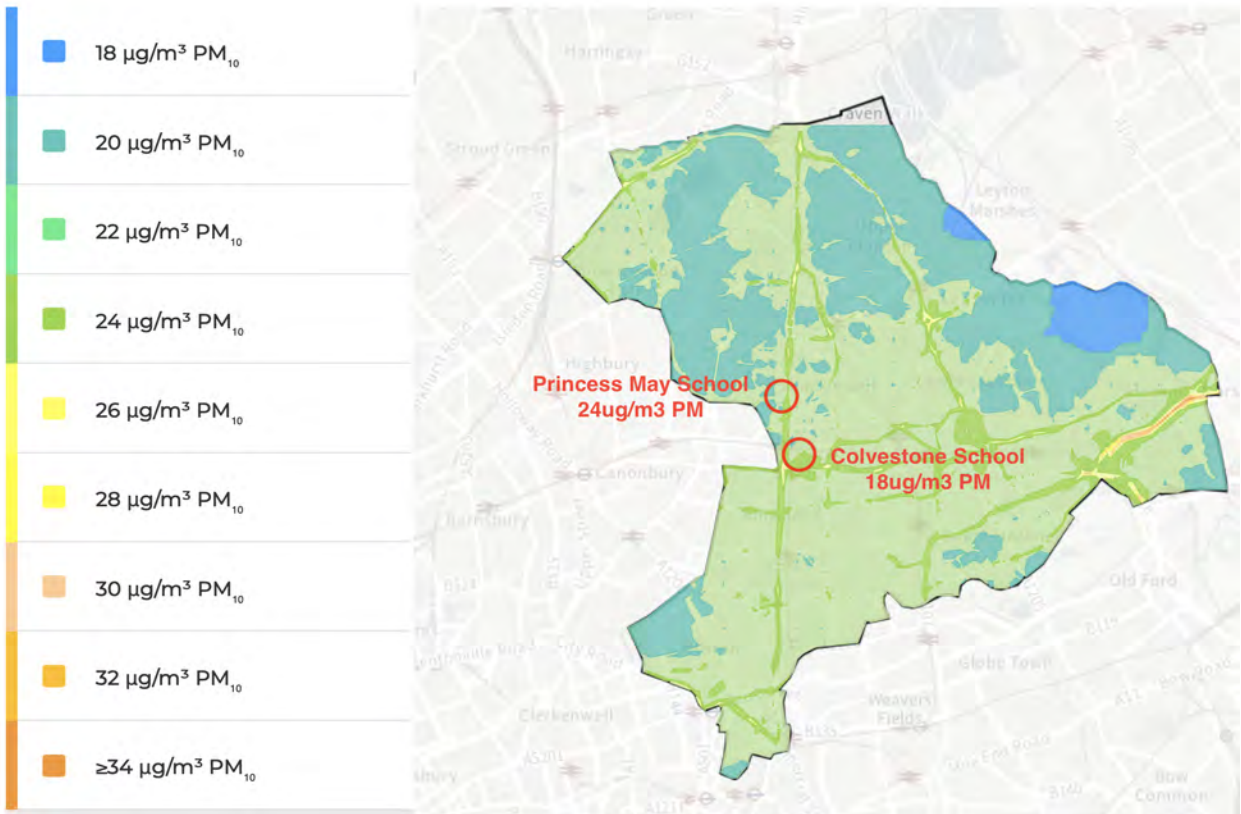


Key: Hackney Council air quality monitoring figures from 2021 showing that the Princess May site has 40% higher concentrations of NO₂ compared to the Colvestone Primary School site. It is reasonable to assume that the completion of the Colvestone Crescent 21st Century School Street with 40% tree canopy and other pollution-mitigating measures will reduce it further around Colvestone Primary School, whilst Princess May will remain on the A10, further increasing this disparity.

Ref: <https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality>

[Note the WHO annual mean air quality guideline is 10 µg/m³ for NO₂.]

In addition to Breathe London air quality monitoring project figures that show 'almost 40 per cent of the NO_x pollution at schools comes from road transport, with diesel cars being the single biggest local contributor to NO_x pollution at London primary schools...' [9] the borough is also recording dangerously high levels of particulate matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀). Whilst more dangerous PM_{2.5} levels are not currently available on the London Borough of Hackney website [10], it is reasonable to assume that these figures track (if not exceed, owing to the types of vehicles on main roads) PM₁₀ concentration comparisons between the Princess May site and that of Colvestone Primary School. These comparisons, using London Borough of Hackney data, show particulate pollution at least 20% higher at the Princess May site compared to those at Colvestone.



Reference images: Hackney Council air pollution mapping (2018, prior to LTNs and removal of parking / School Street at southern end of Colvestone Crescent) shows PM₁₀ levels at least 20% higher at the Princess May Site.

Ref: <https://map2.hackney.gov.uk/maps/air-quality-pm10/index.html>

[Note that the WHO annual mean air quality guideline for PM10 is 15 µg/m³]

At the Princess May site approximately half of all available outdoor space sits next to the A10 with a bus route and a traffic-light-controlled pedestrian crossing immediately adjacent that serves to further concentrate congestion and idling traffic. As noted above, these stark differences in levels of pollution are likely to increase both with recently completed and future plans at both sites: the greening of Colvestone Crescent as it becomes the borough's model 21st Century Street (see below) contrasting with LTNs that entrench Princess May's position on the main road traffic route through the local area.[11]

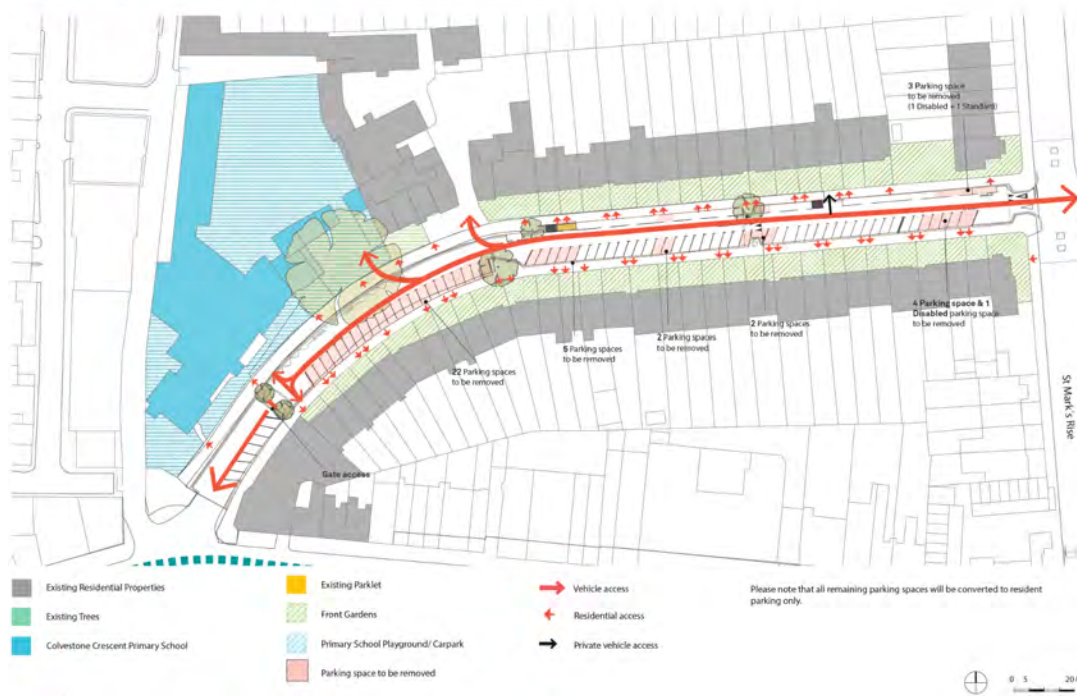
Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street

Adjoining the £1m Ridley Road Market scheme that incorporates local landscaping (portions of which are already completed at junction of Colvestone Crescent and Ridley Road) the Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street forms part of the Colvestone Crescent masterplan.

The Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and School Streets the Council have established to improve air quality in the borough could drive even more traffic to the A10. By contrast, Hackney Council already has an intelligently-designed and fully-funded plan to reduce air pollution around Colvestone Primary School. Colvestone Crescent, the road on which the school is located, is already a [School Street](#)[12], closed to traffic during the school run. The next fully-funded[13] stage is to develop it into the borough's first 21st Century School Street, the initial phase of which, 'positioned directly next to Colvestone Crescent primary school – presents an opportunity to create a permanent school street. It will expand the existing school playground into the street, creating a safe space for children to play on the street itself.'[14]

The consultation documents notes that the project, with the school at its heart, builds on 'a highly successful parklet project on Colvestone Crescent, instigated in 2019 by an active and passionate group of residents' and has 'been developed in collaboration with residents to ensure that the proposed green space will serve as an extension of an active and passionate local community.'[15] The Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street is a community project formed around a community school, and a bold and forward-looking plan that promises both to draw and retain families in the heart of Dalston.

Existing Site & Proposed Parking Removal



The Colvestone Crescent 21st Century School Street reinvents Colvestone Crescent into a long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, spaces for congregating, 'wobble walks' and informal play structures.

Proposed_Overall Masterplan



① School Street/ Parklet

② New trees/ kerb build out

③ Entrance Zone with greening, cluster seating & cycle stands



Paving enhancements & greening replace car parking at intervals along the street.

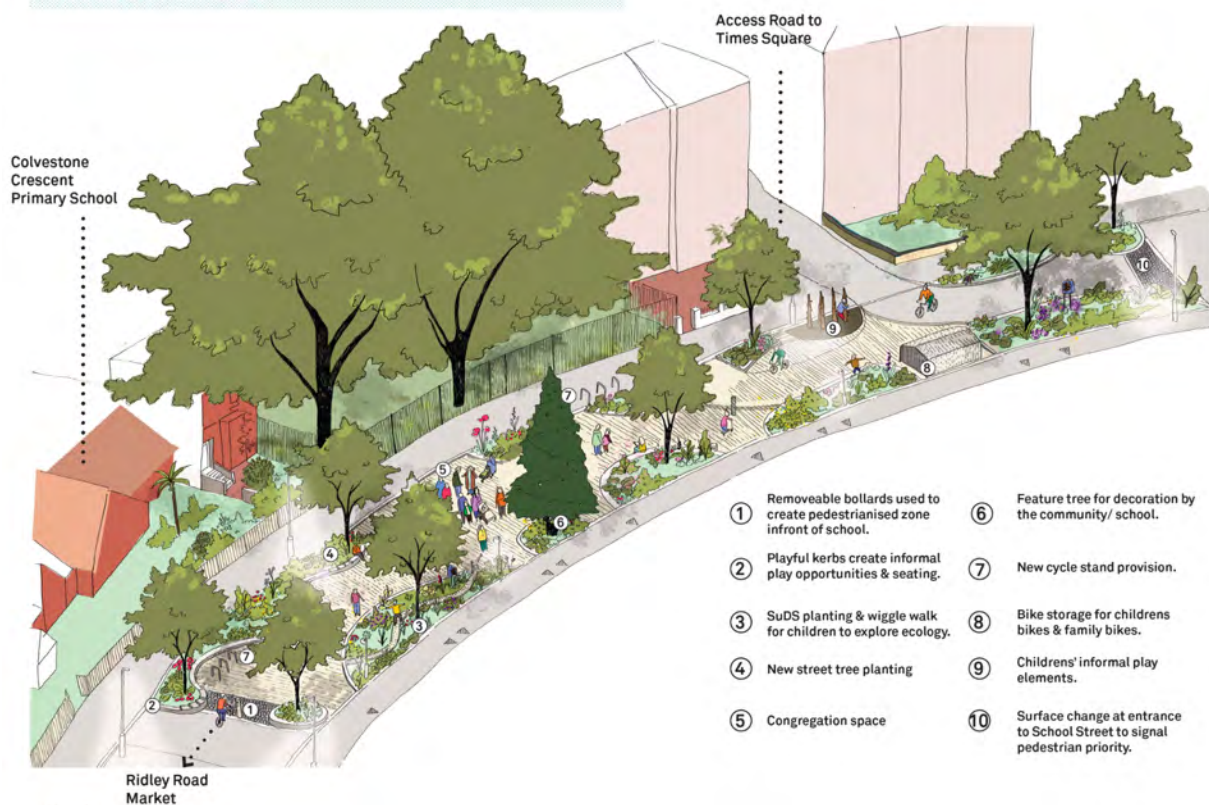


Clustered seating along the whole length of the western stretch of the street





Illustrative Axonometric



Whilst remaining accessible, the scheme incorporates an ambitious tree-planting strategy, significantly increasing the tree canopy of the street, active travel infrastructure and an innovative play strategy.[16] It could be assumed that further funding for the expansion of this

plan, if desired, would reasonably be derived from Community Infrastructure Levies on the Hackney Local Plan (LP33) / the Dalston Plan – CILs having the intention of ‘ensuring that a new development contributes to the cost of the infrastructure that the development will rely on, such as schools and roads.’[17]

The Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street will be the London Borough of Hackney’s first demonstration of how ‘streets can adapt to help tackle the climate crisis’.[18] Oliver Lord, Head of policy and campaigns at Environmental Defense Fund Europe has said: ‘The health burden of air pollution is not equal. Whether kids attend school on a main road or in a leafy suburb should not determine the quality of air they breathe, which will affect them for the rest of their lives. Our schools should become a catalyst for safer, quieter and less polluted roads.’[19] Colvestone Primary School is a shining example of exactly this catalyst: an historic school, imbedded in its local community, directly inspiring the model 21st Century Street project – a progressive prototype of which the London Borough of Hackney should be extremely proud.

It is impossible to see how a proposal to move children, one of the most vulnerable groups in the borough to the ruinous effects of pollution[20], to a site with higher levels of pollution is either defensible on duty of care terms or commensurate with Hackney Council’s public pledge to ‘no increases in pollution at schools in Hackney’[21]. Indeed the site at Colvestone – embedded as it is in the landmark 21st Century Street project, adheres to bolder commitments to *lower* pollution specifically around schools, in accordance with the Mayor of London’s strategy to improve the air quality around all London schools.

Summary

As identified by the Mayor of London and Hackney Council there is a clean air crisis in London. Children are amongst the most vulnerable groups to the damaging long-term effects of pollution: it determines future quality of life (in terms of health, attainment and other vectors of inequality). The pollution at Princes May Primary School, the proposed site for a merger with Colvestone Primary School, is drastically higher than at the Colvestone Primary School site (as demonstrated by London Borough of Hackney figures). The Council has an innovative, fully funded plan to continue to further reduce air pollution near Colvestone. No such plan yet exists for Princess May. While it is incumbent on the Council to protect the children who attend school there currently, it makes no sense in the meantime to move children from a school with lower pollution and a plan for further reductions to a school with higher pollution and with limited scope for further reductions.

The landmark London Borough of Hackney Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street is a signature demonstration of how our streets and our communities can adapt to rise to the challenge of the climate crisis, and it has Colvestone Primary School at its heart. To remove the vulnerable group for whom, in the first instance, the project has been designed would be perverse: moving students from a school where there is a clear plan for improving air quality to a school whose playground and buildings are close to a high traffic, high pollution street simply doesn't make sense – either for a proposed merger or for prospective parents. On the contrary, the position of Colvestone Primary School at the heart of the model 21st Century Street greatly enhances its offer to families, the retention of whom in the heart of Dalston is a priority concern for Hackney Council with ramifications across education, planning and community cohesion. Further, given concerns for falling roll numbers (challenged in 'Financial Viability' and 'Impact on the Dalston Development Plan' earlier in this document), the Colvestone Primary School site is a more viable and attractive destination site for pupils affected by any proposed mergers or closures of primary schools in the borough.[22]

Footnotes – Air pollution section

[1] Press Release / Policy Announcement, Mayor of London, 1 November 2020. See:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-plans-to-reduce-toxic-air-at-schools>

[2] Harriet Edwards, Senior Policy and Projects Manager, Air Quality, at Asthma UK and the British Lung Foundation, quoted in Press release, Mayor of London, 6th Aug 2021:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/31m-kids-going-to-schools-in-areas-with-toxic-air>

[3] Emphasis added. Press release, Mayor of London, 6th Aug 2021:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/31m-kids-going-to-schools-in-areas-with-toxic-air>

[4] Larissa Lockwood, Director of Clean Air at Global Action Plan, quoted in Press Release / Policy Announcement, Mayor of London, 1 November 2020. See:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-plans-to-reduce-toxic-air-at-schools>

[5] Mayor of London School Air Quality Audit (2018), re: Local Implementation Plan (funding that could be applied for, for work 2019/2020), p.46/7, quoting from the bid guidelines: '2.34 In the short- to medium-term, there must be a particular focus on action to reduce air, pollution, reducing exposure to it and tackling pollution hotspots, which boroughs should support through their LIP. Locations that have

large numbers of vulnerable Londoners, such as schools, should be prioritised for action. In particular, the boroughs have an important role in ensuring recommendations from the Mayor's school air quality audit programme are implemented, and LIP funding can be directed at both the audits and the delivery of measures.' Accessed here:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/saq_report_-_de_beaupoir_hackney_final_draft_-_inc_appendices.pdf

[6] London Borough Hackney Clean Air Plan 2021-25, section 3.8 (p.35). Accessed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g2gQvKM71Fto95rw0rdYo8sPtJAM1kjo/view>

[7] See the Mayor of London's School Air Quality Audit documents on the importance of considering travel to and from school in the overall consideration of a site's pollution impact / potential for mitigation.

Accessed here:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/saq_report_-_de_beaupoir_hackney_final_draft_-_inc_appendices.pdf

[8] Hackney Local Plan 2033, adopted July 2020, p.22. Accessed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HRu0A_fdoWUi3OBfzUT03TT4S9gYwHDq/view

[9] Press Release / Policy Announcement, Mayor of London, 1 November 2020. See:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-plans-to-reduce-toxic-air-at-schools>

[10] The link from <https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality> is a dead link and no other published monitoring data for PM2.5 from the London Borough of Hackney can currently be found.

[11] Even if, as is hoped, LTNs bring down overall traffic volumes in the borough, the relative positions of the two sites in regards to road infrastructure / traffic, the surrounding buildings, vegetation and use are so manifestly different that this stark difference in levels of pollution between the two sites is long set to remain.

[12] <https://hackney.gov.uk/school-streets>

[13] Confirmed by Cllr Woodley, Colvestone Primary School public consultation meeting, 24th April 2023

[14] Colvestone Crescent / 21st Century Street, London Borough of Hackney, November 2021. Accessed here: file:///Users/mc/Downloads/266_221129_CC_ConsultationPres.pdf

[15] Colvestone Crescent / 21st Century Street, London Borough of Hackney, November 2021. Accessed here: file:///Users/mc/Downloads/266_221129_CC_ConsultationPres.pdf

[16] Colvestone Crescent / 21st Century Street, London Borough of Hackney, November 2021. Accessed here: file:///Users/mc/Downloads/266_221129_CC_ConsultationPres.pdf

[17] Community Infrastructure Levies (Planning Act 2008) are due on local developments and here specifically the developments committed to in the Hackney Local Plan (LP33 / 'Dalston Plan', adopted July 2020). See Mayor of London School Air Quality Audit (2018), section 5.8.10. See also 'Financial Viability' and 'Historical Significance and Protections' (this document).

[18] Colvestone Crescent / 21st Century Street, London Borough of Hackney, November 2021. Accessed here: file:///Users/mc/Downloads/266_221129_CC_ConsultationPres.pdf

[19] Quoted in Press Release / Policy Announcement, Mayor of London, 1 November 2020. See:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-plans-to-reduce-toxic-air-at-schools>

[20] In addition to impeding brain function, 'primary school children are amongst the most vulnerable of the at-risk groups, as their lungs are still developing, and toxic air can stunt their growth, causing significant health problems in later life.' Mayor of London School Air Quality Audit (2018), accessed here: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/saq_report_-_de_beaupoir_hackney_final_draft_-_inc_appendices.pdf

[21] Mayor Philip Glanville, quoted 2018, accessed here: <https://www.cleanair4schools.co.uk/about>

[22] It might also be assumed that the Princess May site also offers the Borough greater asset value for repurposing without the listing and local protections that apply to the Grade II listed / Asset of Community Value / potentially covenanted Colvestone Primary School site in Colvestone Crescent (see [Historical significance and protections](#)).

G. Historical significance and protections

This section details the history of the building, its continuous operation as a school for the past 161 years, the existing protections on the building and site, and research relating to a possible covenant(s) on the building stipulating its educational function.

Built in 1862, Colvestone Primary School is a Grade II listed building[1] designed by TE Knightley in a Gothic Revival Style, which is situated in the St Mark's Conservation Area and to which it forms a protected architectural gateway[2]. It was one of six Birkbeck Schools founded by businessman and educational philosopher and philanthropist William Ellis. The schools were named after George Birkbeck, founder of Birkbeck, University of London, and pioneer in adult education.

The Colvestone building (formerly known as the 'Kingsland Birkbeck School') was purpose-built to reflect Ellis' radical ideas about education. Richard Clarke (Birkbeck / University of Westminster) writes: 'The Birkbeck Schools were secular, often for girls as well as boys, emphasised teaching through dialogue, rejecting rote learning (as well as corporal punishment)' with an emphasis on "'social economy" and "useful knowledge"'[3]. Ellis' schools and social focus to learning were explicitly aimed at widening access to education.[4]

'Its premises, which today remain nearly intact as Colvestone Primary School, reflect in their architecture some of the most progressive elements of Ellis' philosophy', Clarke continues. 'Two aspects of the Kingsland School's design stand out...: the presence of individual classrooms and good lighting and ventilation' – here in contrast to the heavier, more overbearing and larger-scale architecture of the London Board schools which were built from 1870 onwards (for example, Princess May School, built 1899 and which is not a listed building). The small scale of the school building is particularly appealing to children – both in establishing a proximity with their peers in a school community in which familiarity is the rule, but also in the way that this nurturing environment is reflected through the architectural detailing – for instance, the low-level eaves and the decorative elements of the building. These features, combined with the overall layout of the school – including the main hall which is central to the plan form – is both comforting for SEN children and helps them to navigate the building.

The Council has recently invested in sensitive refurbishment works to the listed school building, undertaking long-awaited and significant repairs to the external envelope including to the brickwork and stonework, as well as to the tiled roof and leadwork. The separately Grade II listed front railings have been also been carefully restored. The works have noticeably enhanced the school's appearance as a landmark building in Colvestone Crescent, marking the western gateway to the conservation area. The children's internal learning environment has also been brightened up by the decoration of classrooms, communal teaching spaces and corridors.[5] Whilst the building was shrouded in scaffolding and subject to both internal and external renovation over the last year (sadly also through the Reception open days) the wonderful benefits of these sensitive works are now being enjoyed as they reach completion and manifestly improve Colvestone's offer to prospective parents and pupils.

In addition to the light, airy nature of the purpose-built teaching, study and recreation spaces, the school benefits from two separate playgrounds: one for the Nursery and Early Years provision and one for the main school. The larger of its two playgrounds is calm, well-landscaped and proportioned, and insulated further from the road network by the enclosing school buildings and surrounding houses, together with the drop in land levels away from Colvestone Crescent. **The smaller of the two playgrounds, appearing on Council-produced pollution 'heat maps'[6] as having one of the lowest levels of pollution in the local area, is an outdoor classroom for Nursery and Early Years pupils and as such is designated an Asset of Community Value (2021).**

Most significantly, the Heritage Statement prepared in 2020 for the school refurbishment works writes in glowing terms of the contemporary condition of Colvestone Primary School, noting that 'in heritage terms, the original use is synonymous with the optimum viable use.'^[7]

A note on ownership

The Kingsland Birkbeck / Colvestone Primary School building was independently financed by William Ellis to house the school he founded in 1852, the building being completed in 1862. Initially built on leasehold land, the freehold was acquired 20 years later.^[8] It remained unaffiliated with the School Board (founded 1870) but, in 1904, motivated by a shortage of secondary school provision in the area its foundational trust (The Birkbeck and William Ellis Schools Trust) entered into negotiations with the LCC initially for a grant to support the change to secondary use (and specifically the installation of a science laboratory).^[9] By early 1905 however LCC demand in Hackney was specifically for girls secondary provision, and the trustees of the Birkbeck and William Ellis Schools Trust were under financial pressure relating to a second school (the William Ellis School, then in Gospel Oak).

In January 1905 a proposal was made to sell the Kingsland Birkbeck School (and site) to the LCC directly.^[10] It was initially thought that the Trust could 'sell the freewill outright to the Council... free of all restrictions under the Endowed Schools or Charitable Trusts Acts'^[11] though subsequent legal advice received in July 1905 advised that the Trust was determined an 'educational (as opposed charitable) trust' and therefore could not sell off educational assets, without condition and agreement by the Charity Commission, unless the Trust was wound up.^[12] The Trust however continued to operate (not least with regards to the William Ellis School) and agreement of terms was not reached until November 1905^[13] and the purchase completed in 1906.^[14] Such was the pressure on provision the LCC committed to the conversion works on the site and the first new pupils began at the school in October 1905 prior to the LCC taking ownership.

Given the time taken to find an equitable solution for the Trust, LCC and Charities Commission it is suspected that a covenant exists on the building pertaining to its ongoing function as a school as a condition of its purchase. This is the subject of ongoing research, not limited to a request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the London Borough of Hackney (ref: 16591453), further research in the archived papers of the LCC (London Metropolitan Archive) including legal advice received around the purchase of the school buildings in 1906, the archives of the Charities Commission (held in the National Archives at Kew) and the Land Registry.

The Birkbeck and William Ellis Schools Trust is still extant as a charitable foundation (and still appoints governors to the William Ellis School, in Highgate Road, Kentish Town).

It is now established that Hackney Council took possession of the original deeds in 1990. Hackney Council, through the pursuit of an FOI request, have been supplied with the copy of this receipt and the relevant cataloguing details contained in that documentation. Hackney Council continue to refuse to locate the deeds (see Chapter 3, and following subsequent legal requests for them – see Chapter 4). Failure to establish the legal conditions on the building is a failure of due diligence identified in the Council's own Estate Strategy, and prohibits any participant in the consultation in engaging with the precise questions around the reuse of the building and therefore on the ramifications of closing the school (financial, legal, academic and otherwise).

Summary

Colvestone Primary School is the last remaining Birkbeck School building and has functioned as a school for 161 years. Its architectural design and scale explicitly reflects the socially-minded and community-focus ideals of its founders – ideals specifically focussed on increasing access to education. As a purpose-built grade II listed school building, its best use is its optimum viable use as a fully-operational school educating local children. Recent restoration works on the building and internal modifications manifestly improve the school's appeal and parental offer.

Closing it as a school would be a significant historical loss to Dalston, one named in its listing, but would also remove the social heart from the St Marks Conservation Area and the community of Dalston. The school carries multiple site protections: two separate Grade II listings; its position as integral and planning-protected 'gateway' to the St Marks Conservation Area; an outdoor classroom designated an Asset of Community Value; with a potential covenant on the site protecting its educational function the non-disclosure of which prohibits informed participation of stakeholders and elected officials in the Formal Consultation.

Footnotes – Historical significance and protections section

[1] 'Colvestone Primary School was added to the National Heritage List for England in February 1975 at Grade II and is of special heritage interest on account of its architectural and historical value.' Heritage Statement (prepared for London Borough of Hackney Planning), *Heritage Collective*, 2020, p.9. Listed building entry (Historic England): 1265832. Separate Grade 2 entry for railings: 1226422. Accessed: historicengland.org.uk

[2] For the identification of the Grade II listed Colvestone Primary School as a protected / locally important view see Draft Dalston Plan Supplementary Planning Document, May 2021, p.99, and recent planning applications on Colvestone Crescent. DDP SPD accessed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JKYYxGAtynP0NsxumGUAq_tR70Lg90_a/view

[3] 'Self-Help and the London Mechanics' Institution – Birkbeck After (George) Birkbeck', Richard Clarke, Birkbeck College, University of London, 2009

[4] 'Social Economy in the Classroom: The London Birkbeck Schools', Richard Clarke, in *The London Journal*, 2023

[5] It is suggested that these and potential future (unforeseen) works that benefit the school (for example the expansion of the (funded) 21st Century Street) could be financed by the Community Infrastructure Levy (Planning Act 2008) due on local developments and specifically the developments committed to in the Hackney Local Plan (LP33 / 'Dalston Plan', adopted July 2020). The intention of CILs: 'a means of ensuring that a new development contributes to the cost of the infrastructure that the development will rely on, such as schools and roads.' See Mayor of London School Air Quality Audit (2018), section 5.8.10. See also 'Financial Viability' and 'Pollution' (this document).

[6] See 'Pollution', this document. Images: <https://map2.hackney.gov.uk/maps/air-quality-no2/index.html>

[7] Heritage Statement (prepared for Hackney Planning), *Heritage Collective*, 2020, p.39

[8] 'Social Economy in the Classroom: The London Birkbeck Schools', Richard Clarke, in *The London Journal*, 2023

[9] Educational Committee Report, 1st November 1904, LCC Minutes, London Metropolitan Archive, p.2363

[10] Higher Education and Scholarships Sub Committee: Agenda Papers, LCC Archive, London Metropolitan Archive, 27th Jan 1905

[11] Higher Education and Scholarships Sub Committee: Agenda Papers, LCC Archive, London Metropolitan Archive, 5th May 1905

[12] Higher Education and Scholarships Sub Committee: Agenda Papers, LCC Archive, London Metropolitan Archive, 21st July 1905

[13] Higher Education and Scholarships Sub Committee: Agenda Papers, LCC Archive, London Metropolitan Archive, 17th November 1905

[14] Educational Committee Report, 8th May 1906, LCC Minutes, London Metropolitan Archive, p.1169

9. Campaign summary

Colvestone Primary School's campaign to be taken off the list for merger has captured people's attention locally, regionally, nationally – and even internationally.

The strength of feeling across the Colvestone community has been remarkable.

In a short period of time, we have rallied support and endorsements from school families, ex-pupils, local residents and the wider Dalston community.

Petition

Since the launch of our petition at the start of April, we have amassed 1,701 signatures each putting their name to: *...remove Colvestone from the potential closure list, thereby ensuring security and stability for staff, pupils and parents.*



The screenshot shows a Change.org petition page. At the top, the Change.org logo is visible. Below it, there are navigation tabs for 'Petition details', 'Comments', and 'Updates'. The main heading of the petition is 'Save Colvestone Primary School in Dalston'. To the left of the main text is a green banner with the text 'SAVE COLVESTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL'. To the right, there is a progress bar showing that 1,697 signatures have been collected, with a goal of 2,500. A message states: 'At 2,500 signatures, this petition is more likely to get picked up by local news!'. Below the banner, the text reads: 'Colvestone FSA started this petition to Hackney Council (Mayor Phillip Glanville, Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Cllr Guy Nicholson, Paul Senior)'. A paragraph explains: 'In response to falling enrolment across the borough, Hackney Council has made an initial proposal to merge Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School at the Princess May site from September 2024, which means the closure of Colvestone school.' On the right side, there is a 'Sign this petition' section with input fields for 'First name' and 'Last name'.

The petition is still gaining signatures and supporters every day:

www.change.org/p/savecolvestone-fsa-colvestone

Some people who signed the petition also added their thoughts about the Council's proposal:

“This school is a vital part of Dalston’s community, as a parent of a child who attended Colvestone it was brilliantly placed with no other schools nearby. He went on to study chemistry at Oxford, as did another of his classmates. I cannot imagine this school no longer existing, it must not close.”

Former parent

“Colvestone Primary School is an essential part of the Ridley Road area community.”
Local resident

“Colvestone is a valuable part of the Dalston community, our children benefited from a fantastic educational experience that is as open and diverse as the local area. It is really important for future generations of children.”
Former parent

Local support

Our cause has caught the attention of Dalston’s local Councillor including Zoe Garbett – and the campaign made the neighbourhood update mailed to every household in the ward.



Hackney Council wants to close Colvestone Primary School, leaving parents and staff in shock. The council wants to move the school’s students to Princess May Primary School, due to falling pupil numbers across Hackney.

Colvestone is Dalston’s only non-denominational school. It is a tight-knit community with one-

form entry. The council has recently spent more than £200,000 to help the school improve.

Zoë Garbett, Dalston’s Green councillor, is backing local parents who want Colvestone to stay open. Parents are also worried about air pollution in the playground at Princess May.

Zoë said: “This announcement

has shaken parents, staff and the whole school community. Parents tell me that they want Colvestone to stay open and have time to keep improving.”

Want to help support Colvestone Primary? Visit: www.change.org/SaveColvestone or contact: zoe.garbett@hackney.gov.uk

Press coverage

Our story has been featured in the Hackney Gazette and Hackney Citizen multiple times:

www.hackneygazette.co.uk/news/23469925.author-michael-rosen-joins-bid-stop-hackney-school-merger/

<https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2023/04/20/parents-dalston-primary-school-merger-council-boosts-rethink/>

Hackney Gazette

Author Michael Rosen joins bid to stop Hackney school merger

20th April

HACKNEY COUNCIL

MICHAEL ROSEN

EDUCATION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PEOPLE

HACKNEY



By Julia Gregory

Children's author Michael Rosen has added his name to a campaign to save a Hackney primary school at risk of closure because of falling school rolls.

‘It’s not a commodity’: Parents from Dalston primary school at risk of a merger urge council bosses to rethink plans

By [Julia Gregory](#), Local Democracy Reporter | Thursday 20 April 2023 at 17:32



Protest outside Colvestone Primary School. Photograph: Julia Gregory

A group of Hackney parents have launched a campaign to save their children's primary school.

Colvestone is one of four primaries that could merge under plans that also include the potential closures of De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer schools in September 2024.



Parents Corine and Brandon Bishop at Colvestone Primary School, Hackney. Their child has special needs. Because of falling school rolls Colvestone primary could merge with Princess May School. Photo: Julia Gregory

We were also featured on ITV News:

<https://www.itv.com/news/london/2023-04-24/school-closing-as-young-families-are-driven-out-by-spiraling-london-costs>

itvX

School closing as young families are 'driven out' by spiraling London cost of living

LONDON | EDUCATION | POLITICS | ⌚ Monday 24 April 2023 at 6:27pm



And we are in conversation with German broadcaster ADR who would like to feature Colvestone's story in an extended report later in May "to look at the bigger picture and what these developments mean for a city like London and what possible solutions would be to keep a city attractive for families".

We have also featured in the Financial Times, The Guardian and BBC London:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-67275173>

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Hackney mayor candidate campaigns under way as by-election looms

9 hours ago



Colvestone Primary School parents Hendrik Elstein and Mike Cooter for whom school closures is an important issue

Social media

Our campaign on social media (Facebook and Twitter) has seen tweets, posts and the petition shared by our supporters to help us reach thousands of people, including previous Colvestone parent, the renowned poet and activist Michael Rosen.

Public meeting

On Monday 24th April, 135 people attended the public meeting at the school. The session ran for 1 hour and 45 minutes, as parents, teaching and support staff and the local community voiced their deep concern for the plans.

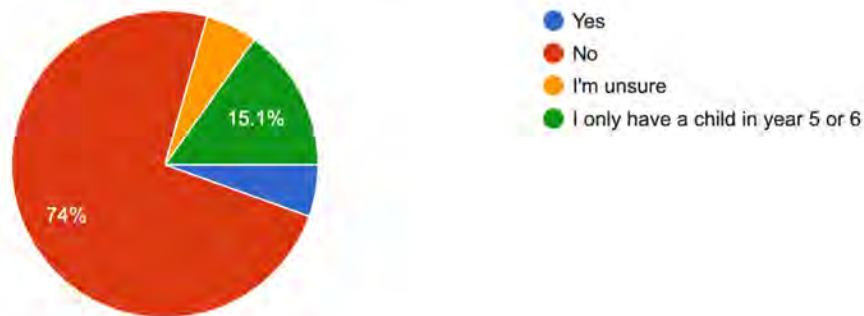
10. Appendix

Appendix 1: Full Results of survey conducted during 26 – 28th April, after the April 24th meeting.

Colvestone Parents Choice Factor Survey

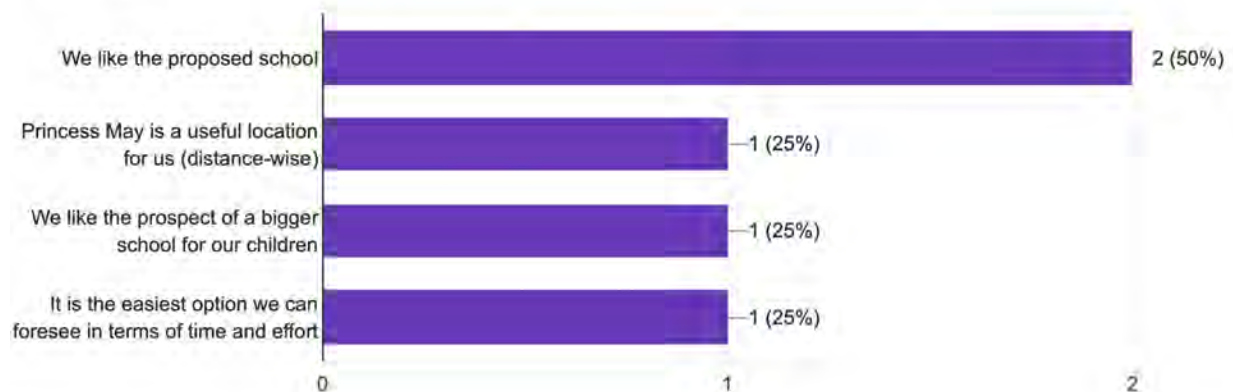
If the council were to go ahead with the proposed merger of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May in September 2024, will you agree to sen...tion only!) if you only have a child in year 5 or 6.

73 responses



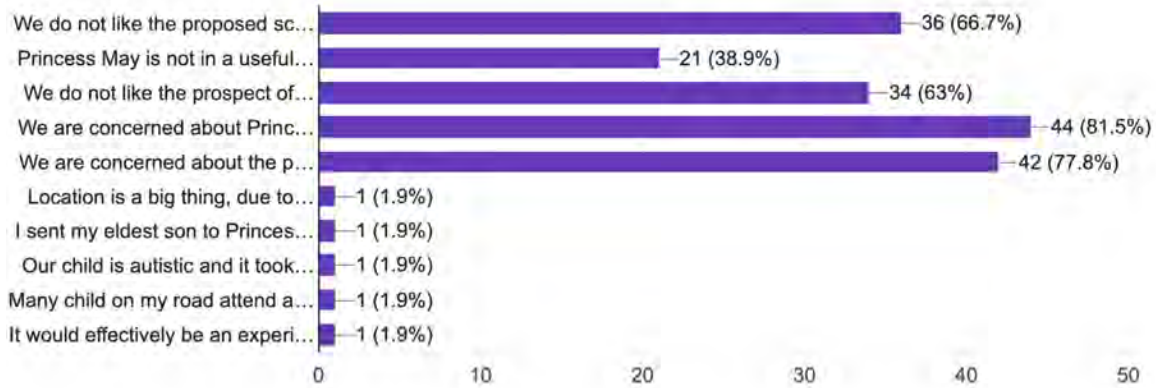
If you are happy to send your child to Princess May in September 2024, please help us understand the main reasons - please check all that apply

4 responses



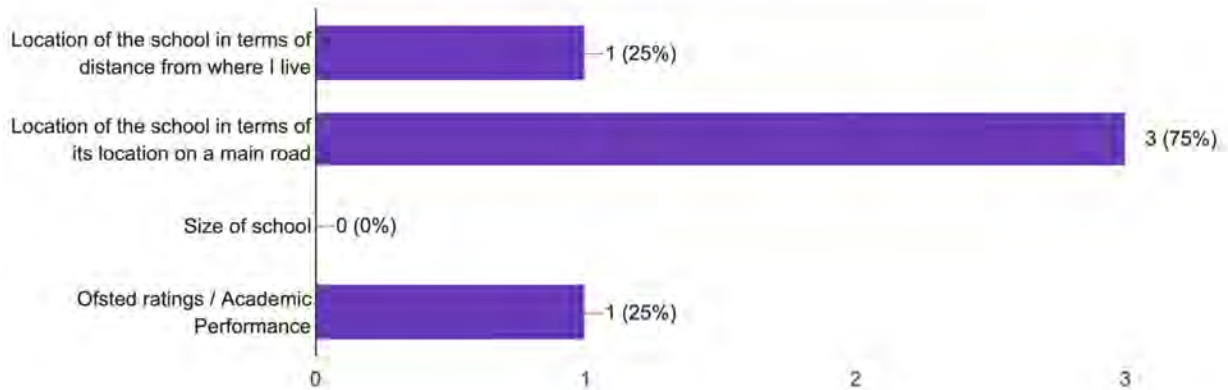
If you have no intention of sending your child to Princess May in September 2024, please help us understand the main reasons - please check all that apply

54 responses



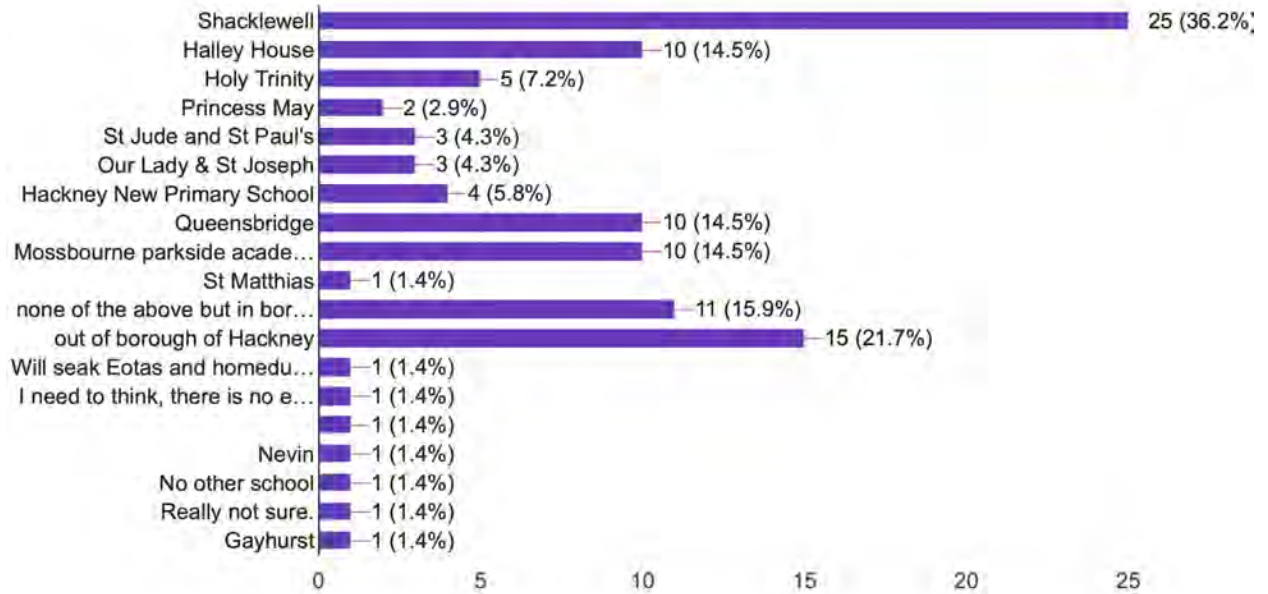
If you are unsure about whether you would send your child to Princess May, what factors will affect your decision? - please check all that apply

4 responses



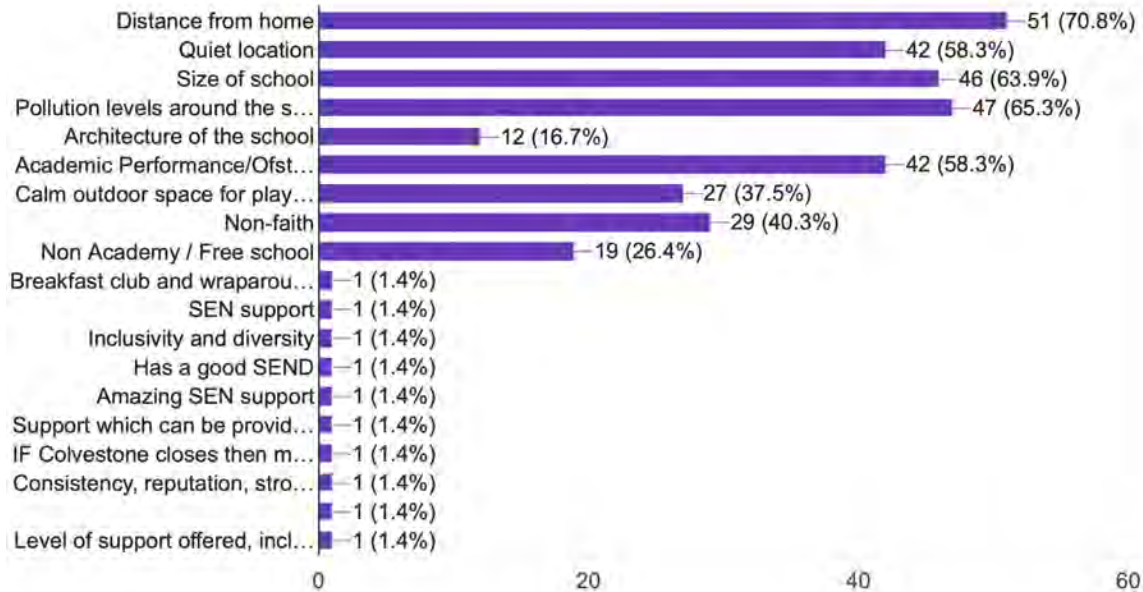
If Colvestone were to merge, what would be your preferred choices of school for your child - please answer this question whether or not you answered yes or no above (and please check all that apply)

69 responses



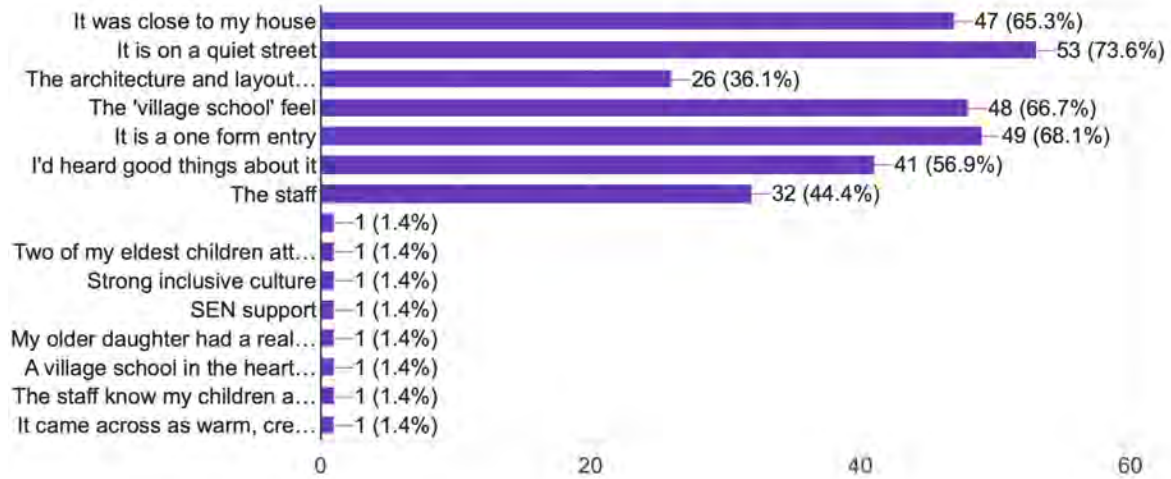
What are the main factors you take into account when choosing schools for your child(ren) - please check all that apply

72 responses



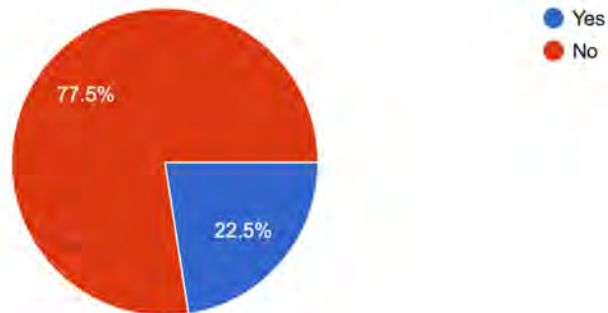
Why did you choose Colvestone - please check all that apply

72 responses



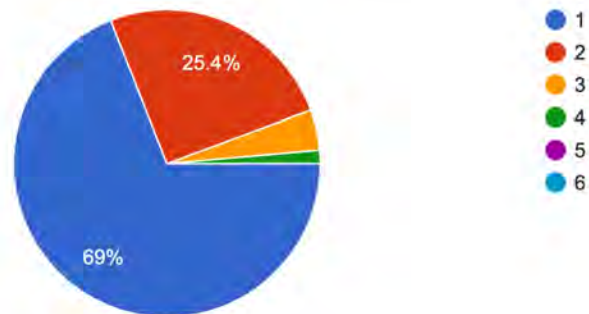
Does your child(ren) have Special Educational Needs

71 responses



How many children do you have /care for who attend this school?

71 responses



Final survey question: Anything else you think the Council should know:

“Our child is autistic and it took us a long time to settle her and be happy at Colvestone. It will be extremely difficult and impossible to move her to another school at this stage.”

“Many children on our road attend [Princess May] and both parents and children are not happy”

“I sent my eldest son to Princess May 8 years ago and had to change schools after a few months because we were really unhappy with the standards of the school. We visited the school again a couple of years ago, whilst going through the selection process for my youngest child, who currently attends Colvestone and we were disappointed to discover that Princess May is still not a viable option for us to send our children. We would not send our child to Princess May, our child is very happy at Colvestone and we’re it to close we would look at finding a similar school to Colvestone probably outside the borough”

Some powerful statements from families about Colvestone and the proposed merger:

“A village school in the heart of the city. A place the children could ‘own’ and know ALL their peers.”

“It came across as warm, creative, fostering community feel, inclusive of parents”

“The Staff take the ethos of the school very seriously”

“[Colvestone has a] Strong, inclusive culture”

“Closing Colvestone would push us as parents away from the centre of Dalston and potentially out of the Borough. It’s an academically strong and inclusive school with an excellent community whose non-faith, non-academy/free status, and single form intake gives it a village feel in the centre of bustling Dalston and is unique to the area.”

“A big school is not suited to every child's need and therefore the reason why Colvestone was chosen even though it was a bit of a distance.”

“The new leadership team have worked hard to create a viable school going forward – with a little support (and at least not being shot in the foot by our own education authority) I believe we are the model for Hackney’s future. A 21st century school on a 21st century street.”

“My daughter has additional needs and I would be looking for an out of borough move to find something similar to Colvestone”

“I don’t know a single parent that would consider sending their child to Princess May. I think it would be a shame for Hackney Council to have to close both schools as I’m almost certain that Princess May will close after Colvestone because it will not get the pupil numbers. I don’t see why Princess May couldn’t close if it was needed and pupils transfer to Colvestone. Colvestone is flourishing currently and I’m sure with the new management structure it will continue to do so.”

“No other school we looked at had the small, family feel that Colvestone had.”

“The emotional impact on children’s well-being will be the biggest issue if the merger happens, not the finance element.”

“I’d prefer to not go to a faith or free school; however I feel this is all I’ll be left unless I accept a school on the A10 that is twice the distance from my current school”

“We believe that Colvestone primary school is a unique offering in the area, we are adamant that we will not be sending our children to Princess May”

“Please save Colvestone for future generations. This school is unique.”

“[Please tell Hackney] That my daughter loves Colvestone Primary School and the teachers that teach there and closing a community primary school will send out a very negative and lasting message to young families looking to live in Hackney.”

“Colvestone and Princess May schools are the worst match for merger, they are completely different.”

“Princess May has been an unpopular school for a long time. For the Council to decide that a good plan/good offer would be to shut Colvestone and move all the children to Princess May shows a massive lack of understanding of the Dalston community and/or a flippant attitude to families at Colvestone.”

“If Colvestone Primary School closes the wider community will become impoverished.”

“This will not only affect school age children and their families but the wider community too. Don’t do it”

“I am very worried about the outcome of this proposal as there doesn't seem to be any real choice here – there is no nearby one form non religious option – other than keeping Colvestone open.”

“It is discrimination against non-religious people to only close non-faith schools in this proposal. I would like to speak with a legal team to understand if we have a discrimination case. The Councillors have a legal responsibility to provide quality education for our children so why is the Council not closing the academically worst performing schools and sending those pupils to better schools? If the worst academic schools have a chance to improve then Colvestone should be afforded equal rights to improve pupil numbers.”

“If The school was to close, this would have a knock on effect with my job and being able to get to work on time.”

Appendix 2: Emails sent by parent of children with special educational needs

Email from [parent A] sent 25.4.2023

Dear [councillor]

I hope you are well.

Thank you for attending the meeting at Colvestone on Monday, and thank you for giving me your email address so I could write.

My name is [parent A] and I delivered my rather emotional speech advocating for the SEN children and families of Colvestone.

I wished to write and further express to you what this school means for my [child] in particular.

[child] is a wonderful little [child].

[They are] pure joy and sunshine.

[They] owns any room he walks in.

[They are] creative and unique.

[Their] greatest superpower is that despite being autistic, [they] has and is able to show great empathy and a strong ability to express and discuss [their] emotions.

Despite all the struggles [they have] had to face due to [their] neurodiversity, [they remain] self-confident in all aspects of [their] life.

The biggest challenge [they are] facing is school and access to education, which is due to the fact [they] struggles with visual and auditory stimuli processing by [their] environment and has learning difficulties.

Attending a school even like Colvestone that is a one form entry is already a hard mission for my [child].

[Their] first year at reception (Sep 2020) was pretty much a write off, as [they] needed time to climatise and adapt to the new environment.

Despite the fact that [their] then teachers took things really slow with [them], [they] found the demands of school extremely challenging and cried every morning when I was dropping [them] off.

At the end of the reception year we could see that academically [they were] more than a year behind [their] peers, so we decided to have [them] repeat reception. This decision was taken in the August before the school year started and the school supported us fully in our decision to keep [child] back. There was no argument or discussion, they just listened to what [our child] needed and what [their] parents advocated for [them] and gave [our child] that.

My husband and I have no words for how grateful we are that [their] needs were respected in such an immediate and supportive way.

Reception the second time round (Sep 2021) was hard again, [they] cried a lot at drop offs, but gradually became more accustomed to the school environment.

[Their] writing improved and [child] started writing [their] name and being able to copy letters. [Their] recognition of letters was much slower, and by the end of the second year at reception [they] still had not mastered the letters or numbers, however [they] seemed more comfortable with the school setting and started to make friends.

Forming friendships is one of the things we always worried about, so to see [them] play with other children, request their company and to be included was a wonderful development.

When we started year one in (Sep 2022) [our child] was almost fully adapted to the school environment and would only have the occasional cry in the mornings.

However the educational challenges of year 1 were too much for [them].

[They] became withdrawn and anxious, [their] sleep got affected and overall [they] seemed lacklustre and sad.

When we spoke to [them] about [their] sadness, [our child] would say things like

“I hate my brain”

“ I want to kill my brain”

“ I don’t understand and I don’t want to go to school”

“numbers and letters are moving in my head, I don’t know what to do with this mama”

As you can imagine it was heart breaking for myself and my husband to realise that [our child] has these feelings of sadness, frustration and unworthiness.

So we discussed this with the school, who listened to our concerns, and adapted [our child]’s learning environment and curriculum so that [they] would learn **in [their] way and [their] pace.**

Moving forward to this week, I can tell you that with the love and investment of his teacher, [name removed], his TA, [name removed], [name removed] our Headteacher and the school Senco [name removed], [they are] able to count to multiples of 10! And [our child] has started to be able to read a few words!

This week [our child] is also **receiving an achievement award** from [the] school for all the progress [they have] made.

[Our child] gave me the letter inviting me to the ceremony with such pride.

[Our child] now skips to school most mornings and only ever asks to stay at home towards the end of the week when [they are] tired.

[Our child] is finally able to access education in [their] terms in an environment [they are] happy in

Both my husband and I are amazed by the progress and the happiness we see in our little [child]. We believe that moving [them] to a different setting would devastate [them] and settling [our child] will most likely take another two years, by which time we will be looking at the end of Primary.

We will most likely have to apply for EOTAS and homeeducate.

You must understand after our meeting this evening the significance of Colvestone for the SEN families of Dalston.

All be it emotional, I believe I made my point loud and clear.

Colvestone is not an accident, it is not a postcode lottery, it is our choice, our **ONLY CHOICE**.

There is no other school in the area that can ensure that our SEN children get the **access to education they have a right to.**

Closing this setting would mean the removal of **that right to access education for 35 SEN kids** that are currently on the register for Colvestone.

Another point that I would like to visit that I did not have time to elaborate on during my speech was the recent announcement that Hackney will be investing FIVE MILLION pounds across the borough to support SEN kids and services.

What about these 35 kids that will loose their school?

Their little family in which they feel **comfortable to access education?**

Might I ask what does it take so that the Council will consider making Colvestone an autism provision school?

Or an autism and SEND friendly school?

I mean it is well on its way there, as 24% of the children that attend have some sort of special education needs.

Double the national average which is 13.2%.

Please do note that the only two schools in the area that have autism provision are both two form, and they only have 10 places each in their units.

So not only they are two form and therefore **tragically unsuitable for autistics** due to the overwhelming and noisy environment, but they also **only offer 10 places**.

It is my understanding that there is to be additional autism provision units established in more schools in Hackney, however all the proposed schools like Nightingale, are two form schools.

I implore you to consider Colvestone as the perfect school to create an autism friendly environment.

Below, I am including the main points of my speech from Monday the 24th of April.

The Cull de sac nature of Colvestone facilitates a safe access to school.

SEN children get overwhelmed when they are walking through busy streets and can often run into traffic. This has happened to us a few times when walking the Dalston high street. You can imagine how scary this is for us but also for [our child], first to be overwhelmed and then to have [their] parents grab [them] to save [them] from traffic. Once a week when we go shopping on the high street is bad enough, but to have to deal with this twice a day on our school run, would bring so much danger and anxiety in our daily routine.

The neutral tones of this grade 2 listed building are ideal for SEN children as they offer a calm and unintrusive environment in which to play, so rather than being overwhelmed, autistic children can be free and comfortable and able to access PLAY.

Being a one form entry Colvestone is naturally a calmer and less overwhelming environment. A busy assembly in the morning stays with SEN children for the whole day, and that overwhelm makes their access to education impossible.

SEN children thrive in caring and loving environments that are willing to listen and really “SEE” them and their additional needs.

A home from home family that is willing to support them in ways that allow them to access education and realise their potential.

The Colvestone team operating as a close knit and caring family, achieves just that.

This school is a rare gem because of the wonderful humans that work there.

The small community of Colvestone gives SEN children much needed access to friendship and inclusivity. Attending a school with a smaller community provides fertile ground for **inclusive friendships to grow**. It is often the case that neurodiverse children struggle to create relationships as a rule and that becomes even harder in large, two form settings.

Finally, please do take note that for my [child], and for most of the SEN children of our school, adapting to new environments and routines is a herculean task and a big change such as their school environment will be detrimental to their education, well being and happiness.

Please listen and take note to the Sen parents and the School community, please show us that our choice matters. That we have the right for a non faith, local **one form** school.

And that our children will be given the **fair and suitable access to education they have a right to**.

Note that the majority of the families WILL NOT BE SENDING THEIR CHILDREN TO PRINCESS MAY.

So that will continue to be an empty school as it will not be brought to capacity by Colvestone students. If we wished for our kids to attend that school, we would have made it so already.

I do hope that during the Monday evening meeting you could see the passion demonstrated by the parents and wider community, but also that you have taken note of how organised and clearheaded we are.

This is not going to be another school closure that will go unnoticed.

In the three weeks since this proposal has been announced, we have come together to fight for our school.

We have researched and pulled together our historical, scientific and personal evidence and created a website for our cause :

<https://www.savecolvestone.com>

We have run a very successful petition that keeps gaining traction:
<https://www.change.org/p/savecolvestone-fsa-colvestone>

Our cause has attracted local press:

<https://www.hackneygazette.co.uk/news/23469925.author-michael-rosen-joins-bid-stop-hackney-school-merger/>

We were also featured in ITV news:

<https://www.itv.com/news/london/2023-04-24/school-closing-as-young-families-are-driven-out-by-spiraling-london-costs>

And we have attracted international press, from a German TV channel, as they are working on a documentary about London and how “friendly” it is for families.

And we are only three weeks in.

We will keep fighting this, until the Council realises how important this ONE FORM ENTRY school is.

We have the strength of parents fighting for their children and the support of the local community.

Please take note, please fight alongside us.

Thank you for your time

With Respect

[parent A]

A SEN parents representative for Colvestone Primary School

Email from [parent B] and [parent C] sent 26.4.2023

Dear [councillor],

We are writing to express our disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Dalston (Hackney) by Hackney Council.

We are very disheartened by this proposal and in the worst case scenario that this is going ahead, in total honesty, this will have a tremendous effect on [our child]'s education and subsequently in [their] future academic life.

We believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children especially for our SEN children, parents and carers and the community in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.

We live [very local to the school] and have been part of the Dalston community for a long time, we love our diverse community. We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [child], who is [age removed] years-old and autistic because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([our child] has a experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [our child] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [our child] to be happy and settled in [their] school (3 years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredible difficult impact on [them] and it will be practically impossible for [our child] to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on [their] mental health.

Let me give you a brief history of [our child]'s life so that you have an insight of where [they are] coming from:

[Our child] was diagnosed at 2.5 years' old with Autism by Hackney Ark (with severe delays in communications, severe delays in social interactions and severe repetitive behaviour). [Our child] regressed from age 18 months, she was prior to that stage able to say 5 words: Maman, Daddy, cheese, hello and bye (I am [redacted] and Daddy [redacted] – I only spoke [redacted] to [our child] from note to 2) and literally became non-verbal and lost [their] sounds capacity A, E, I, O, U, [our child] was now only screaming, lost eyes contact and only presented with repetitive behaviours. With tremendous tenacity we managed to access straight away hackney services of Speech Therapy (once a week where Specs was implemented) and Portage ([our child] attended the later services for one year, at home and at the Guarden (in pre-school) once a week alternatively).

At this point when I thought I would get back to my career I realised that [our child] needed so much support and decided to stopped my career to support [our child] full time and at this point I went on a mission and to become my child's therapist and a nucleus that would utilise all services offered and my own therapies. I taught myself an american therapy which is called ESDM (Eearly Start Denver Model), taking my child everyday to Gymboree (a pre-school private center) and implementing ESDM at the same time, helped also [our child] to support [their] physical mobility as at this stage [our child's] upper-body and hands were going inwards (I used

daily at home a school bench at home, making [our child] copying me standing on one leg and other leg and also using a climbing wall we had at home). With all these combination of supports from Hackney services and my own therapies, [our child] progressed, we retrieved her eye contacts and [their] body posture developed now to a straight posture.

At the end of the year, when [our child] turned 3, Portage Coordinator asked me what we foresee for [our child] academically and I expressed at this point that [our child] could go mainstream to a nursery, which was 7mins from home, Portage facilitated transition to nursery and [our child] entered nursery with an EHCP and worked hard at making sure [our child] has all support needed so that [they] attend nursery. The setting kept on using PECS for promoting speech and in 2019, when [our child] started to make the sound A, I, O, I found the Gemini therapy programme and within a month [our child]'s perceptive communications improved tremendously. We have used this programme since then and [our child] is now talking more, single words and understand everything we are saying to her. [Our child] attended nursery for two years 3 days a week with allocated one to one.

We then chose Colvestone Primary School because it is a one form small school and just 5 mins from home. [Our child] remained in one corner of the Reception class for a term and half and by the end of that year [they] had ventured in all corners of the school with a phenomenal support of [their] allocated TA. [They] attended Reception (with of course the pandemic, and attended school during the second lock-down).

When [our child] was in year 1, after a week at school (Sept. 22) [they] refused to go to school and leave the house, it took us 7 months to bridge [our child] back to school and as you can imagine, it was a real isolated work for us as [our child] didn't want to go out anymore but with great effort, determination and tedious work we thankfully managed for [our child] to be happy going out and then managed to bridge [our child] back to school, with the School Senco we worked very hard collaboratively to get [our child] back and [they] did for the end of year one. [Teacher, name removed] has done a tremendous work. Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support which as you may have heard from other families is not a given, [our child] has an EHCP and now a level 5 in funding which goes towards [their] SEN and [their] needs to be cared by someone all the time.

But even though, we have all in place on paper, the tremendous work we have had to do with the school in order to secure [our child]'s support has been a real effort, as well as working hard to make sure that [our child] is happy attending Colvestone and this in view to attend [their] years at Colvestone to year 6.

To be honest I can't believe we have to write this and the idea of this plan going ahead is very difficult for us and we are trying not to think about it!

We know our child feels safe and happy at Colvestone, [our child] receives a wonderful SEN support with a fantastic experienced SEN one to one [name removed] and a brilliant teacher/senco [name removed]. Moving our child to another school will be strongly difficult and

disruptive in our child's education and have consequences on [them] achieving long term education goals. And it will take us years to get to where we are and by then, it will be the end of primary school. This will literally damage all the hard work we have put together for the past 5 years. I hope you realise the difficulty of what we have to do on a daily basis to get to where we are. We are working hard at [our child]'s school foundation so that [our child] can thrive in the future and become the astronaut [they] want to be (I asked lately [our child] what she wanted to be and [they] astonishingly responded to me: "Astronaut" and repeatedly saying: "Captain [our child], to the rescue").

I have added few pictures below so that you can see how amazing [our child] is doing at Colvestone. In January, [our child] was awarded a Colvestone's Achiever for: "[Our child] enjoys the creative aspects of the curriculum. In art lessons and in Music, [child] shows good level of engagement. [Child] takes part in daily phonics lessons where [they are] exploring environmental sounds with [their] peers. [Child] enjoys drawing and will often draw pictures that are detailed in design. [Child] has drawn pictures linked to [their] favourite stories, such as "Class Two at the Zoo". Which [they enjoy] listening to and reading alongside the adult, some of the known phrases. [Child] takes part in PE lessons and will join the class line when [they] knows that it is time for PE. Well done [child]! – [our child] went to receive her award in front for Y1/Y2 asseemlee.

Last Friday [our child] was awarded 100% attendance Award, there again [our child] during full school assemble stood up when [their] name was called and went to receive [their] award and came back to sit with everyone else aside [teacher's name removed]. Yes 100% attendance! Incredible! What a journey, what an amazing achievement! And this done to the wonderful work of the school, one to one, Senco, staffs and the Leadership team, [Head of School], [Executive Headteacher] and team.

I also included a picture showing how [our child] is happy at school with [teacher's name removed] during Easter parade.

Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, which we strongly beleive in and is required. We strongly hope that our wonderful Colvestone Primary School can stay open and all is done to support our school and for our [our child] to keep accessing education as well as all the SEN children and all the children.

Yours sincerely,

[parent B] & [parent C]

Parent of [name / year removed] at Colvestone Primary School

Appendix 3: Excerpt from an email sent by a local historic and town planning specialist

Uncertain Future of the School Building and Site

Our foremost concern is the potential loss of Colvestone Primary School, but we also wish to stress the negative impacts its closure would have on the school building and the surrounding area. I write here in my capacity as a historic buildings and town planning specialist.

The school building dates from 1862, and was designed by architect Thomas Knightly in a Gothic Revival style. As such, it is one of Hackney's oldest surviving school buildings. It is a grade II listed building, which means that there is a duty under the Planning Acts to preserve its special interest as a building of outstanding historic and architectural significance for future generations. The optimum use for a listed building is its original use, which in this case is as a school. It is also possible that there is a deed of covenant on the site stipulating that the building should be used solely for educational purposes. If the school is to close, the building will lose the vital use for which it was designed and built – most likely forever.

Closure will also see the building become redundant. There are suggestions locally that the Council intends to keep the building vacant for the foreseeable future. As such, it will be sealed up and rendered lifeless within the community. The recently completed refurbishment works will be wasted, as the building will become a target for vandalism and unlawful entry. Disused buildings deteriorate at a rapid rate, as they are more prone to water ingress, damp and a lack of ventilation. Only recently, thieves stole lead from the school roof, an unwelcome act which inevitably will increase if the building falls empty. If the school use ceases, the building is likely to feature on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register, which identifies those historic sites that have an uncertain future and are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development.

There are fears locally that the Council will sell the school site to a private developer, preventing it from ever returning to use as a Hackney-run primary school. Although the school is not currently an opportunity site in the Council's draft Dalston Plan, it lies midway between sites D6 (Ridley Road) and D7 (Birkbeck Mews). Undoubtedly it will be attractive to housing developers as it is located on the western side of St Mark's Conservation Area, a leafy sought-after Dalston residential neighbourhood made up of houses dating from the same period as the school building. The site is adjacent to Dalston Town Centre and excellent transport links, including two Overground stations and numerous bus routes; a Crossrail 2 station entrance is also proposed within metres of the site boundary.

The redevelopment of the site at minimum will require a change of use for the listed building, resulting in internal and external alterations detracting from its special historic and architectural interest. But the pressure for development and the developer's profit margins will inevitably result in the large-scale redevelopment of the site, which at best will harm the setting of the listed building and at worst destroy it.

There will also be a negative impact on the character and appearance of the St Mark's Conservation Area. Firstly, the character of the area will be severely affected by the loss to the community of an important primary school attended by many local children. The hustle and bustle of school life will disappear forever, including the noise of children in the playground, children walking to and from school, children singing and playing musical instruments, performing in plays and partaking in sport. There will be no more school fetes, no more Christmas concerts, jumble sales or sports days – activities shared with the wider community.

Secondly, the physical changes to the site, whether simply the deadening effect of closing up the school building or the more drastic visual harm arising from a major redevelopment, will have a negative impact on the appearance of the conservation area. This is particularly pertinent as Colvestone Primary School is not only a landmark building at the western entrance to the conservation area, but it is also one of a handful of buildings in the neighbourhood which have a community use, the loss of which would have an homogenizing effect on the conservation area and a reduction in the quality of life of its residents.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, please review and reconsider the Council's plans to close Colvestone Primary School and merge it with Princess May Primary School in 2024. Nobody in the school or in the wider community wants to lose this very special school just to balance the Council's books. Nobody wants it to be subsumed into another much larger school with very different values, with which it has nothing in common. **To close Colvestone would be untimely, misguided and short-sighted. Please let Colvestone rise again, above all for the children of Dalston.**

Appendix 4: Hackney National Education Union letter of support Hackney NEU comments on the closure of Colvestone school

We have been asked by parents and NEU members of Colvestone school to briefly outline some of our concerns regarding the potential merger with Princess May.

Colvestone school is a small one form entry school that has served the local community in the heart of Hackney for over 170 years. It has historic significance as the last remaining of William Ellis's "Birkbeck" schools and is currently a Grade II listed building.

The proposal to close Colvestone school and merge it with Princess May is based on financial considerations rather than any social or educational benefit.

Hackney NEU believes that there are significant benefits in retaining small one form entry primary schools wherever possible. Whilst we understand the financial difficulties presented by years of government underfunding we believe that smaller schools and smaller class sizes are a desirable aim for our students.

As the recent Sutton Trust report has stated the UK has the largest class sizes in Europe* and all efforts should be made to arrest this trend. Research by the Education Endowment Federation suggests that *"The average impact for reducing class size is around 2 months additional progress over the course of an academic year."*

As well as improved academic progress we would argue that smaller schools and smaller class sizes have the following benefits.

Tailored learning

With small classes, teachers can more easily monitor every pupil's progress and tailor learning to each pupil. Teachers get to spend more individual time with each child, so they have a better idea of what they may need some extra support with. Pupils will also feel more confident talking to their teacher about any issues they are facing or areas of work they need some help with.

More social confidence

In smaller classes, pupils will usually feel more confident talking in front of a group. You also find with small schools, there is a greater sense of community and less cliques. The community spirit between pupils helps children to socially interact better and feel safe to try new things and discover new interests.

Teaching staff know their pupils better

At a school with a smaller community, teachers know more about their pupils, across their academic, emotional and even medical needs. Sometimes at larger schools, problems impacting a child's mental health or other aspects of their life can be missed.

More inclusive

At smaller schools, unique characteristics are embraced more, and students who are less outgoing can feel more relaxed about being around peers and have a better chance of enjoying their school experience.

Parents have a better relationship with the school

It is also easier for parents to be more involved in the school community, whether that is having a quick chat with their child's teacher about their progress or getting involved with school events and social events. Many parents make friends with other parents or getting involved with events related to their hobbies.

Colvestone school has consistently performed above the national and local average at both KS1 and KS2 with the last published SATs results showing 76% of children reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (compared with a 65% national average)

This speaks to the value of having a small local community school.

The transition to a new school, especially a larger one located further away (and the other side of one of the busiest roads in Hackney) would be very traumatic to the current pupils and the Council need to give serious consideration to this.

Chapter 3. Failure to consult in adherence to Hackney Council's Constitution: bases for Calling In any adverse decision on Colvestone Primary School.

Grounds for calling-in the adverse decisions in CE S247 (School Estates Strategy) are set out below:

1.1 The decision-maker did not take the decision in accordance with the principles set out in Article 1.2;

1.2 All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:

1.2 (d) – the decision maker failed to consider relevant evidence when making the decision

- Information was circulated to Cabinet on the day of the meeting with analysis of current vacancy place data, published by LB Hackney on 19th September. A copy of the full report is attached and further analysis is provided as Appendix C. It shows that the projected consequences of the proposals made in the Briefing Report are contradicted by actual place data calling into question key suppositions and the achievability of stated aims of the proposals. Schools are responding to falling rolls and the need to avoid deficit budgets, so have requested temporary caps on their Published Admission Numbers thereby reducing the overall vacancy rate.
- The Briefing Report refers to over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (based on Jan 23 census) and this is a 21% surplus of places. The latest school vacancy place data shows 391 empty places in Reception classes so the vacancy rate has reduced to 14.5%. Across all year groups (and all school types) the vacancy rate has reduced to 12.7%, which is approaching the target of 5 – 10% vacancy rates.
- The analysis also shows that projected (systemic) place reductions in the Briefing Report will not be achieved by the proposals. The target was a reduction of 135 places in Reception but some of these reductions have ALREADY been achieved through voluntary caps on PAN at De Beauvoir (30 to 15) and Princess May (60 to 30). If the proposals to close these four schools goes ahead, it will only lead to a further reduction of 60 places. It was always incorrect to suggest that a merger of Baden Powell and Nightingale would reduce PAN.
- The analysis of current place data highlights the challenges the Council faces in achieving their target of 5 – 10% vacancy rates as faith schools have some of the highest rates but have not been in scope under the current proposals. For Reception, the faith schools have 136 empty places which is over 30% of all vacancies in just 14

schools. Across all year groups, the vacancy rate in faith schools is 24% which is twice as high as the overall Hackney figure of 12.7%. If the faith schools are excluded from the data, then overall vacancies across other school types reduces to 11!

- The analysis of current place data shows that there are insufficient local places to accommodate pupils from the schools in scope aside from faith schools and schools outside the borough.
- The failure to account for actual, up to date pupil movement invalidates many of the suppositions in the Briefing Report and calls into question the capacity of the proposals to address / reduce falling rolls.

1.2 (a) – clarity of aims and desired outcomes

- Informal Consultation. There has been a failure to provide clear and unambiguous expectations of information required from stakeholders to inform the Informal stage of the Consultation, details of the process of analysis of opinions, information and challenges received, and specifically how information received would inform the next stage of the consultation. (See also pt. 1, p.3 of the CYP Scrutiny Report submitted to the Informal Consultation).
- Formal consultation. No response was received at Cabinet when the Cllr was asked how stakeholders would be engaged for the next stage of the consultation given the lack of change to proposals after representations in the Informal stage of the Consultation or the failure to engage stakeholders (or the elected representatives) from the majority of schools in scope.
- Outcomes. If the merger of Baden Powell and Nightingale will not contribute to the overall outcome to reduce surplus places then why has this been included. Are there other outcomes that the Council seeks that are less clear?
- The focus on single outcome metric and two primary criteria for being in scope (falling rolls and financial unsustainability) means that the Council fails to account for any context-specific issues; such as the location, building types (affordances and efficiencies), staff costs, proportion of SEN provision, ideal class sizes / surplus places and how that might affect SEN provision success and access to integrated provision, operating expenditure (and capacity to identify savings) etc.
- The failure to provide school by school analysis (as requested but denied without grounds at Cabinet) fails to allow decision makers and the Council at large the capacity to scrutinise the underlying basis for each of the proposals.

1.2 (a) – consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions

i. The local interventions were not fully considered prior to being included in these proposals.

- The Briefing Report suggests that local interventions to help the schools in frame had been exhausted prior to the public announcement of the Consultation, although no evidence to the nature of interventions, timescale, cost or efficacy are offered. This was specifically challenged by parent/carer representatives from Colvestone Primary School at Cabinet. Details of the ongoing, recent and positive interventions at this school are detailed in Appendix B below.
- Without reporting on claimed interventions at all schools it is impossible to ascertain what has been done by the Council to protect schools in frame prior to the consultation, whether due support was given proportionally to all schools, the efficacy of these interventions, and how future LA policy might be informed through an evaluation of the efficacy (or otherwise) of these or alternative (untested) interventions.
- The Briefing Report suggests that the impact of these interventions have been tested and evaluated – however an analysis of their success or insufficiencies on a school by school basis is omitted from the report.
- The CYP Scrutiny Report also notes the lack of evidence of the impact of any claimed interventions across the schools in scope – which were positive and ongoing in the case of Colvestone, and in their infancy (pt. 4, p.4, CYP Scrutiny Report).
- These evaluations should have been carried out and made available to decision makers for all schools in scope to inform current and future proposals. The Save Colvestone campaign, public submissions to the consultations and representations to Cabinet have consistently questioned why these successful interventions have not been allowed to run their course given their recent, highly positive impacts.

ii. The consultation did not engage with parents properly to really understand their preferences, despite parental choice being a key factor that the Council cannot control.

- The process of consultation could have been understood as an opportunity to understand what stakeholders might do or prefer when offered a number of options, to potentially order those options in order of preference, with the goal of allowing the LA to make informed decisions.
- Understanding parent / carer preference is key to evaluate potential impacts of the proposals, and the failure to account for preference – evidenced by the failure to consult on a broader range of options – fails to inform decision makers of the potential consequences of their actions.

iii. No information about to suggest alternatives

- From the outset of the consultation (the 'pre-informal' phase), schools and families have been presented with a closed set of proposals with no alternatives offered. If there are no alternatives suggested (or subsequently consulted upon) other than 'no action' (also discounted) then the Council has failed to consult in a real or effective way.
- A failure to consult on a range of options from the outset is problematic for a number of reasons: the appearance of democratic process is undermined by decisions already being made; a failure to consult on a wider range of options results in a situation where the intentions of families should the proposals be adopted is unknown, and therefore there is no way of accurately understanding if the proposals as framed will have the desired effect (here: of pupils moving to other local LA schools resulting in reduction of surplus in the Local Authority system / way that guarantees the financial stability of the destination school(s)); it is impossible to understand if this is the best possible set of proposals for the communities that will be effected to address the identified problem; the framing of the consultation (pre-determined plans to close four specific schools as opposed to a range of *possible* options) makes the consultation far more damaging to schools in frame – and fundamentally affect the capacity of those schools to address one of the key criteria used to put schools in scope of the consultation: to attract more pupils; the failure to consult at a formative stage exposes the consultation (and the Council) to legal jeopardy: the responsibility to consult at a 'formative stage' is the first of the Gunning / Sedley principles for public consultation as reflected in the Cabinet Office's 'Consultation Principles' 2018.
- The Briefing Report briefly addresses alternative options identified through the 'pre-' and 'informal' consultation periods. By dismissing these requests for consultation out of hand the Council deny further engagement by stakeholders, and foreclose any possibility of creatively addressing a problem that might better reflect stakeholders desires and intentions. It is unclear therefore what the Council proposes to learn from the process of consultation.
- By failing to offer a range of scenarios to stakeholders, pupils are at risk of enduring successive closures at a vital formative stage of their education. This risk is even greater when the high proportion of pupils with SEN / EHCPlans or as members of more vulnerable communities at the schools in scope is considered.
- That consulting at a formative stage has effectively been discounted from the outset of the process is addressed in 5.9 (Briefing Report, p.18 – reason: staffing – though this erroneously suggests that a wider consultation would require more mergers or closures) and Responses to the Consultation (p.770, pt. 18) on the basis of time – though this overlooks the extremely long period over which the consultation is being considered, and the potential problems that would be avoided by better informing the

proposals, the resources available to decision makers, and the consultation's capacity to achieve its aims.

- Despite talking about 'thinking creatively' there has never been any engagement with alternative ideas or help on how these could genuinely be considered as part of the process. Alternate merger possibilities have not been consulted on even when requested in Council-run school engagement meetings.
-

Iv. Specific SEND options

- The Cllr at Cabinet was asked about the specific, repeated, requests to consider expanding the already successful SEND provision at the schools in frame to accommodate demand in the borough – and in the awareness that most of the schools in frame have higher than borough average levels of pupils with EHCP or SEN support.
- The potential for expanded SEN provision at Colvestone was discounted in the Briefing Report presented to Cabinet (repeated in responses given at Cabinet, 25th Sept) by a claim that expanded provision would require the school to be completely decanted for works to take place (5.16, p. 19). This was erroneous and misguided. Full background for this claim and specific rebuttals can be found in Appendix B (notes to **1.2 (a) – consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions**).
- The use of vacant buildings to aid schools financially and the expansion of SEN provision to meet borough need are both identified as warranting Council support in the Estates Strategy (pp.7, 10-14). The CYP Scrutiny Report also advocates for the promotion of 'inclusive schools and education to ensure that more children are supported in mainstream local educational settings' (pt 8, p. 6). The positive potential to exploit surplus space / buildings on school estates, as identified as a potential revenue stream in the Estate Strategy, is not addressed in the Briefing Report presented to Cabinet and is detrimental to schools in scope (and Colvestone specifically) by its omission ('Schools with Excess Physical Space...' (Briefing Report, 4.27-29, p.12).
- Similarly the considerable additional savings to the borough of reducing out of borough SEN provision (currently between £35-70,000 per pupil per year) are not reflected here either. These points are reiterated in the consultation responses that quote expert testimony from an Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team, a CAMHS social worker and an Inclusion Expert all specifically in relation to protecting and expanding Colvestone's SEN provision

(Supplementary Papers, Appendix P – Kwest Report on the Informal Consultation, p. 26 / PDF p.345). The Equality Impact Assessment appears to acknowledge the particularly high impact of the proposals on the SEND pupils at Colvestone, but fails to incorporate any of the above mitigation / arguments in favour of retaining and expanding provision and the relevant benefits to pupils at Colvestone, the borough in general, and to the financial advantage of the school – because of the erroneous discounting of these proposals through a misrepresentation of the site / buildings and required works.

1.2 (e) – the decision would not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted

The detailed analysis of the vacancies for each of the proposed school closures shows that these proposals are forcing parents to make very difficult decisions. There may be too many vacancies across the whole borough but in south west Hackney and Dalston;

- The popular schools have very few vacancies which make it very difficult for a family with children in different year groups to move to.
- Many of vacancies are at faith schools which families do not want (evidenced by falling demand and Council own survey).
- Some of the closest schools with vacancies are out of borough – in Islington or Tower Hamlets.

The analysis of these unforeseen consequences and the material effects for the aims of the proposals as outlined in the consultation is included in **Appendix D – 1.2 (e) – the decision would not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted** below.

- Assess each proposal. The Cabinet report does not look at the specific circumstances for each for the proposed school closures. They are different and it is important that each proposal is assessed individually – as requested by public questions and through individual representations to the Pre-and Informal Consultation – in terms of the impact it will have on the Council target of reducing Reception places and the effect on school options/ parental choice in that part of the borough.
- Out of Borough. It is hard to see how losing pupils from rolls to other boroughs helps the outcomes. The response in Cabinet from the Cllr that ‘I can’t change geography’ appears to misconstrue the challenge: it is precisely in the power of the LA to chose which schools to put in scope of the consultation and to consider relative proximity in that process. The CYP Scrutiny Report (submitted to informal consultation) comments on the necessity to act in a way ‘that minimises the loss of pupils through cross-border flows where neighbouring authorities may have a comparatively better borough wide offers’ (pt8, p.6).

- Faith Schools. Given that 84% of Hackney residents want non-denominational schools in the borough it is unclear why the Council appears to be treating faith and non-faith schools as interchangeable forms of provision, or to produce localised parts of the borough where parents are left with only a choice of faith school for local education provision.
- Repeat Closures. More broadly, the Cabinet Briefing Report fails to address, or propose mitigations, for the potential for pupils to be caught in a cycle of repeated closures, an issue of particular importance as many of the children affected fall within the most vulnerable in the community: as identified in the Report, the proposals disproportionately affect communities with above-average prevalence of free school meal eligibility, ethnic diversity, and SEND / EHCP provision.
- Financially Unsustainable. Cabinet has failed to respond to the clear jeopardy presented to one of the schools in scope (Princess May) were it to be forced to expand, as a consequence of LA commitments within these proposals to families from Colvestone, from (near full) single form to a two-form entry school with substantial surplus places. Such a move would clearly undermine Princess May's current financial model by burdening the school with additional staffing costs but with insufficient pupil numbers to avoid instability and potential subsequent closure – a disastrous outcome for the school and pupils both current and recently transferred as part of the proposals. The budgetary consequences of necessary protections for Princess May are not identified in budget considerations.
- Alternative Merger Option. The rejection (5.15, p.19) of a potential merger / accommodation of De Beauvoir families on the Colvestone site because of the 'financial position' of the school is nonsensical: more pupils, as has been stressed throughout the consultation process, would radically improve the financial position of any of the schools in frame – potentially pulling them out of scope of the consultation and enable them to pay off the historic deficit.

1.2 (a) – a presumption of openness

- As detailed in [1.2 (a) – due regard for the statutory framework, guidance and code of conduct] below, the LA has consistently refused to release information related to the deeds of one of the schools in frame – denying both FOI requests and legal representations. As detailed below, this information is of clear material importance to the evaluation of the proposals outlined in the consultation as protective covenants would manifestly affect the range of alternate uses of the site in question (Colvestone Primary School) which are discussed only in general, asset use/disposal terms in the Briefing Report.

- The refusal to detail possible land use due diligence (as demanded by the Estates Strategy) in this instance suggests that this due diligence has not been conducted for any of the sites in frame.
- Additional requests (made both as casework and under legal representations) to disclose the allocation data for schools in south west Hackney prevents an assessment as to whether schools (and particularly schools in scope of the consultation due to roll numbers – a key criteria used by the LA to identify schools in scope) have been fairly treated over recent years in this allocation process, or whether any of the schools in scope have suffered from an artificial suppression of pupil numbers through this process.
- High level (non-postcode-based) analysis appears to suggest disproportionate allocations to free schools in the years 20/21 and 21/22 (with 22/23 data as yet unanalysed), for example.
- Questions raised at Cabinet challenged the selective representation of financial modelling for one of the schools in frame in the Briefing Report and the conclusions reached in the LA's summary of its resources, underlying data and analysis. It is unclear how these differences can be dismissed by the Cllr without full disclosure of the documents that underpin the conclusions of the LA, disputed by members of the public with access to the same documents, such that decision makers, Council and the public can inform their own evaluation of the situation. The bases of these challenges to the LA's conclusions are outlined below in **Appendix A – misrepresentation of financial data – 1.2 (a) – a presumption of openness**
- Without greater clarity it is unclear how Cabinet (and the general public / stakeholders in the further consultation) might be expected to make financially-based decisions on the proposals. Note that the Briefing Report identifies 'financial sustainability' as a key metric for both determining schools in scope and for the evaluation of the proposals outlined in the consultation.

1.2 (a) – due regard for the statutory framework, guidance and code of conduct

- School Building Titles. Due diligence has not been conducted on the status of school buildings as demanded by the Estate Strategy (p.14) with regards to building deeds / titles, particularly with regards to restrictive covenants, and specifically with regards to restrictive covenants believed to be included in the transfer deeds (1906) of the Colvestone school buildings when they were acquired by the LCC in 1906 from an educational charity (still extant). These deeds have been subject to an unfulfilled FOI request currently under Internal Review (Ref: 16591453, originally submitted 14th April 2023), requests made in each of the reports prepared by Save Colvestone for each stage of the consultation, and legal requests made (11th September, 2023) on behalf of the parent's organisation of the school in a pre-action letter. The Council

has been provided with a copy of the receipt from Hackney Council for the deeds from the London Residuary Body dated Dec 1990. These documents and consideration of them are of clear relevance to the consultation and the choices to proceed on proposals relating to Colvestone as:

1. If restricted by covenants standard disposal of the buildings would not be possible and so consideration of the buildings as an asset in the general Council holdings (and therefore potential source of revenue) as described in the briefing reports / consultation meetings etc. / Cabinet would have been in error.
 2. The buildings might potentially be forfeited to the (still extant) educational charity who sold them under restriction should the educational use cease – a clear source of jeopardy for the pursuit of the current proposals, of which public / Cabinet have not been made aware.
 3. Should such a covenant be contained within the deeds it limits the reuse of the buildings significantly and would likely force the Council to reopen a school on the site – having paid hundreds of thousands of pounds in retention contracts, redundancies of staff, building protection, and associated costs of transferring pupils (potentially out of Borough at great expense) for SEN provision currently being provided by the school. It would also jeopardise student numbers in the new school as the current pupils would have relocated elsewhere. (N.B. as repeatedly insisted upon by the Council, there is no academic attainment argument for closing the school – it is performing very well). This path would be an egregious waste of public funds. There is recent precedent in Hackney for this wastage – the closure of Hackney Downs School / discovery of covenanted deeds / establishment of Mossbourne Academy.
 4. The Estates Strategy is clear about the jeopardy posed by ‘free school presumption’. Closing the school and reopening it would result in a free school where control of the school and land would be forfeit to a private enterprise. This would be a direct consequence of the covenant – and manifestly changes the consequences of the proposals on which decisions are being made.
- Dalston Local Plan. Failure to account for long term demand produced specifically for Colvestone (as opposed to the borough in general) and role of school as infrastructure for Dalston Plan homebuilding (see also below, 1.2(d)). Consideration of the relevance of the Dalston Plan continues to fail to account for the proximity of all of the main sites specifically to Colvestone and the more general relevance to south west Hackney that has been disproportionately targeted for closures and for which there is now a shortage of non-faith provision. Colvestone School would be the nearest primary school provision for all of the major Dalston Plan sites. By failing to address the specific relevance of the Dalston Plan to Colvestone (as opposed to all the schools in frame in general) the Report deliberately obscures its relevance and potential impact. Further, no depositions are included from Hackney Planning that discuss the primary school provision for these homebuilding projects (Colvestone was identified as key infrastructure for the project in recent Dalston Plan public events) or any analysis as to the chilling effect removing local primary school

provision would have on the Council's stated aims to attract / retain families in Dalston (Estates Strategy pp. 12-13, target housing mix) and reiterated by the CYP Scrutiny Report, p.6, re: conditions for 'retention of families in borough'. (Further: although the wording in the Report has been changed, there still remains a lack of evidenced long term planning (in addition to consideration of long-term place demand) more generally – an oversight reiterated by responses at Cabinet that children won't come into schools 'early enough').

1.2 (c) – the decision-maker did not act in accordance with the budget

- The Briefing Report lacks even high-level cost benefit analyses that weigh the considerable expense of closures against the potential financial advantages of proceeding with proposals. No modelling for these comparative costs / budget effects are contained in the Briefing Report, even when this must be the key driver of the proposals (it is repeatedly noted that the quality of education is high (rated Good / Ofsted) at all schools in scope and that all schools with vacancies in the borough are rated Good or below).
- No costings of alternate proposals (alternate mergers / closures / wider consultation) are included in the Briefing Report nor are they weighed against one-another (a point also noted in the CYP Scrutiny Report pt.7, p.5). Similarly there are no details given of potential savings to the borough of alternate proposals (for example, increased SEN provision at Colvestone to reduce the huge expense of out-of-borough SEN provision – see 1.2 (a) above).
- Part 1.10 of the Cabinet Report states that “where we might merge schools, we will have to work with those schools to ensure they have the right facilities and investment on the new sites to meet the aspirations of their respective schools and communities.” No reference to these potential costs (or their size) is made in the very brief comments in the Report by the Interim Finance Director.
- There is a lack of short or long-term budgetary considerations to support a school compelled to expand by these proposals (Princess May) but likely to have considerable surplus at new scale and therefore to rapidly fall into deficit as a result. Given the LA's role in this potential destabilisation it would seem beholden that the school be given some guarantees in this regard, and estimations of shortfalls budgeted for.
- Additional costs for SEND provision for pupils currently being cared for schools in scope are absent from the Interim Financial Director's brief survey of potential costs for the proposals. It is noted that, due to in-borough shortfalls in provision, out of borough SEND provision currently costs the LA between £35-70,000 p.a. per pupil. As noted in the Briefing Report, a number of the schools in scope have high levels of

SEN pupils that currently access provision in those settings (and education itself more broadly). No costs are outlined to support transfers, access, additional support provision and possible out of borough resources. The general outline of support offered at Cabinet (the use of picture stories etc.) failed to address the extent and complexity of enabling large numbers of vulnerable children with SEN / EHCPs to access education in new settings, or to estimate the level of funding required to achieve these aims.

- The responses given at Cabinet failed to engage with these substantive points (identification of revenue streams, overlooked budgetary consequences of the proposals, etc.) or challenges to the LA's interpretation of underlying financial data. The assertion that the deficit of a school should be written off to limit further growth of that debt is undermined by figures that suggest a capacity of the school to pay it down over time. Understanding the basis of this difference of interpretation is key to evaluating the proposals upon which Cabinet are asked to make a decision.

Appendix A – misrepresentation of financial data – 1.2 (a) – a presumption of openness

The Briefing Report, Responses to the Consultation (Appendix S, pp. 775-6) and subsequent references to its conclusions at Cabinet, misrepresent the content of the independent SRMA report on Colvestone by omission, and the overall financial analysis on the school presented in the Report – the analysis that concludes with the stark claim that Colvestone is “particularly financially unsustainable” (Briefing Report, 4.22, pp.11/12) – fails to accurately represent the data on which it is based: the school's own conservative budget projections and the savings (and conclusions) of the independent SMRA report “proactively requested” by the school's Senior Business Manager “to support him in improving the financial outlook of CPS (Colvestone Primary School)” (SRMA Report on Colvestone School, p.4). Viewed in combination, the two sources of modelling data the Council are using suggest “highly achievable” savings (SRMA Report) leading to budget surpluses and debt repayment, albeit over a longer period than that modelled in the SRMA report. This is achievable on lower pupil numbers than those used in the SRMA report – lower pupil numbers reflected in Colvestone's own financial modelling.

By referencing a table in the Briefing Report of school deficits as evidence of “financial unsustainability” the Briefing Report conflates debt and financial sustainability. The SRMA Report claims that the rapid running down of the school's deficit in 3-4 years would be “extremely challenging” – a comment the Briefing Report extracts – *but not impossible*. What the SRMA report does not do is suggest that a longer term of deficit reduction would not be viable, or that the running of surpluses be achieved and sustained through the identification of “highly

achievable” savings as the deficit is run down over time and pupil numbers improve. The SRMA lists a number of reasons for this recent drop in pupils, many of which have been reversed (see 1.2(a) above). The specific points of misrepresentation are outlined below:

‘High achievability’ of surplus and longer-term deficit reduction

The Colvestone Senior Business Leader produced a 3-year budget projection for the Council, the headline figures of which are included in the Briefing Report for Cabinet (p.11/12). Omitted from the reporting of this highly conservative budget projection produced by the school are a series of caveats to these budget figures that suggest sources of additional funding that would improve the financial projections (as has been the case in 22/23 when the school ran a surplus – see ‘Notes / Assumptions’ in the 3-year budget produced by the Colvestone SLT). Further, when this highly conservative budget projection (that relies on far fewer numbers of pupils joining the school than the SRMA report – see below) is viewed in the context of the SRMA report commissioned by, and to support, the school’s Senior Business Leader, a huge volume of additional savings are identified: £614,000 in ‘high achievability’ efficiency savings (and a further £167,000 in ‘medium achievability’ savings) over the next three years. (Note: only £30,000 p.a. is speculative in the form of grant targets). This suggests a ‘high achievability’ of in-year surplus and progressive deficit reduction over time. The Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet fails to reflect the savings identified in a report that is their best financial modelling and on which it signed off, and therefore fails to disclose the positive financial outlook that results from viewing these two documents together (as the Briefing Report purports to do).

Pupil projections

The Briefing Report (4.22, p.11) disputes rising pupil forecasts contained within the SRMA report in which it is quoted “the SRMA and school have discussed the pupil number forecasts with the LA, who advised that these numbers are not unrealistic.” The report states: “The local authority is firmly of the view that the projected number of children joining the school, on which the budget is based, are unrealistic.” It is unclear on what grounds this claim is made as it obscures the Local Authority’s role in producing the SRMA report, including during the pre-publishing review phase of its production, and signing off on its conclusions (without challenging this specific point) in April/May 2023. The relevant section of the Briefing Report for Cabinet (4.22) also fails to disclose that the financial projections produced by the school are not based on such steep rises in enrollment, as projected by the SRMA report, and are therefore far more conservative on this point – in line with what appears to be Hackney Council’s current position.

That the school, as is subsequently pointed out, had 14 new enrollments in Reception in 2023 whilst the school had been under the public threat of closure for several months, and Hackney Education had advised at least one parent (that we are aware of and have signed dispositions from) looking to apply to the school that the school was to be closed and not to transfer, is, frankly, remarkable. The true extent of pupil number suppression due to the consultation will be hard to gauge, but is likely to be considerable – p. 32 of the Briefing Report documents the considerable damage done by the consultation to many of the schools in frame. Further, the

allocations data for previous years has been requested (both as casework and through the Pre-Action legal correspondence) but not produced by the Council. By failing to disclose this information it is impossible to ascertain whether pupil numbers enrolling at Colvestone may already have been artificially suppressed through the allocations process over preceding years. (We understand that there is precedent for this mode of artificial suppression by the LA in the borough from education campaigners in the 1990s).

Deficit Reduction

By focussing on a rapid paydown of the deficit the Report fails to model for a more manageable deficit reduction plan that could be sustained by the school. It is unclear from the Report, and from responses received in Cabinet, why this would not be more desirable for the overall Council budgets – a budget that would have to absorb the whole of the deficit were the school to be closed. Indeed, in its responses, the Council appear to focus purely on attempting to produce additional arguments as to why the school should be closed, rather than on possible alternatives (advocated for in the Estates Strategy, p.7) that might enable the protection of a single-form intake LA school.

The comment in the Briefing Report that Colvestone ran a surplus in 22/23 because of ‘a mid year additional cash injection’ suggests that Colvestone was only in surplus in the last financial year because of emergency Council intervention. This insinuation was repeated at Cabinet (25th September). The school received funding from the Schools Contingency Fund, the de-delegated fund to which all schools contribute and to which all are eligible to apply. This money was applied for to help improve the school building and in particular ensure that it was statutorily safe and compliant. The school had a right to apply and were eligible for this funding which is why it is there. One might suggest that the Management Team would have been remiss not to have applied for it – as is the case for all monies that the school applies for and receives from the Council and other funds. To imply that this an emergency intervention by the Council, or the only reason for running a surplus, is highly subjective and contestable at best. Many schools (both in frame of this consultation and outside) apply for and receive this funding, as they are entitled to do. To suggest that it was a vital intervention fails to disclose the nature of the Council funding and its purpose, and thereby misrepresents it as emergency funding.

Appendix B – specific supporting materials relating to challenges posed at Cabinet that underpin challenges to the grounds for Decision CE S247 School Estates Strategy.

1.2 (a) – consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions

- It has been stated at Cabinet that positive interventions (with the engagement of the LA) at Colvestone were in their infancy and having a positive effect – on both the school community, parental satisfaction, finances and improving the attractiveness of

- the school after a period of turbulence. They include: an entirely new Senior Leadership Team, new rolling Federation partnership with associated benefits, new Senior Business Manager and fiscal acumen, expanded social media and communications capacities, rising parental and staff satisfaction with the school under new Federation, improved financial situation (including running surplus and Federation benefits) and thorough financial planning, improved building conditions with extensive restoration works on the listed buildings now complete etc. No clear answer was given as to why these successful but relatively recent interventions (including LA investment) had not been given time to prove themselves.
- The Save Colvestone campaign has consistently asked, at the last two stages of consultation and at Cabinet, that the vacant caretaker's house on the school site be considered for either ARP or behavioral / SEN resource as the building is already converted into teaching spaces, is of appropriate size, and would complement the excellent integrated SEN teaching already being practiced by the school. It was also stated that the expansion of this capacity at Colvestone would help the borough address the huge shortfall in provision in borough, build on the school's current good practice and successes in that provision and financially benefit the school. The use, for this purpose, of the vacant space on the school site and specifically the caretaker's house, was subject of conversations during the Mayor and Paul Senior's scoping visits in early 2023. Heads of schools have been invited to make expressions of interest in advance of a likely new round of applications for ARP provision, to which the school would be eligible to apply. Previous dismissal of this idea on the basis that the call was in 21/22 (as the school was undergoing its change in leadership) and now closed also no longer holds. The caretaker's house has its own self-contained perimeter, street access and parking / works space, and it was here in this outdoor space separate to the playground where building materials and site equipment were stored for the major building works completed over the last year and a half – all completed without closing the school.

Appendix C – Analysis of current place data (Sept 2023) – 1.2 (d) – the decision maker failed to consider relevant evidence when making the decision

1. Latest Data: The September Cabinet report is not based on the latest information about school vacancy data.
2. Proposed Outcomes will not be achieved: The proposals will lead to a further reduction in school places (from current vacancy data) of 60 places rather than the 135 places quoted in the May report.
3. Vacancies in faith schools: A large proportion of the vacancies are in faith schools and the target of 5 – 10% cannot and should not be reached without addressing vacancies in

these schools. The Council may not be fully responsible for them, like the community schools, but it has to encourage the relevant faith bodies to take action.

4. Not sufficient places: Analysis of vacancies at schools closest to the four proposed for closure demonstrates that there are insufficient places

1. Latest Data

The Schools Estates Strategy reports seeks viable sustainable solutions to address falling rolls. The May Cabinet report highlighted that in January 2023 Reception vacancies were 21% and were projected to rise to 25% over the next few years (without taking any action). It stated that the aim is to operate vacancy rates across all year groups at about 5 – 10%. The May Cabinet report states that the proposal to close four schools (close two and merge four into two) will lead to a total reduction of 135 Reception places per year:

- De Beauvoir close 30 places
- Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate 30 places
- Baden Powel and Nightingale amalgamate 30 places
- Randal Cremer closure 45 places

The September Cabinet report still refers to over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (21% surplus). I think this is based on the School Organisation Plan (SOP) which is reviewed annually. However this is a dynamic situation and school vacancy data is rapidly changing as;

- Pupils move in and out of the borough
- Pupils move between schools
- School review budgets and change their structure and number of forms*

*There seems to be a discrepancy between the official PAN and an unofficial PAN where schools are requesting that their pupil numbers are capped at a certain level.

The latest school vacancy data (circulated by LB Hackney Education on 19th September) shows very different figures! It has 391 empty places in Reception classes which has reduced the vacancy rate to 14.5%. Across all year groups, the vacancy rate has reduced to 12.7%.

2. Achieving the proposed outcomes

If you look at the proposals again, based on the latest school vacancy data then they are not as effective at reducing school places as initially anticipated, with a reduction of only 60 places rather than 135 places.

a) De Beauvoir closure

SOP states that the PAN here is 30 for 2022-23 and 2023-24 but the school is actually operating with an unofficial PAN of 15 per year – this is reflected in the latest vacancy rates. Therefore the proposed closure will only lead to a further reduction of 15 places.

b) Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Colvestone and 60 for Princess May so that closing Colvestone would reduce PAN by 30 places. However Princess May has already undertaken an unofficial reduction in its PAN from 60 to 30. If two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places!**

c) Baden Powell and Nightingale amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Baden Powell and 30 for Nightingale. The May Cabinet report states that the amalgamation of these two schools would reduce PAN by 30 places. However as stated above, if two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places**. This is acknowledged in the September Cabinet report as the PAN for Nightingale increases from 30 – 60 so no overall reduction.

Therefore this proposal seems to be about the better utilisation of school premises.

d) Randall Cremer closure

SOP states that the PAN for Randall Cremer is 45 and this is reflected in the latest school vacancy data. This proposal will lead to a reduction of 45 places.

3. Vacancies in Faith Schools

The latest school vacancy figures show that the vacancy rates in faith schools are significantly higher than in other schools. Across the borough there are 391 empty Reception places across all schools, and the vacancy rate of 14.5%. In the 14 faith schools, there are 136 empty Reception places – over $\frac{1}{3}$ of places in only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the schools. The vacancy rate for Reception in faith schools is 30%!

For all year groups, the vacancy rate across the whole borough is 12.7%. When considering just faith schools, the vacancy rate for all year groups doubles to 24%.

The Cabinet report acknowledges that the faith schools have responded to the crisis by reducing their Published Admissions Numbers (as other schools have done). It also highlights that the Council has limited powers in relation to the faith schools – they can suggest reductions in PAN but cannot enforce any stronger measures such as closure or merger (as they have done with the community schools).

Looking at the above figures, the Council will not achieve its stated aim of 5 – 10% vacancy rate across the borough unless further action is taken in faith schools. It is neither sufficient nor appropriate to only take action in community schools. They must encourage the relevant faith bodies to have these conversations and make difficult decisions about their school in Hackney as well, but there is no evidence of this in the Cabinet report.

4. Not sufficient places

The Cabinet report Appendix H presents useful information about the nearest schools and vacancies for each of the four schools proposed for closure. Appendix I to O presents a heat

map of the families addresses against school vacancies for each year group. It concludes that across the borough there are sufficient vacancies for all children who need places.

A key issue is distance and the Cabinet report is inconsistent in its application of an appropriate distance to travel to school. It acknowledges that the statutory distance is 2 miles – on that basis a family should be able to travel to almost any school in the borough and there are times when the report seems to expect that. It is a difficult issue because families do generally want to go to a school nearby but quite often they will travel longer distances to keep a child at a familiar school if they had to move away.

When they undertook the options appraisal around potential amalgamation, it is clear that they considered a much smaller distance. So schools selected for merger were generally less than 0.5 miles apart so that the total distance was approx 1 mile.

The latest vacancy data shows that both Princess May and Holy Trinity school have restructured into one-form throughout all year groups and have minimal vacancies, which would be a significant change to Appendices H – O.

We have prepared a report looking at the vacancies at the nearby schools for all of the schools proposed for closure. If both De Beauvoir and Colvestone school close then there are not sufficient places at local schools to accommodate all the pupils. Many of the vacancies are in faith schools or schools across the border in Islington. Please see full analysis and figures in the separate report.

Appendix D – 1.2 (e) – the decision would not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted

- Current pupil / place data suggests that parents in south west Hackney are being forced to choose either a faith school (because it is the closest school with vacancies) or a school out of borough for local provision.
- This is a choice created by the focus of closures in too small a geographic area and is a direct consequence of the consultation. Challenged at Cabinet it appears that no consideration has been made as to the possible (and now actual) consequences of over-targeting a specific area in this manner.
- The Cabinet report does not look at the specific circumstances for each of the proposed school closures. They are different and it is important that each proposal is assessed individually – as requested by public questions and through individual representations to the Pre- and Informal Consultation – in terms of the impact it will have on the Council target of reducing Reception places and the affect on school options/ parental choice in that part of the borough.

In the south west area of the borough, a lot of pupils have already moved away from Randal Cremer and this has already affected the vacancy rates at local schools. There are more details in the full report submitted to Cabinet (Sept 2023) but a few figures are highlighted below. There are still 118 pupils (YR – Y5) looking for new school places. In the top ten closest schools, there are JUST enough places to accommodate them all. Year 3 is particularly tight because St John the Baptist has restructured this year to one-form entry and has limited vacancies.

If you exclude the vacancies at the three church schools, then there are NO vacancies at other schools in Year 2 and insufficient places for children in Year R, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4. So families either choose the faith schools or look further afield but the options are limited;

- More faith schools but with limited vacancies
- Popular community schools with limited vacancies
- Tower Hamlets/Islington community schools have plenty of vacancies
- A school that is rated by Ofsted as Requires Improvement

The circumstances suggest that there is a lack of local vacancies in non-faith schools. The September Cabinet report explained the alternative options that had been considered for Randall Cremer. It concluded there was no merger options as no schools nearby were large enough to accommodate all the pupils but there were vacancies at nearby schools.. However there are now approx 20 children per year group that need spaces and are struggling to find them so are there alternative options?

- i) Keep Randall Cremer open as one-form entry
- ii) Merge Randall Cremer with another local school (increase PAN in nearby school by half-form per year group if necessary)
- iii) Close Thomas Fairchild instead (this school has been rated as Requires Improvement since 2017 Ofsted visit. It is also struggling from falling roll as the PAN was capped at 30 (from 60) in 2020-21 and officially reduced in 2021-22).

In Dalston, Holy Trinity and Princess May schools have restructured with a temporary cap on their admissions number at 30 rather than 60 for all year groups. There are significantly less vacancies and there are NOT sufficient places at the neighbouring schools for all children at De Beauvoir and Colvestone schools, particularly in Year 3. It is a similar picture to the south west – the community schools are largely full and the vacancies are in faith schools or two Islington schools. If you exclude the vacancies at the faith schools, then there are a shortage of places in Reception, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4.

It is not in resident's interests to force families into faith schools that they do not want or a school out of borough.

Are there alternatives in Dalston?

The September Cabinet report explained the alternative that it had considered for De Beauvoir – either merger with Randall Cremer or Princess May but it was felt that both schools were too far away and that a merger with Princess May would not stabilise numbers.

Pupils from Colvestone are guaranteed a place at Princess May but;

- Families at Colvestone have consistently said during consultation that they do not want to move to this school
- The restructure at Princess May means they have capped places and have limited vacancies. They could be forced to take more pupils but this is unlikely to be sustainable financially and may not stabilise numbers.

The considered alternatives for Colvestone school were to;

- Merge with Princess May at Colvestone site but there is insufficient capacity
- Merger Colvestone with other schools in Blossom Federation but there are too far away
- Merge De Beauvoir with Colvestone at Colvestone but this was not feasible initially based on pupil numbers. It acknowledges that due to drop in pupil numbers this is now a feasible option but is not preferred due to Colvestone's financial position.

Whilst the overall objective is to reduce vacancy rates, this has been achieved in Dalston through temporary capping of number at two local schools and it is no longer appropriate to close both one-form community schools in the area and force families towards faith school or out of borough. These options need to be looked at again.

Colvestone has a historic deficit of nearly £0.5m from 3 – 4 years ago from the previous leadership. It has addressed these challenges and has achieved an in-year budget surplus in 2021-22 and in 2022-23 and is projecting a small in-year deficit for 2023-24 due to the new leadership and financial management with Blossom Federation. If the school closes then the Council will be liable for the deficit.

There is some dispute between the Council and the Save Colvestone campaign about the future pupil and financial projections for the school. The Council argues that the figures are unrealistic and Colvestone is particularly unsustainable, though this was disputed at Cabinet without satisfactory response (see: failure to fully disclose financial data). However an immediate increase in pupil numbers (by merging Colvestone with De Beauvoir) would clearly improve the financial position and create a sustainable school with a stable roll.

The dismissal of the merger (adding more pupils) due to the financial position (which is created by low pupil numbers) is a circular argument.

4. Failure to conduct a legal consultation:

Included here is the Pre-Action Protocol Letter for Judicial Review prepared for the Save Colvestone campaign group by our legal representation and sent to Hackney Council during the Informal Consultation.

London Borough of Hackney
Town Hall
Mare Street
London
E8 1EA

Dear Madams and Sirs,

This letter is sent to you in accordance with the pre-action protocol for judicial review.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the proposed claim and to give you an opportunity to make representations to the Council.

11 September 2023

**PRE-ACTION PROTOCOL LETTER FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW
LETTER BEFORE CLAIM
THIS LETTER REQUIRES YOUR URGENT ATTENTION**

Dear Madams and Sirs

Potential legal challenge to the decision to put forward Colvestone Primary School for a statutory process for closure and “amalgamation” with Princess May School

1. This is a letter before action sent in accordance with the pre-action protocol for judicial review.

Claimant

2. Colvestone Family and Staff Association, a legally registered charity, acting on behalf of Save Colvestone Primary School (“**Save Colvestone**”), a group of Colvestone parents and carers (“**the Proposed Claimant**”).



Proposed Defendant

3. Hackney Council (“the Potential Defendant”).

Decision(s) to be Challenged

4. The ongoing decisions to put forward Colvestone Primary School for the statutory process for closure and “amalgamation” with Princess May School, including but not limited to informal consultation carried out from 5 June – 16 July 2023 and the decisions made subsequent to the informal consultation to progress the statutory process.

Interested Parties

5. (1) Colvestone Primary School; (2) The Governing Body of Colvestone Primary School (3) the Blossom Federation.
6. Should you consider that there are other third parties with a distinct interest who should be served as an Interested Party in the proposed proceedings, please provide us with their details and an explanation of their interest.

Factual background

7. There is a long and complex factual background, but the salient points are these. Colvestone Primary School experienced a period of instability in 2021-2022, but from the Summer term of 2022, the School was working intensively with the Council to stabilise matters. There were a number of meetings from June 2022 – January 2023. Steps taken included the School deciding to partner with the Blossom Foundation (note that partnership with Princess May was rejected as an option) and a school resource management advisers (“SRMA”) audit of the School’s financial position. At no point during this period did the Council mention the potential for Colvestone Primary School to be closed or amalgamated.
8. On 30 January 2023, the Council’s School Estates met with the senior leadership of the School, unminuted, to have an initial conversation about possible steps being taken by the Council in relation to school closures, with an indication that Colvestone Primary met some of the criteria for consideration. A further meeting was held on 22 February, where “amalgamation” with Princess May School was proposed.

9. It should be clear that what was, and is, being proposed is the closure of Colvestone. The terms “merger” or “amalgamation” with Princess May only mean that parents/families are offered a place at that school. There is no actual merger, nor any amalgamation of staff or quality of education or ethos etc.
10. The selection criteria¹ identified by the Council for schools to be considered for closure were:
- (1) Schools most financially at-risk;
 - (2) Number of vacant places
 - (3) Physical size of schools and suitability of sites to host a merger
 - (4) Geographic partnership options (such as the existence of other schools within walking distance)
 - (5) Whether new neighbourhoods and new-build estates will create significantly more need for school places in the future
 - (6) Current Ofsted grading and projected outcomes for pupils
 - (7) Community impact
11. In March 2023, the governors and leadership team of Colvestone Primary School opposed the school being considered for amalgamation or closure even at the initial stages of an informal proposal, on the basis that the school was in a unique position, different from the other schools under consideration. In particular they drew attention to the financial stability of the School and stabilising roll, and that the partnership with the Blossom Federation, which had contributed to that stability, was in its early stages. It also drew attention to the high proportion of children at Colvestone on the SEND register.
12. Despite this the Council moved to a pre-informal consultation. Save Colvestone prepared a detailed submission, in particular setting out how Colvestone Primary had delivered a surplus school budget for the year ending 2022/23 and projected an in-year surplus for the years ending 2023/24 and 2024/25; and that a survey of 73 households with children at the School indicated that 87% would not agree to their children going to Princess May School. The Council (through Paul Senior) agreed that any representations made by 1 May would be considered in the preparation of the Briefing Report for the Cabinet meeting on 22 May on whether to go to the next stage. Save Colvestone’s detailed 63-page dossier was submitted

¹ <https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/primary-schools-potential-changes>

on Monday 1 May. The Council then erroneously suggested the material was submitted too late for inclusion. The Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy – falling rolls Open Report (CE S190) (“**the Report to Cabinet**”), published on 12 May for consideration by the Council’s Cabinet, appended Save Colvestone’s representations. Initially the representations withheld from publication, but they were published on 19 May after challenge by Save Colvestone. However, the substance of the Report failed to address the majority of Save Colvestone’s points, failing either to challenge them, to adjust the proposals in light of them, or even to acknowledge them in any substantive form.

13. On 22 May, the Council’s Cabinet agreed to move on to the informal consultation stage. The parts of the Report to Cabinet concerning Colvestone Primary School proceeded on the basis of a projection that 120 children from the School would move to Princess May, but without having carried out any survey of parents at the School. It contained a table purporting to set out the financial position at Colvestone, showing it to be in deficit, but did not provide any information from the three-year projected budget produced by the new Senior Leadership Team (provided to the Council in November 2022) or the independent school resource management advisers (“**SMRA**”) report, which affirmed the projections and identified further highly achievable savings on operating costs. These two reports confirmed both the financial viability of the school and its capacity to pay down the deficit.
14. The Report to Cabinet considered expected demand for school places, but focused on the short to medium term, including when considering whether planned new housing or regeneration would impact the demand.
15. The Report to Cabinet provided information about an air quality review which, when it went before the Cabinet, showed the 2021 NO₂ annual concentration at Colvestone Primary School as 23µg/m³, and at Princess May 1 as 23µg/m³, and Princess May 2 as 32µg/m³. However, this second figure was recorded in the Cabinet’s Decision Document as 20µg/m³, causing concern that the Cabinet had not appreciated the true air quality impact on children moving to Princess May School. When Save Colvestone pointed out the error, the Cabinet Decision Document was amended.

16. The informal consultation ran from 2 June to 16 July 2023. The consultation document described the consultation as considering “a proposal to amalgamate (‘merge’) Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School. If agreed, the amalgamation will result in a single primary school being established on one site for 60 pupils in each year group.” (emphasis added). It should be noted that this suggests the establishment of a new school, which is not possible as any new school is automatically a free school under ‘free school presumption’, as warned in the Strategic Plan; Princess May School is already “established”.
17. The document did explain that “amalgamation” meant closing Colvestone on 31 August 2024 and Princess May school “providing spaces for displaced children”, “if that is what the parents prefer for their children”. It did not explain that, if fewer than the 120 projected children moved from Colvestone to Princess May, then Princess May is also at risk of closure, or that, even if 120 children did transfer, there would still be approximately a 23% vacancy at Princess May.
18. The consultation document provided general information about the financing of schools, stating that “[s]chools with unfilled places lose £6,484 per place every year”, but did not provide, even in high-level form, any of the financial information verified by the SMRA report showing Colvestone School to be financially viable. It did not address SEND at all.
19. Save Colvestone provided a detailed submission on 16 July 2023. This referred again to two surveys of parents at Colvestone, which showed that 95.7% of parents surveyed did not include Princess May in any of their six preferences when selecting a school, and that 87% would not send their children to Princess May, with a further 6% undecided.
20. Save Colvestone’s consultation response identified both the key benefits and the key risks of closing Colvestone and included information on:
 - (1) the financial position of Colvestone Primary School;
 - (2) future demand, including in light of the adopted Local Plan, the draft Dalston Plan and the fully-funded 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent;
 - (3) the air quality impact of closing the school and offering provision at Princess May School; and

(4) the high number of children with SEND at Colvestone and the risk of significant cost if children have to be sent out of the borough to private schools.

21. It should be noted that the process of pre-informal consultation and informal consultation has already harmed Colvestone Primary School. The threat of closure is enough to cause pupils to move or to change parental school preferences. Save Colvestone is aware of at least one parent who applied for a place at Colvestone, only to be advised by Council officials that the school was closing. The extent of artificial suppression of pupil numbers is difficult to gauge. Save Colvestone considers that moving Colvestone School forward in the process and issuing a formal statutory notice would be even more damaging to the School.

Proposed Grounds of Challenge

22. Save Colvestone considers that the Council's decision-making regarding the proposed "amalgamation" of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May School is unlawful for the following reasons:
- (1) Failure to take into account the relevant statutory guidance;
 - (2) Failure to comply with the public sector equality duty;
 - (3) Failure to take material considerations into account;
 - (4) Failure to conduct a lawful informal consultation.

Proposed Ground 1 – Statutory Guidance

23. When making decisions about closing Colvestone Primary School, the Council is required to have regard to the relevant statutory guidance – "Opening and closing maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers" (January 2023) ("the Statutory Guidance"). Where there is such a duty, the decision-maker must proceed on a proper understanding of what the guidance requires. The decision-maker is also obliged to take the guidance into account and to act in accordance with the guidance, unless clear and cogent reasons are given for departing from the guidance: see, eg, *R(Britwell Parish Council) v Slough Borough Council* [2019] EWHC 988 (Admn) at §§ 27 and 33; *R(TG) v Lambeth LBC* [2011] EWCA Civ 526; [2012] PTSR 364 at §17 per Wilson LJ.
24. The Council proposes to close the School because of the fall in predicted demand and there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate the displaced pupils. This reason is addressed explicitly in the Statutory Guidance,

which requires the Council to consider whether there is predicted demand “in the medium to long term”. It is understood that is the reason on which the Council is relying.²

25. The Council has consistently considered predicted demand on the basis of short to medium term, rather than medium to long term. This is particularly apparent when the Council considered the demand from planned new housing in the borough (addressed further below). The Report to Cabinet explicitly considers this in relation to “demand in the short to medium term”.
26. While there is no definition in the Guidance of what “medium term” and “long term” mean, the Council’s other relevant documents³ define medium term as 5-10 years and long term as 10-15 years.
27. The Council has either failed to understand the Statutory Guidance, or is departing from the Guidance but without giving clear and cogent reasons for that departure.

Proposed Ground 2 – Public Sector Equality Duty

28. The public sector equality duty (“PSED”) is laid down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty is to have “due regard” to the relevant matters, and although this does not require the achievement of particular outcomes, it is not “a question of “ticking boxes: Aikens LJ, giving the judgment of the Divisional Court, in *R(Brown) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* [2008] EWHC 3158 (Admin). The duty must be “exercised in substance, with rigour, and with an open mind. There is no duty to make express reference to the regard paid to the relevant duty, but reference to it and to the relevant criteria reduces the scope for argument. The duty must be fulfilled before and at the time when a particular policy is being considered. It must also be fulfilled by the actual decision-maker; knowledge of the duty by another officer is not sufficient: see *R(Danning) v Sedgemore DC* [2021] EWHC 1649 (Admin) at §55.
29. An important evidential element in the demonstration of the discharge of the duty is the recording of the steps taken by the decision maker in seeking to meet the

² See section 3.5.2 of the Report to Cabinet. The Council has not identified any other reason, for example, that the School is not considered viable. If the Council is not relying on the reason stated in the Guidance, but on some other reason, that should be made clear when responding to this letter.

³ <https://hackney.gov.uk/dalston-spd#happen>;
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JKYYxGAtynP0NsxumGUAq_tR70Lg90_a/view eg pg 146.

statutory requirements: *R (BAPIO Action Ltd) v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2007] EWHC 199 (QB) (Stanley Burnton J (as he then was), confirmed by McCombe LJ in *Bracking v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* [2013] EWCA Civ 1345, [2014] EqLR 60 at §25.

30. The importance of the PSED was emphasised by the Court of Appeal in *R(Bridges) v Chief Constable of South Wales* [2020] EWCA Civ 1058 at §176ff. The Court held that the duty includes a public body taking reasonable steps to obtain information about whether the decision-making would result in direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics.
31. The duty to comply with the PSED is a continuing one.
32. The Council carried out an undated Equalities Impact Assessment (“EIA”), which was provided as Appendix L to the Report to Cabinet. This demonstrates that the Council failed to comply with the PSED in at least two regards relating to Colvestone School.
33. First, although the EIA addressed children with special educational needs and disabilities (“SEND”) in general, it failed to consider the specific position at Colvestone School, which has a high percentage of children with SEND: 17.31% of pupils have special educational needs (the national average is 13.2%) and 8% of pupils have an education, health and care plan (“EHCP”), meaning that 25% of children have SEND. The 25% figure was confirmed to the Council by the School in March 2023. The EIA only lists the pupils with an EHCP, indicating that the Council failed to consider the true extent of the impact.
34. Furthermore, the EIA suggested that the outcome for pupils with EHCPs “may be improved”, because “the educational quality of any school they move to is graded either ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted”, which ignores the fact that Colvestone is already graded ‘Good’.
35. Second, the Council has wholly failed to factor air quality impact into the PSED analysis. Negative air quality impacts are known to harm those who are more vulnerable, in particular, children. Hackney’s own Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2025 identifies school communities as amongst the most susceptible groups to the

serious health impacts of air pollution within its strategy to improve air quality throughout the borough.

36. Air pollution levels are significantly higher at Princess May than at Colvestone. Princess May is on a main road (the A10); Colvestone is on a quiet back street, part of a fully-funded re-greening project which will further improve air quality, meaning that closing Colvestone will inevitably expose children to poorer air quality.

Proposed Ground 3 – Material Considerations

37. There are a number of considerations which are obviously material to the Council's decisions which do not appear to have been taken into account.
38. First, the relevant financial information does not support Colvestone's inclusion, even at pre-consultation stage. The only financial information that the Council has in relation to the financial position at Colvestone is the three-year projected budget produced by the new Senior Leadership Team (provided to the Council in November 2022) and the SMRA report, which affirmed the projections and identified further highly achievable savings on operating costs. Given that these two reports confirm both the financial viability of the School and its capacity to pay down the deficit, it is unclear on what basis the Council has concluded that Colvestone is one of the schools most financially at risk, or has "a budget deficit in top 10 schools raising the most financial concern" (per pg 42 of the Report to Cabinet).
39. Second, planning-related considerations. As the Report to Cabinet tacitly acknowledges, planned future housing and regeneration is obviously material to the predicted demand for the School. The Council has dismissed any short to medium term planning matters that weigh against the proposed school closures, but in so doing has failed to take into account the Colvestone 21st Century Street, which is a fully-funded, short-term (ie 1-2 year) initiative focused on Colvestone Crescent. The adoption of the street on which Colvestone Primary School sits as the Borough's first permanent play street plainly has the potential to increase the number of families drawn to the area, requiring a proper medium to long term analysis of the expected child yield from the development. The Council has not undertaken any such analysis.



40. As set out above, the Council has only considered the impact of proposed new housing in the short to medium term (and has not even done that lawfully). The Council does not appear to have taken any account of the fact that the Local Plan LP33 focusses growth in Hackney predominantly in the two designated town centres of Dalston and Hackney Central. The Council plans to deliver a minimum of 1,330 homes a year up to 2033 across the Borough, maximising the supply of genuinely affordable housing with up to 2,000 homes for Dalston. In Dalston, the majority of the allocated sites are clustered around Colvestone Crescent, some in very close proximity to Colvestone Primary School.
41. The draft Dalston Supplementary Planning Document (May 2021), to which weight must be given as an emerging plan in late stages of preparation, makes clear that there is a particularly high need for 3 bedroom (family) housing and that key to the vision for Dalston is child-friendly planning. Approximately 200 affordable family homes (plus others at market rates) are planned in close proximity to the School. All of this is plainly relevant to the medium and long term predicted demand for Colvestone Primary School; none of it appears to have been taken into account. Instead, the Council has undertaken a generic consideration of planning matters, which ignores the specific considerations relevant to Colvestone.
42. Furthermore, the Council does not appear to have taken into account the potential negative impact of the closure of Colvestone on proposed future housing provision and regeneration in Dalston. The School is key infrastructure, the ramifications of the removal of which are not addressed by generic reference to the need for developer contributions when infrastructure is not present. The whole point of concentrating development in Dalston is that some of the requisite the infrastructure is already there.
43. Third, SEND-related considerations. As set out above in relation to the failure to comply with the PSED, the Council has failed to take into consideration in relation to Colvestone specifically, the high proportion of children with SEND. The school has implemented a SEND strategy which has excellent feedback from parents/carers and staff. Parents chose a 1 form entry school for their children with SEND needs as this is shown to support children's emotional and wellbeing needs. This is relevant both to the medium to long term demand for places at Colvestone and to the likelihood that Colvestone parents will not choose to take up places at Princess May.

44. Colvestone's integrated provision and current surplus capacity also has the potential to save the council money otherwise spent sending children with SEND to independent / private schools outside of the borough at a cost of between £35-70,000 per pupil per year. Given that potential financial losses appear to be driving the Council's decision-making, this is further material consideration weighing against the closure: keeping Colvestone open has clear financial benefits; closing Colvestone risks the Council having to find yet more expensive out-of-borough SEND provision.
45. Fourth, community impact. Colvestone is the last surviving Birkbeck school - a historical and socially important part of London and Hackney's past. It is also by Ridley Road market, one of the most historic markets in London. It is also a key part of the Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street. The Council does not appear to have researched or obtained any information about the potential negative community impact of the closure of Colvestone School, nor does it appear to have taken these matters properly into account.

Proposed Ground 4 - Consultation

46. If a public body chooses to consult, it must do so lawfully. The basic requirements for a lawful consultation process were established in the case of *R v Brent London Borough Council, Ex p Gunning* (1985) 84 LGR 168 and are known as either the *Gunning* Principles, or the Sedley Principles, as Hodgson J set out and accepted the submissions of Mr Sedley (as he was then):
1. Consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage.
 2. The proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response.
 3. Adequate time must be given for consideration and response.
 4. The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals.
47. The Supreme Court in *Moseley* stated at §25 that it is "hard to see how any of [Sedley's] four suggested requirements could be rejected or indeed improved".



48. The *Gunning* Principles are reflected in the Cabinet Office's 'Consultation Principles 2018',⁴ to which the Court referred in *R(British Blind and Shutter Association) v SSHCLG* [2019] EWHC 3162 (Admin) at §31.
49. There is considerable case law on each of the four requirements. The focus of this proposed challenge is on the first and second requirements
- (1) formative stage: it is not a formative stage where an option of central significance has already been excluded⁵ or where a definite solution has evolved;⁶
 - (2) sufficient reasons: a consultation document must present the issues in a way that facilitates an effective response;⁷ the scope of the consultation must be clear⁸ and non-disclosure of information can, depending on the circumstances, make the consultation unlawful.⁹
50. The informal consultation failed to comply with these requirements in a number of ways. First, the consultation did not take place at a formative stage, but at a time when a "definite solution" had evolved. This is evidenced by the following:
- (1) The Report to Cabinet set out efficiencies and innovations which could be implemented to manage and balance budgets (pg 37), then claimed a far more limited set of options has been tried (pg 38), stating that further details would be in the school specific section. These measures are not addressed in the school specific section (pgs 46-51), nor are they addressed in the 'Details of Alternative Options Considered and Rejected' section (pgs 57-58), where 'doing nothing' or 'alternate mergers' are the only other options on the table;
 - (2) The fact that the consultation only concerned school closures and did not invite consideration of alternative models and options to reduce vacancies in the local school system; and
 - (3) Officials on the Hackney Council Admissions and Pupil Benefits Team Helpline told a parent explicitly that Colvestone School was closing.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>.

⁵ *R(Montpeliers & Trevors Association) v City of Westminster* [2005] EWHC 16 (Admin) at §§25-29.

⁶ *R v North East Devon Health Authority; ex p Pow* (1998) 1 CCLR 280.

⁷ *R(Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust) v Joint Committee of Primary Care Trusts* [2012] EWCA Civ 472 §9. See also *Holborn Studios Ltd v Hackney LBC* [2020] EWHC 1509 (Admin) at §71.

⁸ *R(Jones) v Denbeighshire CC* [2016] EWHC 2074 (Admin) at §§70-74.

⁹ See the considerations set out in *R(Law Society) v Lord Chancellor* [2019] 1 WLR 1649 at §73.



51. Second, the consultation was in breach of the second *Gunning* principle, for the following reasons:

- (1) The consultation documentation and surrounding information did not present the issues in a way that facilitated an effective response, as they caused confusion about the “amalgamation” of the schools and failed to make clear (a) that both Colvestone and Princess May schools could close, depending on parental choice, and (b) Colvestone staff would not be “merged” into Princess May; they would have to re-apply, only if there are vacancies. This confusion arguably meant the scope of the consultation was unclear;
- (2) The consultation document also did not facilitate an effective response simply providing an open-ended invitation to comment on the proposals, rather than giving guidance as to the information that would be helpful or needed to develop proposals for the next stage of the process. This failure has recently been highlighted by the Council’s own Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission;¹⁰
- (3) The scope of the consultation was also unclear as regards the timeframe that consultees should be considering. As set out above, in light of the Statutory Guidance, that is a medium to long term timeframe (ie 5-10 yrs to 10-15 yrs). No indication was given of this at all;
- (4) Crucial information about the true financial position of Colvestone was withheld, meaning that consultees could not properly engage with the question whether Colvestone was financially viable. Instead, the consultation focused on alleged revenue lost to the Council. These failures prejudiced consultees. They were criticised by the Council’s Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission. Both the provision of proper financial information and giving consultees a proper understanding of the financial questions on which they were being asked to provide views were crucial to the Council being able to take a decision in line with the criteria it identified for determining which schools to close;
- (5) The consultation documentation was not provided in languages other than English, despite the Council being aware that support was needed in multiple languages and platforms; and

¹⁰ <https://hackney.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s84677/Final%20Cllr%20Bramble%20-%20School%20Estates%20Strategy%20-%20Google%20Docs.pdf>

- (6) The Report to Cabinet identified that a wide range of stakeholders would be included in the consultation, including “all residents”, but that group was excluded from the stakeholders to whom the consultation document was sent.
52. Accordingly, the consultation was legally flawed and does not provide a lawful basis for the Council to move to the next stage as regards Colvestone School.

Details of Information Sought

53. The Council is required to make full and frank disclosure in judicial review proceedings. Save Colvestone has already made a freedom of information request to the Council which has not been answered satisfactorily. The Council is asked to disclose the information sought, namely the original, amended 1906 and subsequent Deeds of the Colvestone Primary School building, receipt of which was taken by the Council in 1990.
54. On 27 July 2023, Save Colvestone made a request to Councillor Garbett for information about reception intake and allocations. The Council is asked to provide the information sought, details of which are annexed to this letter.

Details of the Action the Council is Expected to Take

55. In light of the above apparent errors of law, Save Colvestone asks that the Council removes Colvestone Primary School from the proposal to close schools.
56. The Council is asked to respond to this letter in writing within 14 days (ie by 25 September 2023) so that Save Colvestone may consider whether further legal action is necessary.

ADR Proposals

57. We would welcome any proposals to engage on the substantive issues raised by the draft legislation so as to resolve or narrow the dispute.

Other applications

58. If the claim proceeds the Proposed Claimant will apply for a protective costs order (PCO) pursuant to CPR 45.43 on the basis that the claim is an environmental matter in light of the air quality and human health impacts raised: *Venn v Sec State*



CLG [2015] 1 WLR 2328. If you disagree that this is an Aarhus matter or with the making of a PCO please give your reasons.

59. If it is not accepted that the Proposed Claimant is entitled to Aarhus costs protection, then the Proposed Claimant will invite the Court to make an order capping the parties' costs liability in accordance with its power at section 88(6) of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015.

Details of Legal Advisors Dealing with this Claim

60. Counsel

[Faint, illegible text, likely contact information for legal advisors]

Address for Reply and Service of Court Documents

61. You are requested to respond by email to ensure we have your response in a timely manner. Please send your response to all the following e-mail addresses:

- *[Faint email address]*
- *[Faint email address]*
- *[Faint email address]*

Yours sincerely

[Handwritten signature]

[Faint text, likely name of signatory]

[Faint, illegible text, likely address or contact details]



Annex: Reception Intake and Allocations Information Sought

1. For the 2023 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant:
 - a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed
 - b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
2. For the 2022 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant:
 - a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed
 - b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
3. For the 2021 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant:
 - a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed
 - b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
4. Also, please provide the full postcodes of each of the allocations made to the following schools for Reception intake in the years 2021 and 2022 (and 2023 if available):

Halley House
Mossbourne Parkside
Princess May
St Matthias
De Beauvoir
Holy Trinity CofE
Our Lady and St Josephs



5. Annex A: Informal Consultation responses including expert testimony, Briefing Report – Informal Consultation'

Annex of Informal Consultation responses including expert testimony

Owing to the failure to respond in detail to many of the responses to the Informal Consultation they are included here for re-submission. Included is the submission to the Informal Consultation by the Governing Body of Colvestone Primary School. Attention should be drawn to the expert testimony (flagged in the official summary of the Consultation Responses produced by Kwest, also included here - Chapter 6).

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Excludes comments submitted by respondent(s) who requested that their comments not be shared in public domain.

Comments On Proposals - Consultation Questionnaire

- closing a school is very expensive (the Council estimate well over a million pounds, plus £250-300,000 each year to maintain closed buildings). The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus - how can closing it make financial sense?

- Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.
- Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community.
- Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense

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- the Council say that it can re-open the school if demand increases in the future, but if it does this under current legislation all new schools are automatically Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land (and will have spent a huge amount of money in the process).

- the site has multiple protections - two Grade 2 listings and an outdoor classroom / playground that is an Asset of Community Value - it is not a building easily repurposed but it is an excellent building purpose-built as a school. We also strongly suspect that it has protected educational use and are searching for the deeds.

- with the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site.

- small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities (the school is particularly strong in integrating children with SEN - special educational needs or learning support plans - into the wider community to the advantage all pupils). The small community context is key to this. A single form school enables kids to be supported by their peers across age groups and produces a real sense of belonging and pride in their community.

- Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites (200 of which will be affordable family housing). As a small school it only needs a small number of kids per year to be full - closing it would be incredibly shortsighted (the council should consider demand for places in the mid- to long-term, as per statutory guidance, but it is not factoring long-term demand at all).

- Colvestone is central to the 21st Century Street - the play street and re-greening project that joins Colvestone Crescent to the market. Removing the school will rip the heart out of this project and the neighbourhood.

- closing a school is very expensive (the Council estimate well over a million pounds, plus £250-300,000 each year to maintain closed buildings). The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus - how can closing it make financial sense?

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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

- I will not send my child to Princess May, it was never on my list of chosen schools. The council has not given us any other options, which does not feel like a consultation but a done deal. 98% of parents i have spoken to have no intention in sending their children to princess May for different reasons.

- Princess May is on a major road and has high pollution levels (which every study has demonstrated particularly affect young people). It is also a really big (double form) school.

- The council has not actually consulted the parents, meaning the "consultation sessions" were just about telling us how much money schools are loosing. We have not been given the overall figure for the budget you are measuring this "loss" from. We have not been presented with data on financial viability, we have not been shown financial modelling (except one that is several years old made by the school itself) that takes all aspects of the proposed closure into account, there is a clear lack of long term thinking, including the refusal to assess mid to long term impacts while that is your policy. No one has spoken to the community, to the market traders, to local parents. Your "consultation team" has not been interested in hearing about our concerns.

- Colvestone is a very diverse school with high number of SEND as well as kids with free school meals, and all the school children whose lives you are proposing to disrupt are in such schools. There is a fundamentally unequal treatment as none of the schools in the more wealthy parts of hackney are in danger.

- Colvestone has a really strong community, and is really important for the wider community of Dalston. Which is why we chose it. Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.

- Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes the commitment to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. This is part of an important move to try and get families to stay in the borough and keeping this local school is a huge part of that.

- the closures planned are unfairly hitting dalston, with too many community schools close together being affected. You have not put any faith schools in this plan, which means there is nowhere left to go for pupils who do not want to go to faith schools. Leaving the one school with a strong community to continue, as a single form school, would be a fair way to rectify this problem.

I don't have an issue with the Council adjusting school numbers for falling birth rates in the Borough. That seems sensible, but there are 2 concerns I have over the proposed closure of Colvestone/ merging them with Princess May.

The first is pollution. Why move a school set back from the main road, to one that must be far more polluted? Princess May's right on the main road. Air quality matters.

The second is over the reasons for the fall in the numbers at Colvestone over recent years. A lot of the reason for the decline in numbers there is that parents were unhappy, so a lot have moved their children - mostly to Shacklewell. It seems now that that the statistical fall in numbers is being used as a justification to close the school. That seems unfair as it's a hidden factor in the debate.

BP school is over 30 year old, staff are very friendly and dedicated to their jobs and pupils. They take responsibilities really seriously: looking after the kids, helping them with classwork and encourage to achieve the best grades of education. Teachers gives regularly updates to the parents how their kids where been in the classroom that day. At this moment school has a few amazing young pianists, few tallented chess players, 2 wonderful violinists and etc.

Moving to new school would be really stressful for everyone: teachers, parents, pupils. Some teachers would loss the job, some pupils would development anxiety and stress, friendship between kids would be broken and all school structure would be shattered.

- Colverstone is a well loved school, and one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.
- Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.
- Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - will negatively impact the community. This school is needed where it is.
- Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.
- Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.

Princess May

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area. • This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. • Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. • Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney’s first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it’s located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.
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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

P 00000001

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area. • This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. • Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. • Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney’s first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it’s located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a badly thought-out and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Currently Colvestone is the only local school with such a high number of SEND children because many of them cannot go anywhere else, cannot go to a bigger school, and have found at Colvestone the only nurturing environment that means they can remain in school. Otherwise it means for many of these kids staying at home as there is no SEND provision of this level anywhere else locally. The council knows this and will spend 70k/year per child sending them somewhere really far away to get the care they are getting at colvestone right now.
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Closing Colvestone would have a devastating impact on Dalston and the community. As a single form entry non faith school it offers a uniquely attractive option to parents wishing to move INTO the area. 2) It’s a much needed source of customers for Ridley Road market. 3) The Dalston plan includes housing for 200 families and colvestone is the nearest primary school to those. 4) Colvestone has a covenant attached to the deeds since it was gifted to the Borough which stipulates that the building can’t be used for anything other than education. So it can’t be turned into flats (unlike princess May and De Beauvoir) 5) colvestone IS financially viable. It’s already in surplus this academic year, and needs only a handful of children to be at capacity numbers wise. 6) the air pollution at Princess May is higher than at Colvestone. As per hackneys own records. Does the Borough really want to put children at an increased health risk from air pollution and be responsible for that? 7) over 90% of colvestone parents polled stated that princess may was not in their original 6 schools applied for. It’s not an option to send Colvestone kids there. In addition Paul senior confirmed that Princess May is probably in the list of 10/12 schools to be considered for consultation next year. Fundamentally immoral of the LEA to expect Colvestone pupils and families to go through this process more than once; surely? 8) the school sits at the heat of the plans for Hackneys first 21st century street in colvestone crescent. 9) SEN children often manage better in a small school and environment, as seen by the increase in average no of SEN kids at Colvestone. Why remove that option for Dalston parents?

Objections to the Informal Consultation by Hackney Council to ‘merge’ Colvestone Primary School on the Princess May site, authored by the Governing Body of Colvestone Primary School, July 2023

Below are the objections and concerns over the proposed closure of Colvestone. It is referred to as a closure because that is what is happening. The ‘merger’/‘amalgamation’ of Colvestone to Princess May only means that parents/families are offered a place there. There is no merger/amalgamation of staff/quality of education etc. The governors feel that the use of the terms “merger’/‘amalgamation’ are purely used so that the metrics of closing 2 schools instead of 4 look better for the council.

Part 1 is the objections and concerns against the ‘factors considered by the council’

Part 2 is a response to the statement relating to the benefits of merging schools stated on the website.

Part 1: The objections are taken point by point from the website <https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/primary-schools-potential-changes> and the Councils: *Factors considered by the Council when considering possible alternatives and solutions include:*

- *Schools most financially at-risk*
- *Number of vacant places*
- *Physical size of schools and suitability of sites to host a merger*
- *Geographic partnership options (such as the existence of other schools within walking distance)*
- *Whether new neighbourhoods and new-build estates will create significantly more need for school places in the future*
- *Current Ofsted grading and projected outcomes for pupils*
- *Community impact*

Point	Objections	Concerns
School at financial risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school has indicated that it would be financially viable for the next academic year and pre the decision to close would be financially viable for 23/24 ● The school has been proactive in making decision to ensure financial viability ● The partnership means that there is shared resourcing in both staff and resources making financial savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The SMRA data was in draft form and the final report seems not to have been taken into account, which indicated huge cost savings . ● The schools commissioned the SMRA report in good faith to explore and take all avenues available to get

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This partnership is continuing for the next academic year and has the potential to continue - meaning that cost savings would continue • There is an in year surplus this year and also the financial management of the school is accurate meaning the any projections are also accurate - this was not the case at the end of 21/22 • There has been a surplus for 2 years running. • The last financial year has seen significant investment in capital costs: building repairs and refurbishment, security and IT investment. These costs will not be required for future years. 	<p>a more accurate picture and to make cost saving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By using this data as a way of supporting the argument to close Colvestone, which would not have been available otherwise and also was not available for all schools in Hackney, is unfair. • Financial viability of schools is addressed in regards to a school's capacity to deal with repair and maintenance costs (3.4.3). Colvestone has made substantial capital investments over the last year to ensure that its site is fit for purpose and resilient for future years This future-proofing is not accounted for.
<p>Number of vacant places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the initial conversation the projections for Colvestone Reception were 7. After questioning at the meetings the SLT and governing body was told that this projection was unlikely to change. However when we received the Reception offers (the first time) the number was 12. We believe that with one of the nearest schools (Shacklewell at 0.4 miles, the same distance as Princess May), being oversubscribed and with the proposed closure of Debeauvoir, (0.5 miles distance from Colvestone) Colvestone would have had more children attending the initial offers. In fact there has been a parent who was not on the list who has subsequently applied to come. • Having 40 parents tours indicates that there is interest. The context of Colvestone's change in leadership, state of the building (there was scaffolding around it, lack of care and a 	<p>The projections were changed from 7 to an actual figure of 12 indicating that modelling data was not accurate There seems to be no account taken of changing circumstances for other schools such as the other proposed closures and also how this would affect nearby schools - this was modelling that the governors asked for at the initial meetings with HackneyEd. (minuted by Hackney Ed)</p>

	<p>hall that was out of action due to Hackney's errors) and resourcing of the school meant it was less desirable than the nearby school. This situation has been remedied and the stability of the partnership would have meant that this year it would have been a preferred choice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is also 'easier' to fill a 1 form entry school than a 2 form entry school. Other schools in the local area (Princess May being one of them) are operating as a 1 form entry school even though the capacity is for 2 or 3 form entry. ● There have been in year admissions this year and less movement compared to the pandemic years. ● The fact that there is not a mass exodus after the announcement shows the desire for a 1-form community school with Colvestone's uniqueness is needed. 	
Physical size of school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Colvestone is a 1-form entry school which would not be able to grow into a 2 form entry school. However, Colvestone uses all the space creatively. As a 1-form entry school it has a dedicated art, music and computing space and has more than enough capacity to be a full 1-form entry school with additional space to provide high quality of education. In Colvestone's case the concern around having large schools that are a financial drain does not apply as it is an appropriately sized site. In the cabinet meeting 22nd May: <i>'Schools with excess physical space and large sites Reduced budgets impact on schools' ability to set aside sufficient budget to deal with day to day repair and maintenance issues as resources must be prioritised to deal with staffing and delivery of education. This can have a significant impact on larger school buildings and sites with fewer pupils which will have higher premises costs. Underinvestment in the premises will create longer term issues and increased need for capital funding to deal with a lack of maintenance.</i> As pointed out in previous objections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been no risk assessment or costs of the size of schools and ongoing costs done in any financial modelling. Comparisons of schools and cost have not been made.

	<p>this was not the case for Colvestone which is a 1-form entry school with appropriate physical space. It is not a 3 or 4 storey Victorian building. Currently all parts of the school are utilised and used. There are no larger areas not in use yet still having to be heated and maintained. In addition investment into capital works such as the school hall, the roof etc. mean that the school premises are in a manageable state for the near future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In addition there is a school keeper's house that could be used more creatively to support children at Colvestone and across the borough as an ARP at a future date as Hackney have secured more SEND funding. Historically at other schools, school keeper's houses were looked at and developed to provide such places. There is precedent. In addition, in the Estates Strategy doc it states that schools should be supported to repurpose school property to support them economically (1) and specifically to expand SEND provision (2). 	
Geographic partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choosing Princess May as the 'merger/amalgamation' school was done on distance. There seems to have been no other consideration that Debeauvoir, which is also less than a mile away (0.5miles) would be closing. Their nearest schools are church schools (1 RC) and the closest non-denominational schools would be Queensbridge - a large 2-form entry school with limited space and a full ARP) and Colvestone - a 1-form entry school with space and a good reputation for supporting children with SEND. It seems logical that Colvestone would have been a choice for some of those families. ● No planning of the overlap of schools closing and their proximity to each other. With De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer closing there is more movement to other local schools, which then are full (apparently the case now). By 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been no pollution consideration of commuting to school in scope. ● There have been no surveys done for parents/carers about what type of school they would like their children to attend. The ratio of community schools to faith schools and their proximity to other schools has not been analysed.

	<p>closing Colvestone - the next nearest non-denominational school near De Beauvoir (0.5 miles) - further diminishes local provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Princess May is geographically near Colvestone (0.4 miles), however travelling there involves a walk along the A10, which is a large and busy road. For young families, children with SEND and older children who cycle/scoot/walk to school, this is an additional concern. (In addition the playground is on the A10) There are no ways of walking to Princess May without a walk along this road compared to the walk from De Beauvoir to Colvestone, for which families can walk alongside it and then come out at the pedestrian crossing to Ridley Road market. Currently children living nearby to Colvestone can walk on a school street and quiet roads avoiding heavily congested and polluted areas like the A10. ● Geographical distance is a factor, however for many families who live on the east side of Colvestone, Princess May would not be geographically closer and will have a longer commute. 	
<p>New neighbourhoods and new builds will create significantly more need for school places in the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are plans for 600 new homes in Dalston, of which there are family homes. Colvestone would be their nearest school. ● There has been no strategy between Education and Planning. It was apparently clear in the council's Dalston Plan walk yesterday that those working for the planning department view Colvestone as key infrastructure / provision for the project yet this has not been considered by the school estates strategy. ● Colvestone Crescent, as part of the Dalston plan, is to be a 21st century street which has been agreed. The school is an integral part of the plan. According to the councils website: <i>As a part of our broad vision for this scheme, we</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been no discussion of the centrality of Colvestone Primary School to the Dalston Plan in any of the conversations or information put to cabinet. It is only mentioned through objections by the families of Colvestone. Again the decisions seem to not have looked at all factors involved and there is a failure to consider other plans developed by other council departments. Further, the council's committed spending on Colvestone

	<p><i>intend to deliver a new, green space, cycle parking, electric vehicle charging, a School Street, and an increase of tree canopy cover to 40% along Colvestone Crescent. How is this street going to work with no school on it?!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In addition part of the aim of the 21st Century street would be to attract people to live there. This again brings families in and Colvestone is their nearest school. 	<p>Crescent's 21st Century Street has not been considered when choosing to consult on closing Colvestone.</p>
<p>Current OFSTED grades and predicted outcomes for children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Colvestone is a 'good' school and all indications from SIP visits and one day reviews indicate that it will continue to be a good school. ● Outcomes are good and there has been a significant improvement in EYFS data this year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This as a metric is irrelevant as we keep being told that there are hardly any schools in Hackney that are not good or outstanding and Hackney is one of the top performing boroughs in KS1 and KS2 data in England.
<p>Community Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Colvestone is by Ridley Road market - one of the most historic markets in London. The impact of a school being mothballed to this historic area is unimaginable (and also under researched by Hackney) ● It is the last surviving Birkbeck school - a historical and socially important part of London and Hackney's past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been no consultation done on community impact by Hackney. ● There is no detail about what that even means! ● Again no consideration of the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Street which have been formed with the community.

Part 2: The points below demonstrate why the 'merger/amalgamation' with Princess May in terms of benefits to Colvestone are null and void - even though as Colvestone would be closed all of these points stated by the consultation documents are irrelevant such as school improvement, resourcing etc.

Merging schools that have seen large decreases in pupil numbers brings significant benefits, including:

- ***Creation of one new, stronger school community, maximising the funding available to it***
- ***Increased specialist expertise from a wider teaching and pupil support team***

- **Stronger finances, with consistent resources and stable staff workforce**
- **Increased potential for school improvement and targeted support in response to local needs**

Context:

The Blossom federation has only been supporting Colvestone since September 2022. Hackney Education insisted on a partnership for the academic year 22-23 after the resignation of both the exec head and head of school after May half term. This left only the assistant head as a SLT member in place. Hackney Education organised applications and interviews and were adamant with the governing body that this was the only solution. The governing body interviewed 2 potential partners and chose Blossom federation for the following reasons:

- Strong, secure and a wealth of experience in financial management. They had a federation business manager who would be able to support the school. The other applicant had no business manager for their own school and therefore no capacity to take on a school with the financial. An understanding of the situation and the difficult restructuring of support staff. The school emphasised creative ways and more understanding of how the school could make cost savings and explore other avenues as well.
- A potential head of school who had experience with EYFS and wellbeing - ensuring that staff and children would feel safe, secure and be able to achieve their potential. The wellbeing of staff and children was a concern as there had been te defederation, restructuring of support staff and the Executive head leaving at short notice with the resignation of the head of school.
- An experienced executive head who led 3 other schools which also continued to thrive with their own unique identity.
- The potential to receive support through resourcing and expertise from a wider group of schools in all areas e.g. premises, finance, resourcing and teaching and learning.
- The federation had identified areas for development which would attract new families including a better website, more social media output and also cosmetic and infrastructure changes. These have all been actioned without time to see the impact.

The partnership was agreed to be extended for the academic year 23/24 by the Colvestone governing body in December. This was going to be put to all stakeholders in the first half of the Spring term and to the Blossom Federation governing body. There were preliminary discussions of federation although it was felt that the school needed to continue with the partnership before any discussions for this would take place. After the Soaring Skies federation, which did not bring many of the above benefits of school partnership stated in the consultation benefits, there was an understandable objection to partnership and federation. The deficit, the restructuring of support staff and the lack of infrastructure in the school to support teaching learning was a direct result of the previous federation. The partnership with Blossom has been positive and impactful in all areas. This is seen not only through SIP visits, ODR and Tags meetings with Hackney Ed but also through the SMRA report.

	<p>In preliminary meetings the SLT and chair of governors asked for partnership to be given time to build on the short successes that had been achieved within a term of the partnership. The successes and achievement of being with Blossom Federation can be seen below:</p>	
Point	Objection	Concern
<p>Creation of one new, stronger school community, maximising the funding available to it</p>	<p>With the Blossom partnership a stronger school community has been built. In parents, staff and childrens surveys taken 100% surveyed said that the Blossom partnership has had a positive impact. The Blossom partnership has also led to a larger and more stable governing body with 3 new governors recruited with a wider base of knowledge resulting in wider and more targeted scrutiny.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been no consideration of this when putting forward the proposal to Cabinet even though there has been extremely positive feedback through Hackney Education scrutiny. • In addition the governors were told that if it wasn't for the Blossom Federation then the school would be considered for closure rather than amalgamation. When asked why this would be the case there was no answer.

<p>Increased specialist expertise from a wider teaching and pupil support team</p> <p>Increased potential for school improvement and targeted support in response to local needs</p>	<p>This is already in place through the Blossom Federation. There have been leadership visits in the key school development priorities to other schools in the federation: phonics, science, maths, literacy, art and SEND. This has resulted in an improved teaching profile moving from good to outstanding and progress in core areas. Phonics provision has been identified as a strength within a term due to the support and development in place from the Blossom federation.</p> <p>Staffing structure: The development of middle leaders has meant that there has been an improvement in teaching and learning. This has been supported by an experienced exec head and a dedicated head of school. Support from leaders across the federation has also supported this development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In thinking about school support there has been no consideration of the partnership in place. The council does not seem to have taken in consideration any of the reports by Hackney Education on the successful impact on teaching and learning of the partnership. ● Hackney Education's processes and structure to ensure that a school does not have a deficit of this level is called into question. The fact that a remote audit was carried out and did not flag that there were no systems in place for purchase ordering, HR files were not up to date and other key areas were missing is a concern.
<p>Stronger finances, with consistent resources and stable staff workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An in-year surplus has been identified this year. When speaking to the C of G at a governors conference it was stated by the director of education that many schools would go into deficit. Colevstone has done this with the strong and secure financial stability brought in by the federation business manager and a dedicated 1x week finance officer from another federated school. ● There have been suggestions made at meetings that the surplus has been down to investment by Hackney Education. The school received funding from the Schools Contingency Fund, the de-delegated fund to which all schools contribute and to which all are eligible to apply. This money was applied to help improve the school building and in particular ensure that it was statutorily safe and compliant. The school had a right to apply and were eligible for this funding and are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been a comparison on schools budgets for this year - have any schools gone into deficit within a year and if so by how much? Colevstone has - even in difficult circumstances and with money being spent on the schools infrastructure and teaching and learning have been in surplus. ●

	<p>entitled to the finding. The fact that the school had not accessed this fund previous to this leadership could be attributed to the deficiencies in the state of the building and resourcing. One might suggest that the Management Team would have been remiss not to have applied for it - as in the case for all monies that the school applies for and receives from the Council and other funds - and to imply that this an emergency intervention by the Council, or the only reason for running a surplus, is highly subjective and contestable at best. Many schools (both in frame of this consultation and outside) apply for and receive this funding, as they are entitled to do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Financial accuracy: budgets set are achievable and reflective of the situation Colvestone is in. There are systems in place to ensure that spending can be carefully monitored through secure purchase ordering systems. There has been an SMRA process which has identified key ways the school can make cost cuts when contracts end e.g. catering/energy. There are clear systems in place to chase debts which have historically been allowed to grow.● The school has achieved a surplus even though there have been debts/invoices that should have been paid or accrued from the previous year. The in year surplus would have been considerably higher had these been properly accrued. The lack of oversight by Hackney Education and the fact that an audit - which was done remotely - did not pick up on these financial discrepancies raises questions.● Computing and IT support is delivered through the federation● PE support is delivered through links with the federation	
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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

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<p>1) The school (Colvestone) is an asset to the community. 2) The kids will have to walk up the A10 which is very congested and polluted - that is not fair. 3) They have been sorted financially this year. I read about the Blossom Federation. Give them another chance! Poor kids!</p>
<p>1. A crucial part of the community in Dalston and Hackney. 2. Proving the community a place for their children to be educated which is close by to their residents 3. Will have a detrimental effect on the education of so many important younger members of the community 4. A historic school that will probably now be converted into another block of flats 5. A local community school and should not be closed 6. Good ofsted reports and will have a detrimental impact on all the current and future children who will be given a crucial educational 7. A decision based on cost saving and not the requirements of the community</p> <p>An absolutely outrage.</p>
<p>1. Save funding/ resources through amalgamation of schools 2. Enable Provision for social housing 3. Enable Provision for specialist schools</p>
<p>1. The economics are nonsense. The enormous cost of closing followed by the maintenance of empty buildings, and the certain need to reopen in the long-term will mean the council will lose the building and land under current law, and that after the huge cost to the tax-payer already incurred. Plus Colvestone being small is full and runs a surplus budget! 2. Closure would render current council homebuilding plans - e.g.the Dalston Plan and the21st Century Street - unfeasible. 3. Colvestone is a protected site - 2 Grade 2 listings & it's playground is an Asset of Community Value. Plus the building is specifically built as a school and the deeds forbid other use, so not suitable or available for any other purpose. 4. It is an excellent school, with outstanding results in diverse community needs.</p>
<p>A small school that caters for all abilities and has a significant number of SEN pupils should be cherished. Their pupils flourish, are happy and feel cherished in such a caring environment. Colvestone is sited in a residential area, away from main roads and with no heavy traffic nearby. It is an established part of the local community. I have experienced working at a merged school. Despite every effort, the atmosphere of both schools changed significantly and affected many of the pupils and the staff - a point that would be dangerous to ignore as the school ethos disappears. It would be tragic to destroy an absolute gem of a school by a merger which would remove all the characteristics chosen by parents and loved by the children.</p>
<p>Agreed to merge both school due to low number of children for the benefit of our children continuing their education. What I will suggest is that the leadership of Princess May school should be changed as we want a leadership that embrace the community as the school was previously a community and a lot of parents were happy to stay in the school even when moved out of Hackney as the leadership was welcoming and recognised parents needs.</p>
<p>All I can do is continue to strongly object to this 'merge' proposal. The schools have NOTHING in common and I have NEVER considered sending my child to Princess May. It feels as though you want to call it a merger so that Colvestone parents feel like they have no choice but to send their children to Princess May but this is ill-thought through. I, along with many other parents, will simply not send my child there and LOVE what Colvestone has to offer. Give Colvestone the chance to thrive as it undoubtedly will once 21st century plans come into place. Do NOT PROCEED PLEASE.</p>
<p>Although I understand the financial reasons for the closures in general, Covestone should not be treated as just a "head count" to be saved. As a single form entry school, largely on one level, it is an essential option for our SEN and disabled children. As great as many other Hackney schools are, they are generally huge and overwhelming for children with sensory issues. I cannot imagine how the autistic and ADHD children happily settled at Covestone will transition to the much larger Princess May, however great it may be as a school.</p> <p>Surely if you are closing De Beauvoir (which, unlike Covestone, had been troubled for all of the years I've lived here), Colvestone could easily be filled with De Beauvoir pupils, who otherwise might have to travel much further, as many of the other schools in South Hackney are oversubscribed?</p> <p>Also, if Covestone were closed, what would happen to the site? While many of the other sites considered for closure seem valuable for residential development, and therefore of some alternative (financial) value to Hackney, it is hard to see how else Colvestone can be used? Leaving it as an empty decaying hole in the heart of the Ridley Road community and the broader Dalston Plan (including the Colvestone Play Street) would be terrible for the market and wider community.</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Parent@883	<p>am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child feels safe, happy and secure at Colvestone. We have been part of the school community for over *** years. *** of my children have attended the school. Moving my child to another school will be extremely traumatic and disruptive.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school that has offered my children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>My older [child] with [SEND] went to *** schools in Hackney, including outstanding schools. * was facing being out of mainstream education and Colveston showed * love, acceptance and support which totally changed things around and * is now at a mainstream secondary. The fact that Colveston accommodates for so many children with additional needs and keeps them in mainstream schools saves Hackney a lot of money. My younger [child], like so many other children, is on a 2-3 year wait list for a diagnosis with CAMHS and therefore is not part of the SEN stats we were discussing at the meeting today which were already higher than other schools in the area.</p> <p>I believe the education department are cherry picking the figures to suit their agenda and are not looking at the bigger picture or the cost of cleaning up the mess that will be left by traumatising the SEN children who will have their fragile world torn apart, including providing for many children who will be left outside of the school system.</p> <p>Our children have been through so much from being scared that they will die due to a terrifying virus, mask wearing whereby they can't read people's facial expressions and emotions accurately, being locked down in their homes without socialising with their peers or teacher's, too returning to school and loosing their TA's and headteachers and now just as things were beginning to become "normal" again the council are taking away their normality. This is horrendous for children's social and emotional well-being.</p> <p>Putting Colvestone up for closure has sabotaged our chance to bring up numbers, who will send their kids now? The council's policies that have reduced affordable housing for families has had a direct result on these dwindling numbers. Proposing to spend millions to make Colveston Crescent into a 21st century Show road while closing the school is a ludicrous proposal that shows how inverse the council's priorities are in this.</p> <p>Please support us and oppose these short sighted proposals that will have detrimental effects on the most vulnerable young people in our community.</p> <p>Signed ***</p> <p>Parent at Colvestone Primary School</p>
	<p>An historic building probably being sold out to a Developer for flats at over inflated prices. All the efforts of the Head and her Staff have made over the years thrown out the window. Not to mention the vulnerable local children being farmed off. I am against this Social cleansing. The future should be for all not just the privileged few.</p>
	<p>Areas go in cycles, while they may not be sufficient children to fill the school now, there will be again. This is a short term move which is emblematic of agreement that London can be a city without children. The closure must not go ahead.</p>
	<p>As a buildings and Heritage Conservator I am well aware of the fragility of graded buildings which are unoccupied.</p> <p>I am also aware of the cultural importance of this fine example of a purpose built Victorian school.</p> <p>From a heritage point of view I would be interested to know what alternative plans for the buildings on this site and the footprint of the school have been put forward if the school were indeed closed to intake.</p> <p>We are all aware that protecting and maintaining an unoccupied listed building,(Colvestone School is Grade II listed) is costly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will Hackney Council justify this cost to preserve this valuable and important cultural addition to the history of the borough? 2. Do Hackney Council intend to sell the site? 3. Do Hackney Council have a plan to re-utilise the site for future public or council use?
	<p>Colvestone School is a rare example of continuation of purpose in that it was built as a primary school and has continually served that community purpose.</p> <p>Credit to Hackney Council for it's continuous use to date and I hope this building,ongoing, continues to be a building of importance on Hackney Councils register.</p>
	<p>As a former teacher in a one form entry primary school in the east end of London, I feel I have some understanding of the value of a school like Colvestone to its community.</p> <p>Part of its ethos, care and commitment to individual children is enhanced by its one form entry nature. I would want to support Colvestone continuing to offer quality education to it's present and future pupils.</p>
	<p>As a local resident and parent in Hackney for over two decades I am shocked by the proposals to close or amalgamate schools in Hackney. With classrooms already packed, schools need more funding rather than closures.</p> <p>We need our local community schools and I cannot foresee where this heading ?</p> <p>Many thanks</p>
	<p>As a local resident I would be very unhappy to see the school left empty (if that is the plan). I am concerned that the listed building, which has had recent renovations, be allowed to deteriorate.</p>
	<p>The school is appreciated and enjoyed by a wide range of children and parents.</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Parent 09389

<p>As a parent I don't understand why the last school in Hackney was completed in 2019 and now they are wanting to close a school that has been around for years and years. It has affected so many families and the community. So many schools are situated around De Beauvoir because the council has built them. It is not fair for the families of the children in the school.</p>
<p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone I think there are many reasons to keep our school open. It is the only single form entry school in the area - which is very beneficial for children with special needs. It is the only non faith council run school in the area. It is the only one of the Birkbeck schools still in existence and a key part in your proposal to make Colvestone Crescent a 21st Century Street.</p>
<p>Furthermore I have found your consultation very unsatisfactory. It says on the previous page that the proposal is a merger of Colvestone with Princess May. This statement is completely misleading; as far as I know there has been no suggestion that any of the Colvestone teachers will go to Princess May. As I understand it, you are closing Colverstone and we can send our children to Princess May (which no-one wants to do). This is not a merger at all. I am afraid to say that this sums up my experience of the consultation; disingenuous. Not at all how I would expect a Labour council to do things.</p>
<p>As a parent, I don't want these two schools to merge. Preferably, I would like my child to finish at this school like their sibling, but whatever we say, nothing will happen because Hackney education has already come to a decision. I believe there will be a lot of problems at the schools when they come together. Current students will be in groups and how will the kids handle this situation. What help will Hackney give kids and parents?</p>
<p>As an ex-student and one of several generations of fortunate people who have attended Colvestone Primary School, I am extremely disappointed and angry about the proposals to close the school's site and merge it with Princess May School.</p>
<p>Not only would this permanently deprive the residents of Dalston (and broader Hackney) of extremely rare and valuable access to a single-form entry state-funded primary school, it would also precipitate a significant reduction in the quality of education received by those communities and existing students. I know from my experiences and that of my sibling who later attended Colvestone that the single form entry and therefore smaller schooling environment created a far more hospitable environment for children with SEND, as for many of these kids the enormity of a school with 400+ children would have been unmanageable. If the pupils currently at Colvestone are forced to move to Princess May, I feel the care afforded to children and the educational options available to their parents will suffer a serious deterioration, as they would likely be forced to disturb their childrens' education and transfer them to a school exclusively for SEND children.</p>
<p>Removing a single-form entry primary school from Dalston would also have the effect of more broadly undermining the educational provision available to local residents unable to afford to privately educate their children and desiring a local education for their children.</p>
<p>Closing the Colvestone site would have a deleterious influence on Dalston's broader community, and would likely enable more extensive anti-social behaviour on Colvestone Crescent and its environs as there would be few or no regular use of the building. Furthermore, the empty building site would comprise a significant disused space in an area desirous of better resourced, more accessible and multi-purposable community spaces.</p>
<p>As one of the parents and carers that has contributed to the extensive submission prepared for this 'informal consultation' under the name Save Colvestone Primary School I do not feel it necessary to reiterate all those points here. I stand by them all. What I will do here is to implore you to read them closely, to allow your assumptions to be challenged, to engage finally in the consultation.</p>
<p>Too often in this process I have witnessed elected Labour councillors (some of whom I may have canvassed for) and others with oversight for this process adopting highly confrontational positions, refusing to meet or to discuss the proposals, to allow any challenge to the Council's starting position. I have got the impression that these officials are affronted to have a member of the public challenging arguments that claim that Colvestone, a local community primary school, must be closed – even if these arguments appear on weak foundations or deserving of scrutiny. Why would someone who is elected to serve a community be so resistant to hearing arguments that suggest a school that has been at the heart of Dalston life for over 161 years could be saved? That it actually is financially viable, and that they had the figures all along? That these hugely damaging proposals can be stopped? That they don't have to be the Councillors and Cabinet members, Mayor and Deputy Mayor who closed a school that didn't need to be closed, that scarred the lives of many children, parents, carers, teachers and support staff whose lives didn't need to be scarred. Who wouldn't want to hear a compelling argument for that?</p>
<p>I and many members of the Colvestone community have persistently tried to engage with the officials charged with running this process. We have been refused all meetings. We have been met with an unwillingness to discuss the proposals in even the broadest terms if the questions challenge the assumptions already made in the briefing documents produced by the council. We have been told repeatedly though that you are listening, that Hackney Labour is a council that listens to its residents. Well, this is the time to listen – and to respond. It should not require stating in a consultation that proposes to close four schools that making sure you are making the correct decision is of high importance: given the lives that will be affected it might be the most important set of decisions you make in your political career.</p>
<p>We believe we have built a compelling argument as to why Colvestone Primary School should be saved. It is your responsibility now to scrutinise those arguments – because if we are right then you get to preserve one more local authority school in Dalston and allow it to thrive. A genuine consultation compels you to respond to the information that you receive in it. Please allow yourself to see that changing your received ideas here might actually lead to something amazing: the realisation that yes, this school is viable, it has value, it doesn't have to be closed, and that it is integrally important to the community around it and that that too is important. Because to act to close it on weak data or inertia or an ill-thought through proposal would be an act of gross dereliction of duty, of harm on a community that will echo through generations and that will not be forgotten.</p>
<p>I implore you to finally engage with this consultation and listen to what your community, your electorate, has to tell you. The news might be good.</p>
<p>As someone who lives between colvestone and de Beauvoir I was wondering about merging these two schools. Both have lovely building and communities and it would be a shame not to have a secular school in the area.</p>
<p>As stated above: some children need smaller, quieter spaces. Colvestone School is at the top of a non through less polluting road, the building is attractive and not overpowering. It's close to a wonderfully diverse market where excursions for recognising fruit and the country it's grown in, working out prices is great for maths and the former general knowledge. My daughter loved her class outings along the market being told where certain fabric designs are from plus the above teachings. Small is more.</p>
<p>Bad to move children, this school, community run, non religious non free school is a valuable part of the community & it's loss will upset & disrupt parents & children alike. It's loss is just another deprivation forced on vulnerable people already struggling to sustain a supportive environment for their children</p>
<p>Baden Powell is nearest to my home and also easy for my job. They have grown up in this school from nursery until now. Also, the teachers of Baden Powell are very helpful and kind. They are like friends and family to the children and are happy and interested to go to Baden Powell School. My children are not interested in going to Nightingale School.</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

P0000005

Baden Powell is nearest to my house and easy for my job. Also they have grown in this school from nursery up until now. Also, the teachers at Baden Powell are very helpful, like friends and family. The children are happy and they are interested in going to Baden Powell school. My children don't want to go to Nightingale School.
Baden Powell Primary School is 30 years old, staff are very friendly and dedicated to their job and pupils. They take responsibilities really seriously: looking after the kids, helping them with classwork and encouraging them to achieve the best grades of education. Teachers regularly give updates to the parents about where their kids are in the classroom that day. Moving to a new school, some pupils will develop anxiety and stress, friendships between kids would be broken, some teachers would lose their jobs and all Baden Powell Primary School structure would be shattered.
Birth rates and population rates rise and fall. What evidence does the council have that birth rates and population of Hackney will continue to decline? History says this is unlikely to be the case as dips in birth rates often follow a rise.
Whilst the private sector values smaller class sizes due to the educational advantage it distills on pupils, what other ways have been explored to share resources more equitably between Hackney schools?
Parents needs local schools that are convenient and walking to school is encouraged by the council. What are the implications for local traffic flows and ease of movement if parents are potentially travelling further?
Both De Beauvoir and Colvestone Primary Schools provide high-quality education rooted in local communities and this should be allowed to continue.
As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, Colvestone should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.
De Beauvoir School has a large amount of safe outdoor space for education and exercise, compared to nearby Hackney New Primary, which has virtually none and where pupils have to leave the school for exercise.
*** my children have been educated at Colvestone Primary School. The school is special for a number of reasons but probably the most important aspect has been the single form entry. The playground too is both contained and ideally suited for parents picking up their children to get to know each other. This is essentially a village school at the heart of Dalston. It is hard to describe how these two aspects come together to create a school community around which children can thrive but it does.
I think closing Colvestone Primary School is a huge mistake because this kind of school is exactly what local authorities need right now to tackle a number of growing problems in our student population. probably the single biggest problem to affect children across the country is Emotionally Based School Avoidance.
As a *** for another borough I work a lot with children who have been unable to return to school since the pandemic lock down or who have simply developed anxiety attending a large two form primary school. The numbers of such referrals have increased enormously and I imagine the same is true for Hackney. The solution is rarely in my experience therapy but a period of individual tuition followed by re-integration into a smaller single form school.
Another trend since the pandemic, that has affected children in the London borough for whom i work, is the growing number of Primary School children permanently excluded for emotionally dysregulated and often aggressive behaviour. These children go on to receive an EHC plan and are then eventually (after months of being out of school) placed in a spot purchased alternative provision in the private sector. What makes the difference for them is that the school they attend are small and so less overwhelming.
If the same is true in Hackney then Colvestone Primary School offers the opportunity for many of these children to find a way back into an education without having to spend months failing to face a large primary school they are never likely to re-integrate into or wait for an EHC plan to come through so they can access an independent school outside of the borough. Colvestone Primary School is a HUGE resource precisely because it is small and nurturing.
Closing it would be an absolute waste of a precious and valuable resource already up and running, improving every day under a new leadership team and capable of serving children who have been unable to manage in a larger two form entry school. Surely we could be using money from the SEN budget that is spent on out of borough alternative provision and work creatively to enable Colvestone Primary to continue doing what it does best.
*** of my children attended Colverstone and because of the nature of a single form entry have done extremely well. Without Colverstone their early years needs would not have been recognised. I fear that children of Hackney will not have the same opportunity as my children have. Everyone at Colvestone is valued and everyone is included. Colvestone is a special place which as a parent who no longer has children at the school does want to take away the opportunity to other children that my children had.
Both of my children have attended this school and we would like to see it remain open as it is a convenient and well orchestrated school.
Calverton school serves the community in and around the Dalston area the only primary school that have been serving the local community for years. I've had children attending the school and found it to be a very good school with dedicated staff all the families and children that attend love the school and object to the closure
Change is not good for children. They like their place. They get used to the building, classes and playground. They know where everything is. They don't want to change school. It will be stressful for children, they don't understand why school will be closed and why there is no money for their school. Please do not close this school.
Closing a school means that school and nits identity is lost forever. Amalgamation is not an even merger. One school disappears, absorbed into the other, usually larger one. Teachers are lost to the borough, and don't come back. If pupil numbers increase in the future it is too late to change course. A far better strategy would be to put pressure on the government to increase per-pupil funding for schools with falling rolls.
Closing Academy/Free Schools in the neighbourhood reduces the options for us all to keep a diverse and socially intersectional community.
Closing and amalgamating primary schools in this area will have a huge be detrimental effect on the community and the children and parents of the schools.
The smaller school, create a local focus for the area, crating a better more engaging community. It is better for the children of primary age as it makes for a more nurturing and safe feeling environment for them. Closing them has a detrimental effect on the community at large in almost every way possible.
It better for working parents as they are usually easier to get to too.

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Parent 09891

<p>Closing Colvestone and moving the school to princess May would have an extremely negative impact on the community. Colvestone is the beating heart of Dalston. It creates natural surveillance in the area and makes Dalston the vibrant , diverse , friendly community that it is. Without it I believe we would soon see a rise in the levels of anti social behaviour.</p>
<p>Closing Colvestone would cause a deterioration of the surrounding area, making it unattractive for young parents to move into the area. Geographically it connects different parts of Dalston, which is integral for a functioning community. Former students have excelled academically in their respective secondary thus providing a good standing for the school's pupils in future application processes.</p>
<p>Closing De Beauvoir Primary School would cause so much upset to a lot of students.</p>
<p>To close Colvestone would cause disruption to parents and students. To find a new school would also cause a set back as students will struggle to fit in as they are so close to the teachers and the friends they have made along the way.</p>
<p>Closing school removes parent choice RE SEN schools/ one form entry, non religious, local schools. Princess May is an unsuitable option. No real consultation has so far happened.</p>
<p>Closing schools is not the answer. The community will suffer. Children need a sense of belonging. Amalgamation is not the solution as it will uproot the children with no guarantee that the alternative will be any better.</p>
<p>Closing schools like these one kills even more the sense of community that's so much needed nowadays</p>
<p>Closing the local small school has a negative impact on the pupils' education and the entire community and nothing positive.</p>
<p>From my social circle and professional experience in the field/system of education, merging two schools into one is one of the worst things the council could do to the community. For example, large schools are well known for being unable to solve inside problems such as bullying or unprofessional teachers' behaviour for years. These issues in small and calmer schools are easier to detect and solve. In a small school is a stronger sense of connection between the staff and pupils. This means staff have an in-depth knowledge of every child. In that case, a student who needs extra support will unlikely be ignored and slip through the cracks.</p>
<p>"Research tells us that belonging to a close-knit community is vitally important in developing a child's resilience. It is also a protective factor for mental health and bullying issues. Smaller schools allow for more freedom, collaborative work between school and pupils, encouraging fun activities which bring education to life."</p>
<p>The benefits of a small school education by Oonagh Turner. Fri 20th Aug 2021. https://www.independentschoolparent.com/school/the-benefits-of-a-small-school/</p>
<p>If Hackney Council needs space for upcoming projects - closing a small school is beyond the ridiculous idea. Some areas need extra attention from the council - for example, a small square of the ship containers between ***. This square is an epicentre of antisocial behaviour!</p>
<p>Closing the school is disrespectful to the community. Colvestone has always been part of the community and closing it would have a huge impact on Ridly Road</p>
<p>Closure of Colvestone School will lessen the footfall and diversity of Dalston and Ridley Road, especially the market as the community (Parent/Teachers/other workers) shop and pass through Ridley Road very frequently, which would be a great shame as real efforts were made to take over the shopping village to encourage local people and businesses.</p>
<p>It also opens the way to further development which is incompatible with Ridley Road Market for example the "concrete triangle" (area adjacent to Colvestone School) which is detrimental to the Market as it will end up being the source of many complaints if and when it is approved.</p>
<p>Closing of the school is very short sighted and the area has a growing population and it is highly likely more places will be needed in future so short term it will destroy a long established community. Around the borough and in Dalston there are plans for more homes which will require more primary places, so why close a well established and liked school with a good reputation.</p>
<p>It will be hugely disruptive of all children/parents etc attending or anyone involved in the school. What appear to be a small step of moving all pupils and closing Colvestone will have much larger consequences as Colvestone School is very much embedded in the local area.</p>
<p>More effort should be made in the short term to attract more pupils as it is a long established school in pleasant green surroundings. The adjoining street is a 21st century street and closure will heavily impact the street and area. Long Term as mentioned it will likely cause overcrowding in other schools and a new community will have to be build possibly around a new school, so very short term thinking.</p>
<p>As a resident of Hackney who has lived in Hackney and worked around Dalston my whole life I am very disappointed by the suggestion that there is a proposal to close Colvestone Primary. I hope that this objection to the proposal and the others will be properly considered unlike some of the other decisions which were made even though there was widespread opposition, otherwise it just confirms a large number of views which I hear saying these are exercises to give the appearance of a consultation even though the decisions have already been taken and erodes the faith democratic process.</p>
<p>Colverstone have a number of SeNCO children. Parents have chosen this school due to the size and expertise of the staff. It will be unfair to move these children to a large school. This will cause emotional distress. Opposite to what we should be doing for the well being of all children.</p>
<p>Colverstone is a fantastic community resource. It was key in the campaign to keep *** and her *** children in the U.K. and stop their deportation to India in the 80s.</p>
<p>More recently staff from 2015 when I was a solicitor at Hackney Law Centre have supported children whose mothers are Persons Subject to Immigration Control and unable to access public funds whilst working .</p>
<p>Rolls are falling due to gentrification , the opening of free schools in the borough and accommodating homeless families out of Borough. The Council should take effective action against these changes not penalise local children by closing the school they love.</p>
<p>Colverstone is a small family community school, that serves the immediate area</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

P 0927

Colvestone offers choice to parents who want a small community school that is not part of a large academy. It offers the caring environment needed to help children thrive.
Colvestone Primary School is at the heart of Dalston community. It's a very different school to Princess May. Merging two completely different schools needs more thought.
Colveston Primary School forms the heart of the Dalston community, Ridley Road and the new Green streets.
Colvestone provides the cleanest air, and safest amenity space for play over and above other Hackney primary schools.
Several dissability children travel from *** London to Colvestone because it is the ONLY school in London where their children learn anything despite having tried numerous other schools across london. This is because it is single form entry and in its design is a calm place to learn.
In no other school have I heard of all the kids in each year organising games for themselves that involve all of their year in the same playground activity. This extends to care and cross-play between reception and year 6's playing together too.
Colvestone Primary school is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.
Proposed new development of Ridley Road and flats on shopping centre land will require school infrastructure. The many new homes should be using this tailor made legacy school.
Colvestone Crescent is becoming the first 21st Century street in Hackney. The school and children are very much at the heart of this project.
Colvestone has a long and significant history, having been part of the original Birkbeck Schools founded by William Ellis. The building is in fact the last remaining original school as the only other surviving Birkbeck schoo, William Ellis Secondary School in Camden, moved to new premises in the 1930s. It would be tragic if it wasn't retained for educational purposes and in particular to support the type of ethos and curriculum promoted by William Ellis. From what I can understand the school does this and also has a key role in the local community. Its closure would reduce parent choice, be bad for the environment and deprive parents of a thriving small institution with strong historic roots. Please think again.
Colvestone has served as the primary school for many parents in this area. It is well regarded and I was hoping to send my 2 year old son there when he is old enough. It's close by and means we can stay local.
Colvestone is a close knit, small community school. Closing it will negatively affect the children at the school.
Colvestone is a gem in the community. With 1 form entry and strong sense of community and care for the children, every child flourishes - where some would not in mainstream larger schools. Not every child suits a larger school so stop the consultation and fill the spaces at Colvestone. Keep the school where it is, with one form entry. Not every decision should be based on money and numbers. Create solutions to enable those children who thrive in smaller school environments and reconsider merging Colvestone. Humanity is more important than money.
Colvestone is a good inclusive school in a unique place in a Dalston ensuring a safe place for children to grow and learn with a beautiful historic building from the Birkbeck foundation of education . It dwarves to be a Hackney flagship and let off the regeneration of a Dalston not to be closed . Its proximity to Shacklewell Primary an outstanding school that is oversubscribed suggests they should merge since they need the overspill . Princess May is in Shacklewell a different part of the Kingsland Road and ward.
Colvestone is a Grade 2 listed building, built in 1852 as a pioneering co-ed school. Closing it would mean losing a well designed dedicated school building, and an unreplaceable publicly owned resource.
Without Colvestone and de Beauvoir schools the dalston area would be left with no non-faith, one-form entry local authority schools - only religious schools, free schools and academies, which are not being considered regardless of numbers.
7% of Colvestone students have an Education Health and Care Plan, well above average in the borough. Many of these children and many others would find the transition very challenging. Closing a school with such a high proportion of vulnerable children is unfair and wrong.
Also, the playground at Princess May is right next to the A10 and had 40% higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide than Colvestone (according to the Council's own monitoring system, 2021). Adding more students to a school with much higher pollution levels is obviously damaging to children's health.
Colvestone is a huge part of the community of Dalston and Ridley Road. It is a community hub and serves as a real small local school amidst hundreds of larger, less intimate and welcoming places of education.
Colvestone is a key school very valued in the local community.
Additionally you should consider that closing a school is very expensive and given that this school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus, how can closing it make financial sense?
+ with the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site!!
- small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities
- Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites
Colvestone is a rare gem in Hackney's primary provision as a non denominational school. I am aware that as a single form entry school it is discriminated against in terms of funding, but this small scale is also one of its great strengths. Children feel safe here. They are known by all the staff, and by all the other children. That is one of the (many) reasons children with SEN thrive in this mainstream setting. My children loved this school, and the strength of the friendships they made here endure many years later despite all going to different secondary schools, their Colvestone connections have remained strong, enriching and protective. This will be lost if this special place is engulfed by a much larger school.
Colvestone has a history of providing great quality, creative and lively teaching. It holds strong values and builds strong self esteem, equipping its students very well, not just for the next stage of education, but for life.

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

P 00000003

<p>Colvestone is a small community school of the road in secluded safe area. The children get individual attention. The children are happy and content in Colvestone. I strongly disagree with Colvestone joining Princess May.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a small school which is inclusive and has a unique character. My son attended more than 30 years ago and got a great deal from it. 10 years before he attended ILEA Division 4 had tried to close it and had manufactured low admissions. I hope this is not happening again! I recognise there is a problem of falling rolls, but we should hold onto our schools and diversify them Colvestone because of its family atmosphere has been very good at including disabled children especially diverse and those with Social Emotional and Mental Health issues. I propose that the school keepers house currently vacant should be made into resourced provision with children who have SEMH and Neurodiversity. The Resopurece base should have 2 specialist teachers and 6 specialist TAs who work to support the children in mainstream class and the resource base. In addition the AWPU should be adjusted so that classes of 20 rather than 30 should be the norm. With this support and good marketing of the excellent practice at the school parents will be encouraged to enroll in the school and it will have a future.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique LEA-run community school in the heart of Dalston. Its single-form status makes it very close-knit and children thrive there. Children and families with SEND particularly benefit from this smaller, nurturing environment. The Dalston area has a Plan to build more housing very nearby. The proposed closure feels extremely short-sighted in light of this - will families have the choice they deserve? Or will families even choose to live there if there is no community school nearby? The Dalston community deserves to retain this wonderful school.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique small community school cherished by its families and staff. The head knows everyone's name and we must keep a place for this type of school in Hackney. Also, it is an eco school and on a quiet school street serving the community. It has great potential for growth if given another chance.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique, caring and academically strong school. It is vital to the local community.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique, caring and academically strong, one-form entry school. It is a vital part of Dalston and should NOT be closed.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a vibrant SMALL school with a very happy parent teacher and student community. To merge it into a super school would be a great disservice to the public and go completely against any notion of school choice</p>
<p>Colvestone is a wonderful school and one of the only single-form, non-religious schools in the area. It's accepting, creative and nurturing. It must be protected. Whilst pupil numbers have dropped, the local area has huge plans for residential development so I strongly believe this to be a temporary issue. The school is under new management and even in these difficult times it is at the beginning of a change and it must be allowed to continue. We do not want our children to go to Princess May and we will not send our children (x2) there.</p>
<p>Colvestone is an amazingly friendly, welcoming single form entry community school, and one of the only non-faith, non-academy, non-free schools in the area. The plan to merge with Princess May seems completely ill thought out, and is not talking to the community into consideration at all. The plans for the re-development of dalston, plus the new 21st century street plan all require a thriving school to be up and running on the colvestone site. The fact that only state primary schools are being considered for closures / amalgamations is completely unbalanced when looking at the range of different schools in the area, all which which are suffering from low pupil roll numbers</p>
<p>Colvestone is an asset to our local community. I live on ***, in ***, overlooking the playground of the school. The school is part of our daily life and we are planning to send our three children aged 2 and 6 months respectively to Colvestone. We love that it is a community school, not a faith or free school. We also love that it is single form of entry and that teachers and students all really know each other. The school building is also of special architectural interest. It is an important building in the street scape of Colvestone Crescent and Ridley road market. The plan of turning Colvestone Crescent into Hackney's first 21st century street goes hand in hand with the use of this beautiful building and an empty building would be detrimental to the character of the area.</p>
<p>Colvestone is an excellent school that is close to my house and I get excellent support for my children here. They are very happy at the school and in the school community. It is very important to have the school in the area. There are no other small schools like it.</p>
<p>Colvestone is an excellent school. Being one form entry gives us a much more accessible culture which is particularly important for children with special needs. If it didn't exist they'd have to invent it. It has been disappointing to be patronised by officials from Hackney who have clearly made the decision to close the school. When confronted by counter-arguments from parents who have done their research they simply ignore them. Their approach makes people cynical and ambivalent about democracy in general and Hackney council in particular.</p>
<p>Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. • Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. • Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.

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<p>Colvestone is great with SEND. It's help so many kids.</p>
<p>Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community.</p>
<p>Colvestone is one of a few primary schools that provides a community setting which is able to nurture and support children with SEND, and is only able to do this due to its long-standing experience and direct involvement of local parents. A friend of mine with a child with SEND at the school is now in a hugely stressful situation, as she knows her child could do really well in a mainstream setting, but will suffer from this change to a much larger school. Amalgamation of the school moving it to different space, further away, in a much bigger setting, will remove this close contact and necessary more personal and direct support currently provided.</p>
<p>Colvestone is one of the only non-religious, non-academy schools in the area and I feel it should remain open to offer families in the community the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school. It is a single-form school which helps to foster a sense of family and community, as well as connection between the teachers and the pupils, which is particularly important for younger kids and an important consideration for me when choosing schools for my daughter.</p> <p>Furthermore, Colvestone is at the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes plans to build affordable housing in the area, so it seems a little short-sighted to close the school when some of the new homes will be populated by families that require a nearby school for their young children. The current site of the school is set back from main roads whereas the proposed merger is with a school close by but sat right on a busy road, which is very concerning with regard to pupils' exposure to traffic pollution while at school and on their commute. Given that the school is the best part of 200 years old, the plans also appear to fly in the face of the Dalston Plan's purported aim to protect and celebrate Dalston's built heritage – if this is truly the case, why is the council removing teaching from a historic building that has been serving its community for this length of time? It would be a great shame for this building to be used for anything other than that intended so many years before.</p> <p>Furthermore, unless I'm mistaken, Colvestone Crescent is part of development plans to create a "safer, greener and more accessible public realm for Ridley Road Market" (see https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/streetscene/21cstreets2/, slide 6) – if this is the case, this would create a safer and greener place for pupils at the school to be educated. To be perfectly honest, accounting for the fact that Dalston is a heavily populated urban area, with these new developments Colvestone Crescent seems to me to be a perfect site for a primary school and I'd like to know why the council disagrees. On top of this, I feel that the plans to develop this street as outlined in the presentation above make much less sense if the school is removed from the area - you'd be moving children from a small community setting that is green with low traffic to a larger school with less access to greenery and with a great deal more exposure to traffic and its consequent pollution.</p>
<p>I'd welcome hearing the council's reasoning on this.</p>

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<p>Colvestone is uniquely placed as a one-form entry, non-religious, non-academy, non-free school which should be celebrated instead of being punished - it is harder for the council to propose to close religious schools, free schools or academies so it chooses the easier option of proposing to close this school instead of protecting it.</p> <p>Colvestone School is a listed Victorian purpose-built which should remain true to the purpose it has been fulfilling for over 150 years. Too many new schools in the area are occupying completely unsuitable buildings eg Halley House which has no outside space to speak of.</p> <p>Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan which says it will build family homes. Colvestone needs to be kept open as it is the closest school to this development.</p> <p>Colvestone Crescent is planned to turn into a 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. Crucial to this plan is that it's located next to a primary school. Colvestone School is essential to this ground-breaking proposal.</p> <p>Hackney Council need to look solutions for the dropping enrolment in the borough: lack of affordable family homes.</p>
<p>Colvestone is very important to the local community and should be left alone for sure</p>
<p>Colvestone needs investment not closure. It is only a year since the previous head left, giving the school not enough time to rebuild and strengthen. It is at the heart of Dalston, a historic building and site that could serve the needs of the many future parents and children to be housed nearby as part of the Dalston plan. Without it, the council will be looking at new school provision in a few years' time, making this a short-sighted and senseless proposal. My children benefited from its unique single form environment and close-knit community and teaching staff - it would be a great loss for Dalston to simply close the school rather than build on its strengths to make it the best it can be.</p>
<p>Colvestone new management need to be given the time and opportunity to succeed - in the short window they have already proved financial resilience and pupil success.</p>
<p>Colvestone primary is a community hub as well as a school, its small size as well as location on a quiet road make it particularly effective at creating the community spirit, the benefits of which are important far beyond the school gates, creating social cohesion and providing community members with key mental health benefits.</p> <p>It is a truly mixed non-denominational school that welcomes all, and with its one-form entry also provides a safe environment for children who can't overwhelmed in larger academic institutions, children who need to feel more personal contact with staff in a nurturing environment.</p> <p>The school is also pivotal in the plan to turn Colvestone Crescent into a 21st Century Street, the borough's first permanent play street. This will not only be an incredible community asset, but will make. Hackney an example for other boroughs to follow in the necessary move to make cities more human-friendly and sustainable, which is all key to ensuring improved mental health across our city communities.</p>
<p>Colvestone primary is a fabulous local primary school and it's going to be very damaging to the children to have this upheaval. I am particularly worried by the impact on my god[child] and [sibling] for whom the stability of school life is tantamount to their well being. Once lost we'll never get back these schools back. Hackney is loosing its children and if the council continues with these measures it'll loose more.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School has just undergone an extensive building restoration, and is the life and soul of this street. The fact that this historic building is still being used as the school it was built for is something that should be cherished and enjoyed. School intake is always in flux and the council should support the school through lean times.</p>
<p>Closing the school will mean the street has an unused empty building deteriorating after expensive refurbishment and selling the site to developers flies in the face of the council's own strategy for the conservation area and it's 21st century street.</p>
<p>The daily presence of families and small children in this street is a life enhancing experience for all of our residents.</p>
<p>It is a safe street for children to arrive at school in as it is a no through road, and the site offers good out door space not surrounded by traffic fumes.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary school is a big part of our community and one of the reasons I moved to this area. I wanted to live close to the school so when I have children they can go there and I don't have to worry, as it's close by, the classes are small so the children get individual attention. The school has recently undergone a massive makeover (which looks great btw). Please don't close our school.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary school is a medium sized local school that myself and my partner feel would be an excellent starting point in education for our child. The reasons for amalgamation seem to be driven by the economics of property sales and the value of the site as potential revenue for the council rather than the best interests of children in the borough.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is a nice school for our community that is close to a lot of families. Especially to children with special education needs, it is easy for them to travel to school. Having a greater distance travelling to school would be physically and mentally difficult for kids like my child</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is a relatively small school with good community connections and positive spirit that supports the loca area well. This should be keptto support current and future demand. Primary schools should not become too large or cover too large an area at the expense of community cohesion and the wider benefits they bring to the locality.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is an integral part of the community - it would be a big loss for the community to lose the school</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is at the heart of the Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.</p>
<p>This is one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority and offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p>
<p>Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community.</p>

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<p>Colvestone Primary School is part & parcel and a staple part of the Dalston/Hackney area. In recent years, children of friends and family have attended this wonderful school. They have all had positive time at this wonderful primary school.</p> <p>I attended Colvestone over 45 years ago; it was filled with unforgettable experiences and the most amazing years of my youth and my life! From music (which is a huge part of my life), with ***, (who was also my [child]'s music teacher too); to sport, which was inclusive back then and ahead of it's time! I played football, cricket, basketball etc. Also academically, we were all taught in a caring & supportive manner; teaching in a way for every individual child to understand, this is extremely important. English and Maths were extremely important and the teachers made sure the pupils were well equipped, when going on to attend secondary school.</p> <p>Colvestone Primary School has shaped so many children, young people and adults over the years and to date, that no-one will understand, unless they have actually attended this unique school. Colvestone Primary School, is where students have gone on to have very successful futures!</p> <p>We implore everyone involved to listen to the community to keep this fantastic primary school open. It is detrimental to the whole community and is vital that this one-in-a-million, iconic school stays open; otherwise, the community of Dalston and Hackney will suffer a severe loss.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is so important to the local community. The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus. If you close it and need to re-open the school if demand increases in the future, it would automatically be a Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land. With the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site. Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites so closing it would be incredibly shortsighted.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary school really adds to the community around the heart of Dalston and Ridley Road market. The closure of the school would leave a hole in that community, and diminish the social infrastructure at the centre of Dalston. As a single form school, it is really able to provide a child-centred experience which we particularly appreciated with our child with SEN when * may have found a larger school over-whelming. It was important for us also to have a non-denominational school for our children and Colvestone has always been diverse and welcoming in every way. Without Colvestone I feel that you are depriving future parents in the catchment area of having a local, community-focused school.</p>
<p>Colvestone provided me with an incredible primary education, and the teachers and environment were incredibly welcoming. Bullying problems were dealt with immediately, and the size of the school led every student to be familiar with everybody else, leading to a place where students rarely felt uncomfortable, leading everybody to feel very welcome and able to develop bonds with others. I am still in contact with most of my friends from Colvestone, which I believe to be due to the close-knit structure. Additionally, I have heard very little praise of Princess May, and many of tales of parents regretting sending their children there, due to the rampant bullying issues and difficult integration of SEN students. I feel that the closure and integration of Colvestone into Princess May will only harm the local community.</p>
<p>Colvestone School has been through a lot of big changes in the last few years, including two restructures, a defederation, and now we are facing closure - and some of these quite frankly could have been avoided if the Learning Trust at the time did their job of monitoring the school much better! First and foremost, why did Thomas Fairchild even federate with Colvestone when their last Ofsted was good? And then secondly, the school went on to have two further Ofteds whilst in the federation, which were both requires improvement - why wasn't proper support given from the Learning Trust after the first Ofsted? The federation caused a lot of damage to both schools in terms of their reputations and clearly their budgets that the Learning Trust were not keeping proper track of. Yes this is historical, however it is a major starting reason as to why Colvestone has such a big deficit. The Learning Trust could have done a LOT more to stop this from happening.</p>
<p>This year has seen huge developments at Colvestone since the Blossom Federation partnership, which can clearly be recognised in all the ODR and SIP reports - yet we need more time to be given a chance to develop further (and build a new reputation under the new leadership) to attract new families, increase our numbers of children, and therefore really begin to lower the deficit again. Being on the list to close (or merge - which essentially means our school will close), completely diminishes our chances of attracting more families - and yes, if we were not on the list, with all the work that Blossom have helped the school to do this year, we would have absolutely taken a lot of the surplus school children in the area looking for Reception places because that's how much we believe in the impact they have made to our school!</p>
<p>Colvestone school is a huge part of the Ridley Road community and contributes to the intergenerational value that the area holds. It would be a shame to lose this important asset after so much effort and investment has gone into the market and surrounding area, much of it with an intention to retain and strengthen community. Additionally the draft Dalston Plan sets out ambitious goals for family housing in Dalston, which if fulfilled will surely result in viable admissions for the school without the enormous and shortsighted costs of closing and reopening Colvestone School.</p>
<p>Colvestone school is a small (single form entry) school with a rich history & deeply embedded links in the community which provides a haven for children that would struggle in the larger environment of Princess may or other bigger schools in the area. For neurodivergent children especially, it is a less challenging environment where they are more likely to get the sensitive, personalised focus that will enable them to thrive.</p>
<p>Colvestone School is a unique, historic and much loved part of central Dalston and its community, as the organised and passionate campaign to save it has shown. It is a central part of the Dalston plan that aims to bring 600 new homes including families, which will increase the need for schools in the future. The proposed closure seems short sighted.</p>
<p>Colvestone School is a very important focal point of positive, visible activity for the immediate area. It matters very much to have it there operating in such a different way from all that is going on around it - mainly retail, business, cafe etc. It adds significantly to the fabric of what makes up Dalston and enriches it as a result. It's important that younger aged children go to somewhere as local as possible to foster a sense of belonging. We know this from talking to children we know. It's important to be near as the children can easily walk to school - a point which is always being emphasised from a health point of view. Obviously then, more convenient for working, busy parents to accompany them. It is less likely for them to be driven to school. If Colvestone is amalgamated with Princess May, more cars will be heading that way adding to pollution and traffic jams. Princess May school has a playground right along a heavy polluted road! Colvestone is well sheltered from traffic - much more healthy place to play.</p>

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Colvestone School is a very special school and the amalgamation will take away from what makes this school special.

It is one of the smaller schools but by being a small school, it is able to take on the paramount responsibility within the heart of the community for inclusivity, celebrating culture, and giving each and every student with such diverse backgrounds the focus and attention they need for their futures to thrive. There was never a lack of exposure and opportunity this school gave to each and every one of their students from music and arts to sports and individual study support - the needs of each and every student considered.

Growing up in a small working class family that are an ethnic minority where my parents were busy working to make ends so I was predominantly looked after by my grandmother who spoke minimal English and whose age meant her mobility would continue to reduce over the years, the accessibility, placement, community aspect of the school was important to my family and my development. It will be a loss in many ways with the amalgamation of the school as one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area. It should remain open to maintain right for families, especially those like mine and all those I met during my time at Colvestone, the choice and accessibility of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.

I am proud to be an ex-student of Colvestone school and I am proud that this gem of a school exists in the heart of the community. The proposal if it were to go through will rip away such a vital part of the community and will be a long-term loss in the area for the future development plans and opportunities for the youth and families to come.

Please save this Colvestone School.

Colvestone school is a well-loved and well-used local resource at the heart of our community. If Dalston is to remain a hospitable environment for families to live we need local schools, particularly one offering the choice of non-academy and non-faith based education. If closed and empty, the former school building would be a magnet for anti-social behaviour, already prevalent in the street.

Colvestone school is a wonderfully small school which caters for, not only a child's educational needs but their social development. My [child] attends this school and is growing in confidence socially, mixing with Year 6s when * is only in ***. Further, * is excelling in all areas of * learning.

This school needs to be supported to remain at the heart of the community and continue to develop smart and fully rounded young people.

Colvestone school is an integral part of my local area. Due to

The schools location children and carers walk to and from their school day. This encourage a sense of community for the children, builds confidence and well being physical and mental. Many local residents say good morning to parents and carers on their way to school, which helps bring a community together. I live directly opposite the school, I am always encouraged by the sense of community the school brings to the area. There is a feeling of protection and calmness in the morning and afternoons when the children arrive and leave the school. I believe the whole community benefit from this.

I believe the school is a 1 year in take, a rare thing within central London and I believe must be a benefit to the children. I believe a smaller school can provide a calmer and more individual experience for the children and will help them grow up to be secure, responsible assets to our Community

Colvestone School is at the heart of the local community, and closing it will have a detrimental impact on the local area

Colvestone school is uniquely built and located, giving it a distinctive identity and relation to its community. It has much of the appealing and welcoming character of a village school. The children are very well cared for and receive a high quality of education. It is far better for children to be able to walk to school. This proposal (as well as the other three) will lead to much more car use and toxic air pollution.

Colvestone School is well renowned in Hackney for being a small community school, with a nurturing and caring ethos and a particularly positive approach to SEND children. They have small classes and are rare in that they are a one form entry. This matters to children in terms of their mental well being and development. Additionally, Colvestone has been at the heart of Hackney for 161 years and has a very interesting history. If Colvestone is closed, we will lose this for all future generations, not just now and the unique nature of Colvestone will be lost. The current cohort will be mentally distressed by the proposed merger; after two years of distress caused by covid, it is unthinkable to impose yet more disruption on these young people. We also know that the CAHMS referrals in Hackney have sky rocketed. It is unacceptable to add to existing stresses. It will also impact on the well being and mental health of the staff, let alone their job security. People will leave and the school will feel like a ghost school for those remaining. Finally, Princess May is a very different school. It is across a busy main road. The air quality in Princess May is worse than the air quality at Colvestone. As a clean air borough, why would the council knowingly put children in harm's way from air pollution? Why would they put children at greater risk from crossing a busy main road, when they purport to promote school and safer streets? With respect to roles, demographics change. When I moved to London, I taught classes of 12 children. I now teach classes of 24 max. Small classes are a benefit not a problem, to improving education and this will change as people start to have children. Demographics change, but never permanently. As an educator with 33 years' experience, I urge the council to rethink, on the grounds of health and safety of the pupils, historic value and legacy to the community and lead by good educational practice. Small community schools are a good thing. Do not be the ones who destroy that legacy for the people of Hackney. After all, politicians are merely the current caretakers. Colvestone has been there a lot longer than the current administration.

Colvestone school means such a lot to the community that it would be a travesty for it to close

Colvestone should not close.

De Beauvoir should merge with Colvestone.

Our kids have been through so much over covid and lockdown. We need the school and they need the school.

We don't want this to go legal!

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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Parent 2009

<p>Colvestone should not close. It is a vibrant, well functioning school with a potential to recover from the current drop in pupil numbers. The council could well help Colvestone get back on its feet and get more students if the council took steps leading to promoting the school instead of steps leading to discouraging parents of potential new students from enrolling them in Colvestone as is currently the case.</p> <p>The school has a great deal to offer - the building and schools grounds are beautiful and unique, it is a single form school which has a friendly, special atmosphere and is especially good for children with special needs, allowing them to thrive.</p> <p>Colvestone Crescent is apparently set to become a 21st Century street, which would be an additional incentive for parents to send their children there.</p> <p>It is not fair on Colvestone students to have their education disrupted in this way. They are not pawns on a chess board that can be just moved from one place to another.</p> <p>I, and many (probably most) other Colvestone parents, have no intention of sending my child (their children) to Princess May.</p> <p>This is just not a good solution to this problem. There are many other, better ways to approach current issues at Colvestone and they can result in Colveston thriving again. The council need to abandon this plan and create a new one in the light of the information suggesting that the merger with Princess May is not going to be successful.</p>
<p>Concerned about the attention of teachers on individual students in case of an increase of classroom. I am also concerned about kids' association with their classmates as it may affect their understanding.</p>
<p>De Beauvoir has been apart of our community since I was a child. My children have all attended and it has contributed to the growth and wellbeing of all three of my children. The teachers are compassionate and generally care about the students. They know each and every student by their name which makes the children feel special. We are a community and closing it would affect our wellbeing. The kids are settled and happy. This sudden closure proposal has left the kids unsettled which can have an impact on their mental health.</p>
<p>De Beauvoir is a family, it is not fair! We have a huge playground. Some schools don't even have one. Just because Colvestone parents have the cash to protest doesn't mean other parents do too. I'm not asking to close Colvestone but I am asking to amalgamate De Beauvoir. It is hard to see my school disintegrate.</p>
<p>De Beauvoir is a top school, and it would make more sense closing schools that are under performing and keep the schools that are thriving. I dont see know schools being advertised or promoted in the media or around the borough. Invest your funds into schools that do well and close the schools that don't do so well, those pupils will than fill up the school places resulting in funding etc</p>
<p>De Beauvoir is a wonderful community school and there are limited options available in walking distance for a 4 year old. The school does wonderful work because it is small and can treat students as individuals.</p>
<p>De Beauvoir is an old school. It has something to offer to the community. For historic reasons alone, please keep De Beauvoir for the coming generations. Let it reach 200 years. It is nearly there. Hackney, WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT!!</p>
<p>De Beauvoir primary has been in our community for many years. Four of my children have attended this school. *** and the teachers and staff at this school have been extremely supportive when I have had health and personal issues. My children love coming to this school and are devastated about the possible closure. This school is one big, supportive family. It is not just bricks and mortar. I highly doubt that I will have this support from another school. The children at De Beauvoir are happy and content. They have made bonds with teachers and friends. Please don't take this away from them.</p>
<p>De Beauvoir Primary school should be the main local school in the area. Many residents have attended this school in their primary school age. The Council has given permission to a free school to open nearby with a controversial history linked to a secondary school that has terribly failed in the past. The free school has indubitably taken most of the primary school age in the De Beauvoir area. Learning Trust has also a responsibility in the last troubled years for De Beauvoir Primary school. They have changed head teachers many times and chased results above building the community spirit that was much needed in the school. Community spirit that keeps alive the other primary schools in the small neighborhood</p>
<p>Detrimental effect on families and children - deprived families with mental health issues will suffer - not conducive to the evolution of the area in a social and educational context.</p>
<p>Disagree, I would like to see these school not merge</p>
<p>Do not want baden powell to close down.</p>
<p>Don't close local authority schools at the heart of squeezed london communities</p>
<p>Education in Hackney, one of the most deprived boroughs in the country, is inadequate, underfunded and undervalued. Closing down some of the existing institutions is exactly the opposite of what the Council should be proposing : it shows a deplorable lack of vision, a desperate short-termism and lack of the required leadership for the Borough. We need more and better educational facilities in Hackney. Failing that, we have to retain what we have, nurture and develop them, and give the parents and children of Hackney to feel a sense of purpose, clarity of the path ahead for education, and optimism to see that path realised. Closing the schools down will only achieve the opposite of these goals. Falling school rolls are not an excuse to close down these institutions. They are an opportunity to improve them, with smaller class sizes and better results.</p>
<p>Even if our [child] is in schaklewell, Colvestone is an important part pf the neighbourhood. The closure of Colvestone and nearby De Beauvoir would eliminate non-faith, one-form entry schools in our area, leaving a dominance of religious schools, academies, and free schools. This disregards parental choice and diversity. Additionally, closing Colvestone could negatively impact the Dalston development plan, hinder children with special educational needs, increase air pollution exposure for students, and erase a historically significant Grade 2 listed building from the 19th century radical education movement.</p>
<p>Everyone in the school are stressing about this proposal I have two special needs kids you are not thinking about us at all kids are struggling</p>
<p>Firstly, I do not understand why the school budget has been cut and they have to merge schools. What happens when they agree to close the school and the birth rate goes back up? Secondly, I chose Baden Powell as my [child]'s school because it is considered a family school. My [child]'s aunts, cousins, grandmother etc went there and the education that was provided is excellent. My [child] has had a big improvement in * learning and confidence because it is a small class. This school has benefitted * so much. I believe in a bigger school, this might change. Also, I have no idea which teachers and even the headteacher will move, who have not only helped my [child] but me also with his development.</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

	<p>For it takes a village to save a school and also for the pupils that are attending and enrolled to Colvestone, it is vital for this community, however small or insignificant they seem, they still need their school that has been an essential part of their community and education. Please save this school for the sake of the caring community that it's home to.</p>
	<p>Fully appreciate dilemma Council faces but Colvestone is an integral part of the local community. The building is beautiful and to close it would be to create a blight on the landscape. That end of the street needs occupying to create a transition from market place to dwelling place.</p>
	<p>Generations and generations of children have been attending this school and Baden Powell has been in the heart of the community of Hackney for many many years with nothing but good things to say about it. I am a mother of *** whose [child] is in year ***. However, I also attended this school when I was in primary years and I am *** years of age now. My friends children were sent to this school as part of the history of attending Baden Powell. My *** is a Teaching Assistant for over *** years or more and started when I was in year *** class. Many local residents to the school and within Hackney have worked here for over 20 or 30 years at this school making a huge impact on the children's lives. I'm worried for my *** that * will be without a job if you decide to close. If you do close the school - please ensure you can arrange to have the teaching assistants placed in Nightingale or near by schools so they can continue to work and not be unemployed as it's not their fault. I really hope you can leave the school to remain and not merge the school. Thank you</p>
	<p>Hackney Council has disregarded many points prior to taking this decision which is very appalling. There are many schools in Hackney, each of which is different, and Colvestone is unique with its catchment area.</p>
	<p>Hackney council have told parents that De Beauvoir school should close because pupil numbers are falling and will continue to do so in the future. The council cited three driving factors; Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis; all of which were pushing families out of London. Shortly after the consultation I asked the council to provide source for their predictions and to explain why they believe these trends will continue. I have not received a satisfactory response. I was simply told that the predictions were made by "experts."</p>
	<p>Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis are all recent events. Although they have had an impact on pupil numbers recently, there is no evidence that these trends will continue in the long term. In fact shortly before these events, pupil numbers in Hackney had been rising.</p>
	<p>The school has been serving the community for over one hundred years and once it's gone it will be gone forever. I strongly believe that the closure of De Behaviour School will be one of the biggest mistakes that Hackney council could make.</p>
	<p>Hackney needs all its schools</p>
	<p>Hackney requires more not less schools. Class numbers increasing is putting too much pressure on each teaching institution</p>
	<p>Hackney should not only have large schools in the borough. Some pupils are better suited to small schools and learning environments. In addition having large schools in busy urban areas is often overwhelming for residents at critical times of the working day.</p>
	<p>Happy about the merger</p>
	<p>Having joined the Blossom Federation, Colvestone has really improved. It is shortsighted in the extreme to close a school which is on an upwards trajectory. The effort which has been invested by all staff has been fantastic and this will be thrown away if the school were to close.</p>
	<p>The decision to close a school without any plan for the future of the site is bizarre. I understand it is to be a community asset, but this is vague and without a clear plan and funding will likely see the site lay vacant for a long time, draining further resources. This lack of plan is compounded when you consider the very recent (and long overdue) capital works to the buildings.</p>
	<p>Colvestone currently provides a wonderfully caring and welcoming environment for pupils and families and given time to grow I have no doubt that the current leadership can provide a thriving and viable school. I understand that the need to balance budgets but Colvestone could become financially stable if given time and support.</p>
	<p>I do hope that the Council reconsider these proposals and keep this school available for the local community.</p>
	<p>Having the option of a small community single form entry school in the heart of Dalston is invaluable.</p>
	<p>I agree with the proposals if it saves money and reduces the costs to the taxpayer. Obviously merging the schools will help to reduce financial loss. However my concern is why children left the schools leading to a significant reduction in attendance. The question we should be asking is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the reasons parents opted to remove their children from these schools? 2. How the closing schools be used as learning hubs, centres of excellence, alternative learning spaces to engage the children that have left? 3. Where are these 45% of children being educated? 4. When will Hackney Council implement activities that support homeschool children and their their parents?
	<p>I agree with the two amalgamations and disagree with the other two non-amalgamations, i.e., I believe the other two Primary schools should also be amalgamated instead of being closed down.</p>

P 4399 40005

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

I am a local Dalston resident and parent of a [child] and [children], all teenagers now. who attended Colvestone Primary School from nursery to year 6.

My ***** family SEN requirements mean the intimate environment of a one form entry school in a small building with an enclosed playground are very important criteria for us as is the case for current and (we hope) future Colvestone families. We understand that the current SEN offer is very good and has improved since the school has a new leadership team. Therefore to merge the school with another larger one which we do not consider to be in our neighbourhood and is located on the busy and polluted A10 will be harmful to special needs children as well as all other Colvestone pupils.

Colvestone Primary School is a non-denominational school located in the residential district east of Kingsland High Street. The building was opened as a school in 1862 and has been educating children from the area ever since regardless of their gender, faith, socio-economic and ethnic background. As such it attracts a diverse section of the community adding to the richness of the pupils' educational experience. As such, it varies from other schools in Hackney which have a narrower demographic. This is an important reason to keep the school open on its existing site.

We are aware that pupil numbers have fallen since our children left the school. It is claimed by the Council that this is due to fewer primary school children living in Dalston, partly due to extortionate property prices, a lack of affordable social housing and the cost of living crisis, partly due to Continental European families leaving because of Brexit, and partly due to young families leaving London during Covid. Whilst these may be contributory factors, we cannot stress enough the decline in recent years of the school when it was part of the Soaring Skies Federation under the leadership of the former headteacher ***. We watched her run down Colvestone, putting all resources available into the partner school Thomas Fairchild. Eventually there were insufficient teachers for each year class and a couple years ago she let go of several much valued and long-serving teaching assistants. It is no surprise that high numbers of parents reluctantly took their children out of the school due to the inadequate educational provision.

However, it cannot be stressed enough that due to the small-scale nature of the one-form entry school the new leadership team and federation since last September has completely turned around the decline of Colvestone, returning it to the positive learning environment my children experienced when they were younger, the school interior has finally been redecorated, the playground upgraded, and long-awaited IT equipment has been provided to support the children's education. It shows how Colvestone is like a phoenix, risen again from the ashes. To close the school on this attractive and historic site effectively would destroy the school forever - especially for its current pupils and staff.

Colvestone should remain as a fully functioning nursery and primary school on its current site as it is central to the local community and residential neighbourhood. There has been a school in the current building and site since 1862 when houses around St Mark's Church down the road were first built. The school building is one of the oldest school buildings in Hackney, predating the larger London Board Schools which were built from the 1870s onwards. Originally one of six Birkbeck schools, it was originally founded by the educational philanthropist William Ellis to educate boys and girls, which has been happening ever since - for more than 160 years. So to close the school on its historic and established site would be extremely short-sighted and regrettable for the school and local community.

Furthermore, the school premises are statutorily listed grade 2 as a recognition of their special architectural and historic interest, The Council, as the owner and guardian of the building has a legal duty to safeguard the building to preserve it as part of our cultural heritage for future generations. The optimum viable use for a listing is its original use for which it was purpose-built. So in the case of this listed building, the Council should continue its use as a primary school for local children.

The Council also has a duty to maintain the listed building and ensure it does not fall into disrepair. In the last year, following many years of neglect, the school building and its railings have undergone a comprehensive and sympathetic series of repairs and roof renewal works. But if the school were to leave the site, it is likely it would fall vacant with no foreseeable future educational use, leaving the building vulnerable to squatters, vandalism and water ingress - reversing all the recent renovation works welcomed by the community. The listed building no doubt would be added to Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register for Greater London, due to its uncertain future and vulnerability to decline.

The school site also falls within the St Mark's Conservation Area. It is one of a few landmark buildings playing an important role in the community. The loss of the school on this site and the resultant deadening effect of a vacant and declining historic building containing no children or teaching staff would be enormously harmful to the conservation area, the character and appearance of which the Council has a statutory duty to protect in its function as the local planning authority.

Finally, it cannot be stressed enough that the loss of Colvestone on its historic site is contrary to the Council's adopted Dalston Local Plan which projects the need for around 600 new homes of a variety of tenures including high numbers of affordable family homes in the next few years. This is because there is an identified need in the area for more family homes, partly so that young families are no longer driven away from the area. Some of the allocated housing sites are in close proximity to Colvestone Primary School. This is clear evidence that there will be high demand for school places at Colvestone in years to come, do to close the school on its current site and merge it with another ill-located school outside the neighbourhood would not only be short-sighted, educationally ineffective and morally wrong, but inconsistent with the Council's own local plan for Dalston.

I am a neighbour and think it's insane you want to close a school. It's very short sighted. And irresponsible.

I am a parent and my children go to school here because it is close to my house and we are used to other parents.

I am a parent at another school that is being proposed for closure but after hearing about Colvestone, I would like to keep it open so we can join. We need an option for a small school and it seems to be the only one in the area. My [child] has asthma and I am not sure how we will manage to avoid all the traffic.

I am a parent of a 2 year old in Hackney Downs that would likely have enrolled in one of the 4 schools involved in the merges. I was not aware of the falling enrolment numbers but agree Hackney council should protect the funding and quality of the school provision by merging. My only concern is whether there will be enough places in future years if numbers start to rise again and the closed school buildings have been repurposed/sold to developers.

Party 2001

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

I am a parent of a child at another local school, but feel it is really important for our community to have a choice of non-denominational schools. I understand that Colvestone has had some troubles in recent few years but that the new head is doing an amazing job at turning it around again. I expect the recent troubles were the main contributing factor for lots of children leaving to join alternative schools.

The Dalston Development Plan proposes to build 600 new homes, which will surely increase demand significantly in the immediate area.

The existing building is also a beautiful asset to the local area, and would be terribly sad to see this turned into something else or extended in a way which did not honour its original purpose. It feels like a little bit of village school amidst what used to be a series of villages. It has a massive connection to its local community and I believe it should be saved.

I am a proponent of the Dalston Plan, which commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community.

I am very concerned that the option for these children is a school on the A10, where pollution is 40% higher. Children are uniquely vulnerable to air pollution, breathing faster than adults on average and taking in more air relative to their body weight. Exposure to toxic levels of pollution, particularly at these early stages of development, exacerbates respiratory diseases, reduces lung function development and increases asthma incidence, as well as having an impact on brain development

I am a ***. My grand[child] joined *** at Colvestone last autumn. I have been to the class several times & assisted on a school outing & ***.

This school is impressive, providing a welcoming learning environment that meets the needs of all abilities, including those with special educational needs.

Hackney Council should take note of the concerns of the families of those statemented children who are well catered for at Colvestone ie they are integrated into main stream education. This is a cost effective arrangement as it reduces the need for expensive SEN provision in separate schools for those settled at Colvestone.

The school is a resource at the centre of Dalston. The response to the proposed amalgamation (closure) demonstrates how much it is valued by the whole community.

It is a purpose built school in a listed building. Until the terms of the restriction in the deeds of the school is known, Hacknet Council can not consider it's future.

I am a resident of Colvestone Crescent and galvanised with my peers on the street who object to the closure of Colvestone primary. The school is an integral part of the community and identity of this neighbourhood and should be preserved as a social priority.

I am an immediate neighbour living on Colvestone Crescent.

I am also a full time teacher (state school, elsewhere in London).

I attended one of the parent/council meetings held in the Colvestone Primary School hall. In my professional judgment as a teacher, it was crystal clear that CPS is an exceptional school. I heard stories of children with autism and special needs thriving, in a huge part due to the personal small space that this school offers. This will not be reproduceable in a larger merged school - and there will be the added challenge of meeting the special needs of these students which will not be so straightforward in Princess May. Furthermore, teaching in a school myself that has a large autistic student group, I understand the importance of routine and of familiar faces and of quiet spaces. The disruption caused by the merger to these students could be permanent, both on an emotional level and on an educational level. Safeguarding these young people who form a significant proportion of the school should be a priority for Hackney. The Hackney representative's pre-prepared speech kept stating that CPS was unremarkable in that ninety-something percent of Hackney schools were outstanding, but I am not convinced. I witnessed stories of an exceptional school that should be fought for, not abandoned.

I also heard the transformational story of a [parent] and [child] from *** who started attending CPS. The [child] went from being disruptive and failing to becoming engaged and thriving. The attention that * received at CPS and the belief that the teachers had in * allowed * to flourish. The whole hall was hugely moved by this [parent]'s speech. I sense that moving back to a larger (Princess May) school * might fall back into bad habits and lose interest in learning. The [parent] is astute enough to see just how [their child]'s future depends on this. A move to a bigger school and * could be lost. It makes me think that there must be other parents and carers across London who could only dream of their child studying at a school like Colvestone Primary School. If this parent could move to CPS from ***, why can't others? Make it happen!

Meanwhile, we learn about Hackney's 21st Century Streets plan, with God knows how much spent on computer-generated images and public relations. If only this budget could be invested in keeping CPS afloat another year while further strategies are planned and attempted. The irony of closing down a primary school on the very street proposed as Utopian is just too much. It reminds me that this is all political and arbitrary - if you want to find funds you find them, and if you don't want to find them, then we have crises of depleting student places. Again, if the time invested in promoting the 21st Century Streets were invested in finding more parents in ***, then perhaps CPS would have greater funding for next year. As I say to my students, "Solutions, not Excuses!". If you want a solution then you make it happen.

On a practical note, what will happen to the building and how expensive will that be to maintain? I understand that Hackney cannot grant permission for another surprise block of luxury apartments like Fifty-Seven East (above Dalston Kingsland) to be built on the site. So what will happen to the phantom school? How expensive will it be to maintain as a listed building with no purpose? I feel like Hackney will shoot itself in the foot by closing a beloved school that will actually not save them much money but lead to a lesser education for so many students.

On a personal level, it is also just really lovely to have a primary school on Colvestone Crescent. It is the heart of the community, and something that cannot quite be quantified on some spreadsheet at the town hall. Give me a primary school any day over the 'child-friendly place' provided by a 21st Century Street!

I am concerned about the effective closing on two counts.

- 1) It contributes so much to a dynamic, multi-generational neighbourhood, with families around the local streets.
- 2) The building is an architectural gem which brings dynamism to the street scope. Also, it has recently had substantial sums spent on its upkeep.

I am concerned about the level of teaching at an increased capacity school

I am deeply concerned by the proposal to amalgamate Colvestone with Princess May. I don't see either what proper analysis you have done and shared with the community of either the extent of the problem that requires such a solution, OR what other options were available to you, or why this is the necessary solution. You risk giving the impression that this is a fait accompli. On top of this, I don't see what evidence you have put forward of a proper risk assessment, in terms of the impact on the cohort of the children who currently attend and how the proposals will impact them over the coming year OR on future generations of local children. There is a significant consequence to reducing your offer of non-denominational school places.

PARAG 40207

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Parent 00803

I am not really happy that the school is closing because I wanted my child to finish primary there. But unfortunately the school is closing and we need to look for another school.
I am really angry about the decision to close De Beauvoir school because this school has so many special needs kids and it is very difficult for them.
I am strongly against this proposal. Dalston is changing rapidly and the pace of gentrification is almost frightening. Colvestone has all kinds of families and is right in the heart of Dalston, represent inclusive education. Further, the building is listed and must remain as a school and a non-profit space in the midst of soaring rents. I live *** and it is very much part of our community. Please don't remove it.
I am very sad and disappointed that Hackney Council have not engaged with the parents or the local community about this proposal. Colvestone is a small one form entry school and by closing it you take away all choice -we do not accept the merger proposal We do not want a bigger school. We do not want a playground on an extremely busy road where pollution has been recorded as much higher than Colvestone. We are concerned about the SEN children who will suffer in a bigger school. We feel that there has been no discussion or interest in any other possible outcome - as though merge with PM school is the only option. Colvestone is thriving under the new Blossom management is now financially viable. It will cost a fortune to close the school and keep it mothballed bt Hackney Council's own figures show this and cannot be justifiable-it will be a disgrace to do so. We need to be listened to and engaged with so that we can help the Council to find a way out of this and protect a vital part of Dalston's community.
I am worried if Baden-Powell is closed that Hackney council will build a tower block in its space blocking out light and scenery. Making it harder to find a parking space due to more people living on this road. And you will probably only provide minimal amount of social housing.
I appreciate the falling rolls issue at Colvestone, but the smaller groups there have made it possible to offer real child-centred support which has especially benefited children with special needs and those on the autism spectrum. I feel that there are strong equity-based reasons for keeping the school open. As a close neighbour for over 30 years, I have been able to observe the great, positive atmosphere around the school.
I believe Colvestone should not be closed as this school is best for the local community. The kids will be affected.
I believe it should not go ahead as it will have a devastating impact on the children that are going to Colvestone primary school. Not only are they being displaced from the school they have been going to, and feel comfortable in, it will unhealthily stress the children, as they must get used to a completely new environment, with more students than they are used to being around (as colvestone is a 1 form entry school) which is a very difficult and extremely scary prospect.
I believe our school provides an important and vital role in the community and the future of children in the area - many of which are already disadvantages in many ways. Our school has recently received good Ofsted reviews as a testament to the quality of the education and support we offer. I in particular work with children with special needs and I have seen great progress in them. It would be a shame for that not to continue. I therefore urge you to reconsider your plans of closing this school. Thank you!
I believe that the children of De Beauvoir are well placed and supported in their educational advances. The staff are caring and nurturing and have successfully adapted teaching and learning styles to suit all types of learners. As a parent who is unable to drop off and pick up my child regularly, I have been able to reach out to staff whenever needed, including sending late night emails which have received instant replies. During the Covid 19 lockdowns, the school was quite quick in implementing online learning which many private schools still have not been able to implement. I believe De Beauvoir is key to the community and should remain open for more parents to share the same experiences I have had.
I believe that the community benefits greatly from the support received by the staff at De Beauvoir. I believe that the school is a supportive team to both (especially) the students, but to parents as well. De Beauvoir were one of a few schools that were very quick with offering parents and pupils alternative access to education during the critical covid times. Having friends who have children in private education, De Beauvoir surpassed even what high costing private school were able to do for young people. As a parent, I was supported in every turn of my child's education, with late night replies to emails and raising concerns during the school day. I have always been and felt supported at every turn and believe that more and more children need to benefit from this caring community.
I believe the loss of Colvestone will be a loss to the street, future children of Hackney and the community.
I can understand the pressures on the Council budget but once community assets are gone they are very hard to recover. I would prefer to see part of the assets (eg the house at the front of the school) sold and a combination. Of alternative uses (eg extended nursery provision) rather than the merger.
I did not pick Princess May - this is on the main road. Concern with pollution. Concern with the suppose for my [child] with SEND - currently * needs being met are outstanding. (Non EHCP) Concern that so much money has been spent on Colvestone - de federation / 2 restructures / building works - concern out the use of hackney money and not forward planning. Lack of other options of school - only faith / academy or free school left
I didn't want Baden Powell to close because I got used to that school
I disagree to the closure, because kids mindset will shift drastically, some children do not take likely to changes or will ever get use to changes, stepping out of their comforts zones. This would have a very serious impact on their mental health and that will certainly disrupt their abilities to learn. Some of the children has friends from Nursery going on to year one and ect that they became best friend with, that they may never see again, that will have so much emotional trauma going forward for them if they should change schools. My [child] attend Baden-Powell Primary school and if this merge happens * WILL no be moving forward with the merge, Already * thinks about the possibilities of not been able to see * friends and the sadness and question i have to face already from * is overwhelming and sad at the same time when i look at the worry on * face. So i really do hope that Baden-Powell Primary school will stay open for the future generations. Thank you.
I disagree with the proposal and Hackney's housing policy and benefits cap. This has a direct effect on the number of school age pupils in the borough. This disproportionately affects working class families and means that important schools like De Beauvoir who provide educational/socio emotional function have fewer pupils than they would have if people with a local connection were being housed locally in the borough. This has not been carried out in a strategic manner; places should have been held until the end of the school year, schools are being destabilised by in-year transfer as parents panic at the news. Hackney appear to act amorally and irresponsibly.

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

<p>I disagree with the proposals as the number of the students in the classes are going to increase so much. It would also affect the teaching as the increased number of students and teachers aren't going to teach effectively.</p>
<p>I do not agree on closing schools. Especially when children get used to it. Colvestone primary school is very close to me and my daughter built a strong relationship with her classmates and teachers.</p>
<p>I do not believe that school closures will benefit any children</p>
<p>I do not feel that this merge would be beneficial to Colvestone children due to:</p>
<p>Lack of parental choice (only church, free or academies)</p>
<p>Impact on Hackney's developmental plan (21st Century street)</p>
<p>Impact on SEN pupils - of which are well supported</p>
<p>Air pollution at Princess May</p>
<p>Historical significance (last of the Birkbeck School)</p>
<p>Hackney have been chipping away at Colvestone over the last 4 years which has impacted on the pupils number - the school has been through a period of instability due to the decisions of Hackney. Finally the school is settled and in a good place.</p>
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<p>I do not think closing any primary schools is in the long-term interests of the borough and its residents. The borough should be asking itself why the numbers of children have gone down and why you continue to allow the development of one bedroom apartments which nobody can have a family in (or can afford).</p>
<p>I know the area well (I lived 1.5 miles away for 20 years and worked in Haggerston for 6 years) and I support the parents and teachers wanting to keep Colvestone open. I believe that the school contributes to the long-established community in the local area and could contribute to the improvement of the area for families, particularly the school being a focus for the eco-friendly plans for Colvestone Crescent.</p>
<p>As a small and "calm" school, it provides very important benefits to those children. There should be other ways to make up the funds, not creating a larger school where the risk is that less-able children will be left out or less able to cope.</p>
<p>It is important that the school is so close to Ridley Road market, meaning the school, and the market, can benefit from this link. Schools contribute to the liveable-ness of a place especially long-established schools with traditional buildings that people appreciate.</p>
<p>Colvestone is slightly further from the main road and therefore has less traffic pollution than Princess May.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a rare non-religious school and it is important to retain that choice for parents.</p>
<p>Extensive new housing in Dalston will require school places, so it is very short-sighted and wrong to close Colvestone.</p>
<p>I do not want the school to close because the head teacher is doing a great job in the school and I can see the improvement in my son's education</p>
<p>I do not want the school to close. I am worried for parents and staff. It is a wonderful school and should stay open. The setting enables children to learn. The school has a high quality of teaching. The work environment is friendly. We have a great team. It is very stressful for everyone. The school accepts children from all backgrounds and needs, and are very well supported.</p>

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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Parent 1405

<p>I do not want to send my child to a religious school (especially as a gay parent) or a free school (the funding of which is cloaked in secrecy) therefore there are no other options available to us a family in this area. The schools we would otherwise choose are full. Colvestone has a village feel in bustling Hackney and this is the reason we chose it.</p> <p>Had you chosen to merge De Beauvoir and Colvestone this would have been a different matter as they are very similar in ethos and size but going to Princess May is not an option for us.</p> <p>The other thing I have major concerns about is the talk of further closures after this. So whatever school we choose might then be closed again (particularly Princess May) as there are so few parents at Colvestone willing to send their kids there. This is a perfect example of Hackney Council putting money before children's lives and my family and I feel incredibly let down by this proposal.</p> <p>The consultation process has been a sham. Every time we have asked a specific question of the council we have been answered in generalities and every time we've asked a more broad question, we've been answered with specifics. Imagine attending a meeting about your child's future and the future of the community we have built and answering every point of criticism presented by the council only to be repeatedly told 'the numbers are the numbers' (when we've just proved we're financially viable).</p> <p>In short, I very strongly object to this proposal.</p>
<p>I do not wish for my child to merge with another school as this disrupt their educational achievement that they already accomplish at Colvestone. Colvestone primary school is also in a convenient location for majority of parents.</p>
<p>I do not wish my child's school to merge with another school. We are very sad to find out that our lovely school will be shut down. We are all very happy in our school and we love our little community. Children are learning, playing and growing up in a close and peaceful environment. I deliberately have chosen a one entry form school for my child. Not everyone can cope with busy environments. From my personal point of view it's going to be devastating for year *** children to move once in year *** and then move to a secondary which is a huge change in their life in general. My [child] has [SEND] and * struggles to cope even with little changes during * daily routine. This will completely mess * up. Please leave our children to learn and grow up in their lovely, safe place Baden Powell! We have enough struggles in our lives! Don't mess us up and then offer support and help. I am against the proposal of Baden Powell to be merged with Nightingale. Thanks for your time.</p>
<p>I do not wish to comment because the decision has been made and sadly the school will close.</p>
<p>I don't agree with the proposal Baden Powell is an amazing school with spacious two playgrounds with many teachers who are dedicated to their work and positive attitude towards pupils</p>
<p>I don't want larger amalgamated schools , small and local schools for the community surrounding them.</p>
<p>I don't agree with the proposal to close Colvestone primary school</p>
<p>I don't think the children will benefit from bigger classrooms as its better to have small class so the teacher can better identify children needs and support them where if you have bigger classrooms some children will go under the radar and be missed and not get help if needed and also I'm worried that when it's time to apply for a place I might not get a place in the school of my choice. This proposal is absolutely outrageous and Hackney should not be considering closing schools or merge two school</p>
<p>I don't want to close De Beauvoir Primary School</p>
<p>I feel it would be a loss to the community and a shame for all the Colvestone pupils and a big upheaval for them to join another school.</p>
<p>I feel that due to Covid that these numbers have been pushed more in decline and the regeneration of Hackney so a lot of unfavorable homes have been built so people are forced to live out of London, if this was the prediction forecast why is that intake for schools with low numbers were still allowed to continue, also why wasn't parents informed before hand that over subscribed schools were originally designed to house more children How can we guarantee that in few years this solves the issues and again we aren't in same position</p>
<p>I feel that Randal Cremer is a strong community school which works well with marginalised families and children with high levels of SEND - perhaps it would be of great benefit to offer more funding to increase and extend this work.</p>
<p>I have an [SEND] child and one with needs in years *** & ***. They both don't like change and do not like too many children around them. It took more than a year for each of them to get settled in Baden Powell. It is going to be so unsettling for them to change into a large school with so many pupils. I chose Baden Powell as it was small for both their needs. We love all staff. All staff know the pupils and parents. Please don't merge. If you do I will move them to a smaller school like Baden Powell.</p>
<p>I have been a parent of children who have both completed their schooling in various schools in Hackney. I strongly believe that the amalgamation of schools creates less diversity and less ability for the borough to deliver the specific and attentive requirements of children needed from schooling in contemporary daily life. I am a senior professor at a British University and see the results of the watered down education that is provided by larger schools with more pupils and less time for individual pupil attention over many years. In my view, this type of amalgamation goes against the ethos of delivering education in Hackney in the context of its important crosscultural and multiethnic environment. Children need time and individual attention; they do not need to be squashed together in an environment that cannot give them the care and attention that they need. In addition, Colvestone Primary has been an important part of Dalston's social infrastructure for decades, prized precisely because of its small size..</p>
<p>I have direct access to how this proposal has affected pupils, their families and staff members. I have direct access to children crying and emotionally drained as their peers leave for another school one by one. I have direct access to children as young as 4 only having 1 day to process that it would be their last day with their friends and favourite teachers; as parents frantically do in-year applications. I have direct access to parents who struggle with the English language asking for support and guidance on how to do transfer applications and what to do. Every day we are seeing a lack of content from staff members who have dedicated over two decades of service to De Beauvoir Primary School, only to now have to worry about whether they will be able to secure a job anywhere else. It is very sad to have to watch children say goodbye to their home. Yes, De Beauvoir is and was a home to many. Parents know they can come to De Beauvoir in any moment of stress or destitute and we would always support. They fear they are now left hopeless with one to turn to. Please reconsider as this will negatively affect more lives than you can imagine.</p>
<p>I have had 2 children, now aged 13 and 16, who went to Colvestone and had an excellent education. They're now excelling at Secondary school with my eldest having offers for Sixth Form from Latymer and Harris Westminster amongst others. And it wasn't only academically they were thriving but also socially in a wonderful community. Now my third child, aged 4, is about to start at Colvestone because I think it's the best primary in the area. I will not send * to Princess May. What would a 21 Century Street be without a school?</p>

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<p>I have lived at my address for over 14 years. When I moved in, I searched for schools in my area and found the best school near my house. I registered my first [child] and * finished at this school two years ago and is now in secondary school. I have two more children attending De Beauvoir - one is year *** and one is ***. I have one more child that I will register in school next year. We are happy and don't want De Beauvoir closed. Please don't close the school. Thanks.</p>
<p>I have lived opposite the school for 24 years, both my children were extremely happy pupils there and I was involved as a school governor for five years. The school needs to remain open because it is a vital hub in the community and serves the families and children of Dalston better than any other school can. Its small village like size is an absolute prize for the children and their education. I believe the SEN teaching and support there is so strong that it brings children from across the borough.</p> <p>If schools are to be amalgamated then it should involve pupils coming to Colvestone, not leaving.</p> <p>As a resident I'm aware of how the school would be a lynchpin of Hackney Councils 21st Century Street plan for Colvestone Crescent. It seems absurd, when one of the main beneficiaries of the plan would be the school and its staff and pupils, to consider closing the school.</p> <p>Moreover, I am very concerned about an increase in anti social behaviour and crime , including burglary, drug taking and violence, which would follow the closure of the school. This again would fly in the face of creating a peaceful and green haven as part of the 21st Century Street plans.</p> <p>As a resident and former parent I object most strongly to the proposal of Colvestone Primary being closed to allow for its amalgamation with another school.</p>
<p>I have not and would not pick Princess May as a school. I like the village-like atmosphere of Colvestone, plus my child has severe [SEND] and the change will really affect *. I have a good relationship with Colvestone and with my children's teachers.</p>
<p>I have spoken to a few parents from Nightingale who do not want a merger. I know a few parents who have a lot of problems with a few teachers, pupils and even their *** who takes everyone's business. I know a lot of what goes on. My *** went to a *** from Nightingale and they said they don't want to merge because we are ruff raff. Now children act upon their parents if we merge. I can see a lot of problems with pupils who are already there. My children will be subjected to bullying.</p>
<p>I just don't understand why the school will close. If the number of children in Hackney is so low so why did the new Hackney school open. It doesn't even have a playground.</p>
<p>I live in *** and have 2 children who are at nursery. I would like to send them to Colvestone primary once they are school age. I wouldn't send them to Princess May as I wouldn't want them to go to a school so close to a main road, with everything we know about pollution now. If you merge the schools I would probably move out of hackney</p>
<p>I live in the area and feel that schools like this are so important and the history should be continued. I hope to have children one day in this area and send them to a small school like this.</p>
<p>I live next to Colvestone Primary School in *** and have been a resident there since 2004. The school has been an integral part in the development of the area and its diverse mix of pupils celebrate everything that is great about the area.</p> <p>In the more recent years the investment in the school has reflected positively on the activities at the school - I love hearing the sports, music, after school activity etc!</p> <p>it seems absurd to close the much loved and cherished school after recent investment in its refurbishment and its record in diverse background of pupils including those with learning disabilities. It would send a wrong signal to the community already dealing with increase in drug dealing and addiction and crime at our doorstep.</p>
<p>I live on *** to Colvestone school. I feel the proposals to close the school would have a detrimental effect on the local community. The school is at the centre of the thriving community around Dalston and Ridley Road. If it were to be closed the building would be left empty and open to vandalism and squatters, while simultaneously costing the council thousands of pounds in upkeep until redevelopment. It would leave many local children and parents without somewhere to go and difficulties with moving schools. Furthermore, as one of few non-religious and non-academy schools in the area, it is open to all people and allows parents to choose for their child to be taught in a secular way. As more houses are planned in the local area through the development of Dalston, closing the local school would be negative in the long run as with the development of more houses, the necessary amenities, especially the school will be required. And on a more personal note, should I choose to have children, I would like the opportunity to send them to Colvestone School, as I am sure many others in the local community would.</p>
<p>I love the area and its attributes. So for me to get a such inspirational school out of the area is a tragedy</p>
<p>I much prefer the school class sizes to stay as they are. One class per year seems to help the children and teachers focus better on each other.</p>
<p>I much prefer the school class sizes to stay as they are. One class per year seems to help the children and teachers to focus better on each other</p>
<p>I strongly disagree because my kids are doing well in this school and don't want to change it because it could affect my kids since they cannot concentrate. A new beginning would just stress my kids out since they will have to make new friends.</p>
<p>I strongly disagree because my kids are doing well in this school, and don't want to change it because it could affect my kids since they cannot concentrate. It would just stress my kids out since they will have to make new friends since they don't want to have new beginnings.</p>
<p>I strongly disagree for closure at colvestone primary school, because this school has set a wonderful community within hackney. My daughter has gained a great experience academically and socially. And there is a really good support with parents also... colvestone primary school has brilliant support all round when it comes to children's education and wellbeing. This closure has to stop.</p>
<p>I strongly disagree on the closure of De Beauvoir Primary School because it is a part of the history of De Beauvoir Town. It's very sad for the parents and children because the school is a nice school. Education always comes first, the staff are amazing, always listening to the children's needs, they work very hard at making sure every child has a right to learning. My children are happy with the school and as a parent too because they have learnt a lot and I can see the progress everyday. They are sad because the school is most likely to close and they don't want to move to another school, affecting their friendships and mental health.</p> <p>When it was lockdown the school helped many families to deal with the hardest time and my family was one of them. *** is more than a headteacher, having extra time to listen to parents' issues.</p> <p>We will appreciate if the Council can review the proposal to close De Beauvoir Primary School.</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

I strongly disagree with the plan to close Colvestone Primary School and here's why:

1. It is not an amalgamation, but a closure because it has become clear that many of the wonderful staff from Colvestone will not be transferred to Princess May and based on this information and the survey that was carried out, many, if not most of the families (ourselves included) will not go to Princess May. So the result would be that Princess May will still suffer from low numbers and also face closure in not too distant future. Colvestone, being a small on-form entry school, could be filled by just a handful of new students and saved. One of these two schools could be saved and it is much more achievable in the case of Colvestone.

2. The 21st Century Street by Hackney Council is a brilliant plan and demonstrates everything Hackney is and what the residents want it to be like in the future. Colvestone Primary School is at the centre of this plan. The vision for such a street is built on creating a child-friendly safe environment. Closing the school makes no sense, whilst the plan itself is funded to go ahead. Without a school in that street, this investment is entirely pointless and a misuse of public finance.

3. Closing the school is very expensive. In addition to the usual costs Hackney Council will need to swallow Colvestone's historic debt. As a protected building, it cannot be sold for other development to earn this expense back. Under current management, however, Colvestone is already reducing its historic debt and with recently concluded upgrade works as well as the 21st Century Street, there is no question that this school will operate successfully and reduce its debt further. Hence, it is very likely that the cost of closing this school will be greater than keeping it open in the long run. The same mistake was already made by Hackney Council when closing Hackney Downs School, which cost several million, only to reopen as a new school due to restrictions on the site. I strongly object to such misuse and clear waste of public funds. The council will not only lose a great school, but also a great deal of money, reputation and local families, who will start leaving the borough due to poor management.

Colvestone Primary School could be the most wonderful setting for early years students, with clean air and a safe streets offering the ideal conditions particularly for children within the SEND provision. Whilst I appreciate that the council needs to take strong action to adapt to new numbers of children in the borough, this particular school is most clearly not the right one to be closed and this proposal should be taken off the table.

I strongly disagree with the proposal to close Colvestone Primary school. My child has done really well at this school. There are Faith schools with a higher vacancy rate and as a parent who doesn't believe in faith schools I'm upset that Colvestone would be chosen to close over these schools

Out of interest I looked at the reception intake for 2023 and saw that all the schools in my locality have a full allocation for this September, the only exception being Princess May. This was not on my list of schools and I would not send my child to this school. I'm concerned about the lack of parental choice if Colvestone closes. Also given that a high percentage of current Colvestone parents will not send their child to Princess May, would there be capacity in the other non faith (and potentially non free) schools in the area to accommodate these children?

The school has shown they can be financially viable with lower numbers and I feel this is not being taken into account in the consultation, along with the cost of closing the school, after a period of investment in the building. With the proposed housing in Dalston and Dalston plan there is likely to be an increase in families very close to Colvestone.

I have a concern about the long term cost on children of closing these schools. I work in *** and research is emerging about the long term impact on children of pandemic and school lock-downs, For a current year 4 pupil, they will have had big disruption to year 2 and year 3, then will move to a new school for year 6 and then to secondary school. Princess May is running at a higher vacancy rate and we were told in a recent consultation that could be considered for closures in the next round. So a child who started reception in the pandemic may move there and then have to move again before the end of primary school. This could be especially difficult for SEN children.

I feel the council's proposals are rather simplistic. They focus on numbers and perceived savings but don't explore or propose alternative models.

I also have considerable concerns how genuine this consultation is, I don't get the impression the council are open to taking on any points or concerns raised. They don't go away and consider them. My experience when I raised a question I was told the information is available but no attempt was made to give me the information and no signposting was made to how to access the information. I feel very strongly that the decision has been made, and that the council is looking like it is following the correct process rather than actually doing so. If it did it would properly respond to the points raised by parents.

PARAG 1407

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

I strongly disagree with the proposal to close De Beauvoir school. I have been looking at other schools nearby and their numbers on roll and percentage of surplus places on the government website which is updated regularly. Overall the vast majority of neighbouring schools, particularly those South of Dalston Lane, have been largely unaffected by the fall in pupil numbers in Hackney and London overall, and this is with no halving of overall spaces available by the council as has happened with De Beauvoir. Some local schools only have as little as 2% of spaces free but have an overall maximum pupil roll number of 500 or even more. In fact I am very reluctant to send my [child] to any of those schools as they seem too big and overcrowded, especially as * has additional needs and they will have to spread any support staff between more pupils.

A school does not go from being oversubscribed in several year groups 6 or 7 years ago meaning my children had to wait until nearly the end of the school year for a place, to virtually empty now in comparison, as has happened with De Beauvoir. When this has happened elsewhere it has taken decades.

I do feel like the council have somehow pursued an internal unwritten policy of diverting potential pupils whether they are reception age or in year admissions for older year groups, away from De Beauvoir and into other neighbouring schools, to keep pupil numbers up at the other schools so they don't have to consider closing more schools and the council admitted at a parent's meeting that they have no power to close free or academy schools and religious schools, so siphoning children into those schools saves the headache of trying to reason with those schools to close of their own accord.

In the current climate of falling pupil numbers in London and Hackney, for multiple nearby schools in one of the worst affected boroughs to have no issue at all maintaining pupil numbers despite having a massive overall pupil number on roll for primary level De Beauvoir has been a sacrificial lamb so to speak. I don't have definite 'scientific' proof of this but there is anecdotal evidence. Some months ago I was speaking on twitter to some parents whose children attended Hackney New Primary school and they were also living in the catchment area for De Beauvoir, some claimed had they known of the safety issues with traffic outside that school they would never have put their child in there but now felt it was too late to uproot them. Some said had they known about De Beauvoir, they would have sent their children there instead. There are still more social family sized homes that are still in council and housing authority hands within the De Beauvoir catchment area than around any other school nearby, including the large council estate opposite the school and the huge De Beauvoir estate further down in De Beauvoir town, while that isn't the only factor to consider, it does seem odd that De Beauvoir is the worst affected school in the borough.

Hackney will never admit to having this policy and the policy will massively backfire in the long run. Eventually if the demographic forecast does play out as the research suggests, more and more neighbouring schools will have to be sacrificed to keep numbers at the maximum in what Hackney sees as their flagship schools for some reason. Then if there is a sudden shift demographically due to unforeseen factors, Hackney will be stuck with not enough school places and no space to open new schools or expand existing ones because they will have sold off all the land to private interests. I have seen this happen in other boroughs and this includes some outer London boroughs. It also happened in the area I grew up in, the council pursued the unwritten policy of sending children to one particular large school until they could close all the others. A few years later there were several large family housing estates built in the area including, ironically a new council estate on the site of my old primary school. They had to expand the number of pupils allowed to be on roll at the one primary school left but could only do so by 75, they are close to the 75 now and there is no room for further expansion.

I strongly disagree with the proposal to close De Beauvoir school. This is not just a school for my children, it is a second home where my children feel safe and loved by all the members of staff. I myself used to work in this school for five years, so I know *** as a parent/employee. Many headteachers put on an act when talking to parents, but not *** Since * came to De Beauvoir, * has turned things around and made this school what it is now. * is the most loving and caring *** I have ever met and my children love *. Since this proposal has come to light, my eldest [child] has been feeling very anxious and upset as some of * friends have left during this process.

I strongly disagree with the proposal to close Randal Cremer primary school. I am very pleased about the school, especially the head teacher ***. Great atmosphere for parents and children. My [child] is so upset and sad about the proposal. I change the school for * this year and * is so happy. To take * from Randal Cremer again is like a nightmare and disappointment.

I strongly disagree with this proposal because I believe that it will negatively impact all students. In addition, it will limit the space provided for the students when schools are put together.

I strongly disagree with this proposal if closing Colvestone Primary school.

It is a school in central dalston and it is a very small school which makes it so special to all the children and their families in the area. It makes the city into a village and has grown an ongoing community around the school and the area since decades. There is so much love for this school which is very special - to close Colvestone would be heartbreaking for so many people and unforgivable for the future of dalston. Holstein and their families. As there is no other school in the area which could give children what they get in Colvestone. Think about now and the future of the area - there will be always more children being born. You are redoing all the playgrounds in hackney - which is great! Thisnis attracting more families with chikdrennorr planning to have kids into the area but where will all the kids go to school who are playing on these playgrounds at the moment if you are closing the schools.
Save Colvestone school

I strongly disagree with transferring my son to a new school as I know this will impact his final *** years of primary school. He is currently at his best academically because he has a fantastic support system from both his peers and teachers and other staff members who have known him since the beginning. Moving him will make him feel alienated and in a completely new environment and I know this will affect his mental wellbeing as it will be difficult to handle this change and will be a completely new academic curriculum which will in turn worsen his grades.

Parent ID: 0813

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

P 030021409

<p>I strongly object to the proposal to close Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate it with Princess May Primary School for the following reasons:</p> <p>It demonstrates the same short-sightedness that we have seen in approaches to Ridley Road Market and the Ridley Road Shopping Village + Ridley Road Studios (51-63 Ridley Road) over the past 5 years. Hackney Council is consistently failing to acknowledge assets of community value and various facilities (including for schools for local children and affordable artist studios) that are vital to the survival of Dalston as a diverse and inclusive neighborhood. Hackney Council MUST reconsider its priorities and resist forces that are making Dalston unaffordable for families, cultural institutions and small independent businesses.</p> <p>In particular, Colvestone Primary School is a vital part of the Dalston community and I urge Hackney Council to consider the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area. • This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. • Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. • Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.
<p>I think closing down Colvestone Primary School and merging it with Princess May School will be detrimental and a terrible loss for our local community. Colvestone School is a very important part of the neighborhood. If the demography has currently lesser children this may not be the case in the far future. Demography constantly fluctuates and changes. Hackney should take a long term view and not close down important long established Schools like Colvestone School, De Beauvoir School and the others.</p> <p>Having worked in education most of my life I believe that teaching smaller cohorts of pupils is better for children's learning and development. I understand the financial constraint imposed by the government but these need to be fought back.</p>
<p>Please not close our local schools, keep an open mind on how changes can be implemented in each school and keep a long term view for future generations.</p>
<p>I think it is a sticking plaster approach to a wider, systemic issue that has real life, negative consequences for the lives of children and their families. Given the impact of the pandemic on young children's education and the poly crises hitting the parents (cost of living to name one). Any further disruption should be strongly avoided. Focus on the root of the issue instead.</p>
<p>I think it is disgusting, my child will be starting her final year of primary school and will have to transfer to a new school then a secondary school all in a year! I think the emotional well being of the children is not being considered, she is not sleeping properly and worrying so much.</p>
<p>I think it is important to keep the school open as i do not wish to send my kid to an religious school, an academy or a free school. I want a community non religious school for our children</p>
<p>I think it is terrible proposal and will have a negative impact on the school children and their families. The playground of Princess May is on main road, this raises concerns about air pollution. Amalgamation of the schools would mean more children in the playground, less space means pushing kids all the way up to the fence. It will also force families to walk a further 15mins across busy roads. This would put more stress on families. Closing Colvestone Crescent is a short sighted solution to the current trend of fewer school admissions over the past decade. The council should be encouraging families in Hackney and champion policies that address the issues of gentrification and affordable housing.</p>
<p>I think that I am not alone in this, I sincerely enjoyed sending my children to De Beauvoir because the staff are very helpful and engage all parents in solving problems. Looking back, my children learned a lot, made new friends and they have wonderful memories. It will affect them mentally and emotionally when the school closes. What an experience.</p>
<p>I think that if you joined schools the classes would be crowded and the quality of education would go down. I think one class should not be more than 12-20 pupils.</p>
<p>I think that it would be disastrous to amalgamate both schools and would have a terrible effect on the whole school community, especially for children and their families.</p>
<p>I think that single entry schools are very important and need to be preserved. Parents need choice, and the local school in any area is crucial to families building a support network for them selves and their children. The larger amalgamated academies and corporations don't have the same ethos which a school like Colvestone projects, they are less intimate, have more issues and problems to deal with simply by having a larger population. They are also more focused on their own business interests and public image, and less concerned with the needs of local families who see the school as community hub, which has always been one of the social values of small local schools. The smaller schools can suit vulnerable families better, and children with SEND can thrive in a less pressured environment with more space, less crowding, and a community ethos, which Colvestone has.</p>
<p>Families I have known over our 22 years of running a nursery in Dalston and out-of-school care with families at Colvestone have always expressed their preference for a smaller school, and currently are giving their support. All schools go through ups and downs over time, and I think that Colvestone is definitely on the up with very strong parental support. Colvestone as a building is quite unique and historic, and I'm sure will thrive again once we have all recovered from pandemic effects and Brexit changes in the demographic. I believe that Hackney's plan to develop more homes in the area will also require more school places in the coming years. The architecture and spaces of the school are both intimate and impressive, and it would be a shame to see it become something that is not accessible to the local community, which the school has been strongly connected to for a very long time.</p>
<p>I think that there is still a need for De Beauvoir Primary School. The school promotes diversity and provides quality education to the community. They have lovely staff who look after the children very well. I hope alternative options will be considered before the final decision is taken.</p>

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I think that this is a very badly thought through proposal as Colvestone parents have already outlined. We do not want our children to go to Princess May school. Colvestone is a small friendly village school that has suffered less falling roll than many other schools. It seems as though we are in this process mostly due to the large historic debt but Hackney Education supported the school to choose Blossom Federation as new leadership going forwards and they are taking proactive steps to address the deficit. YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN THEM A CHANCE.

We have asked what it would take to change the proposal - after all it is supposed to be a consultation process. You have stated that we would have to change the numbers against the criteria that led to our selection for the process in the first place. BUT we cannot improve pupil numbers or school finances whilst the school is under threat of closure so it does not feel fair.

We believe that Colvestone could be an asset:

- as a small one-form entry school it is great environment for SEN kids whether as a formal SEN unit or just somewhere that kids who find other school overwhelming could be directed to
- it is beautiful Grade II listed building that should be kept as a school to reflect its radical roots
- as part of the 21st Century Street proposals for Colvestone
- the fantastically strong Colvestone community

We think these arguments are strong enough for you to change your proposal and take Colvestone off the list, and this could be presented in a positive way for the Council.

You have asked us for practical solutions to our problems of falling roll and this is very difficult at the current time but I think there are options;

1. Colvestone as a merger school for De Beauvoir. They are a much better fit and are not far geographically. Initially there may have been too many pupils at De Beauvoir but many of these have now transferred to other local schools. In fact we understand that as families have moved away from Randall Cremer and De Beauvoir in light of the proposal many of the school in that part of the borough are now FULL and these families need another option.
2. Promote Colvestone for SEN families
3. Attract other families. Our campaign over the last few months has raised our profile and I think families will be attracted to the school and the strong community . This includes families currently at Halley House that is currently undergoing a change of leadership and significant change of staff.

TAKE US OFF THE LIST and demonstrate that this is a real consultation.

I think this is a consequence of Brexit, House prices and the cost to rent. We should rejoice in a reduced pupil to teacher ratio and produce excellent results which will attract pupils. We need more families locally. Pupil number will pick-up once the UK understand Brexit resulted in an exodus of families and we now need family homes not just one bedroom flats.

I understand that numbers are low etc, however the council has not allowed the community to respond or even local area. Tell us what can be done to recover the numbers, support the school, talk about alternatives to keeping the school open. I'm disappointed that the council are ready to give up. We as parents have not had this insight that you have. It's unfair to say we have given it a chance when really you haven't. My children are at the school and have learning disabilities and struggles with transitions who is to support them or me, I have my own health I have ***, ***, ***. Who will support me with a new setting for my children. De Beauvoir was a decision I made thoroughly I put a lot of thought into choosing a school for my [children] and now it's closing. I will keep them in there until the last day and probably won't get them back into a school until something magical happens and a school pops up like de Beauvoir small, intimate, family friendly environment, everyone knows everyone, everyone feels safe. Your taking that away not just from me and my [children], this is affecting all these families and the council don't care. Just like raising the rent on people and kicking them out all you care about is money. We want to help and support the school at least give us a chance.

PARAG 17015

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I understand that the council needs to make the argument for sound use of resources across local schools and that falling pupil numbers is hugely challenging. As a parent of a child at DeBeauvoir Primary I feel it's my responsibility to advocate for the school. It's my opinion that the school offers excellent value across a number of social indicators, that may be overlooked in the reductionist population data driving the recommendation for closure.

My [child] is a pupil at DeBeauvoir Primary school. * has ***** SEND needs. I have found the school to be welcoming, accessible and incredibly supportive. After a difficult journey through early years DeBeauvoir Primary has been a sanctuary. The staff team have developed a culture across the school where children are nurtured, valued and can thrive. They are led by a fantastic headteacher, ***, who masterfully engages with the community to promote the wellbeing of everyone connected with the school.

The latest OFSTED inspection and rating of Good with Outstanding Features speaks to the quality of teaching in the school. Teachers work tirelessly and dynamically to provide a rich and engaging curriculum. This is particularly impressive when the social context of the school community is considered; with approximately 65% of children in receipt of pupil premium and similar numbers where English is not the first language spoken at home. There is clearly a great deal of skill and expertise within the staff team, which is sensitive and responsive to the specific needs of the local community. I worry that the sudden closure of the school will result in the abrupt loss of this valuable resource. Once dismantled there's no way to reinstate this ecosystem, it would be lost entirely. The school community is a partnership of people that is rooted in 100 years of history. I really urge careful consideration to be given to the social losses that are incurred as a result of closure.

This thriving school is at the heart one of London's most sought after and affluent neighbourhoods. But my experience of living in DeBeauvoir for the past 6 years has been that this is a very divided area, with extremes of experience in terms of wealth and wellbeing. Increasingly the amenities of the local area are orientated towards the needs of wealthy residents. There are few spaces for children and young people. The school is a much valued community resource for families. I'd argue that the tokenistic closure consultation process has served to further disempower local residents who perhaps already feel marginalised and neglected in local planning decisions. The decision of the council to close the school will have a social impact beyond the disruption of those children who are currently being educated in the setting.

The school is the only local authority maintained secular school in walking distance of Debeaviour Primary. In a multicultural community of many faiths (and none) a faith school may not be the most appropriate setting for children. There is an argument for retaining Debeaviour primary to reflect the needs of the population it serves.

The school is a one form entry school. This is increasingly rare, but it is right that families are offered the choice of smaller school setting. My child has [SEND] and has thrived in a small familiar setting. * also has *** and knowing that all staff know * and have been trained to support * is invaluable. As a parent of a child with complex needs the individualised support we have received has been greatly appreciated and reduced our reliance on other health and social care services, for which there is an economic argument.

The schools finances are well managed and it is currently operating with a surplus budget. I wonder how this compares to other schools in the borough and if there are schools operating in deficit which are more of a financial burden.

The school estate is well maintained and provides a good environment for children; it benefits from ample outdoor play spaces, which may not be the case for many schools. It is located on a quiet side street with no through traffic, which is beneficial in terms of air quality and children's health. The building is listed and has been in use as a school for over 100 years. It's part of our collective heritage.

My personal experience has been that the school is excellent at managing complex needs. There is a real competency in dealing with challenging health and social issues, and this has been evident during the consultation process with many families sharing personal testimonies of the great work done by the school. I urge the council to think carefully about the loss of this resource in our community. It's hard to quantify the value of this work, but as a health and social care professional I am very aware of the cost of placement breakdown for young people with complex needs. I urge the council to scope the SEND work the school is currently providing and consider carefully how these needs would be met in other settings. I think DeBeauvoir should be recognised as model of good practice and excellence, and this should be considered in the evaluation of which schools are ear marked for closure and merger.

In future think it's important the council reflect on messaging and communications about maintained schools, and offer more support to schools with low pupil numbers to promote their good work and appeal to prospective parents. If pupil numbers follow the trajectory the council is predicting then schools will need support to recruit new starters and avoid further disruptive closures. There is open criticism of the free school model that has put pressure on pupil numbers, but the council must find ways to compete in the current landscape and appeal to more families.

I think it would be wise for a third party to check the data informing the school closure policy. There is low public confidence in the data interpretation. Many parents are sceptical, and cite examples such as the closure and reopening of Hackney schools previously.

I want to raise the point that many children in the DeBeauvoir catchment are Islington residents and will potentially have a preference for relocating to an Islington school, where they will have no priority in terms of waiting lists. Has the council considered how it might support in such cases?

In summary I feel strongly that the closure of DeBeauvoir primary school would be a sad loss for our local community. I feel that the impact of closure will be most keenly felt by children experiencing disadvantage and disability, and those with the broadest shoulders are not being asked to bear impact of this policy. It is disappointing that the consultation process has failed to engage the community in problem solving and left few with hope of being listened to. People feel real distress at the forced loss of something so integral. There are lessons to be learnt should further school closures be necessary in future.

Debeaviour primary offers enormous value as small, inclusive setting. There are intrinsic structural advantages to the estate and a wealth of expertise in the staff team. Children with complex needs really thrive in this very special local school.

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<p>I understand that the merger proposal is essentially a financial proposal. I am concerned that this very nice little school in a lovely building built in 1852 and Grade 2 listed should be preserved as a school partly because it was purpose built as a school. It is aesthetically pleasing and has a nice small feel for pupils and staff alike. To close it would be a very sad loss not just for the pupils and staff but would affect the whole feel of that corner of Dalston.</p>
<p>The knock on effects for the aesthetics of the area if the building is turned to another use would affect that area of Hackney and the community detrimentally, uglifying the area and removing the 'soul' of a part of Hackney. I feel the proposal is very short sighted and that immediate financial gains (which I understand would be for the Local Education Authority) should be considered to be of far less importance than the above considerations and the long term value for Hackney of the school's preservation.</p>
<p>I understand the council needs to take some action due to decreasing numbers. I think the school proposals are too concentrated around dalston. I think the proposals do not take the current children in years rec -5 into enough consideration, particularly in terms of parental choice as there will not be enough places in dalston for these years I think the proposals do not consider the increase of housing and families being proposed with the local dalston plan, they seems dis connected I think the proposals are adversely affecting lower economic communities and SEND children I think colvestone school is in a prime central location within dalston to help facilitate spaces and place. As a single form entry it is not as difficult to fill as an entire form</p>
<p>I understand the rationale for the consultation for the closure of schools in Hackney. My concern is the length of time it has taken to LA to address the problem of falling rolls - it has been clear London, including Hackney, was likely to be put into a difficult position. Other LAs adjacent to Hackney acted sooner. It is difficult for governors to understand why the timing in Hackney has been so different. De Beauvoir is now a highly successful school, popular with the local community, with good levels of achievement for all pupils. It is difficult for parents and carers to understand why this has happened to the school. The well-being of the Headteacher and the school team at this time is so important. -They will continue to provide the best education they can to the children and their families but no-one can underestimate the impact of this process of their well-being. I am not sure there has been sufficient support for staff since the start of the process.</p>
<p>I would like there to be a school in my area when I have children in the future. Im also concerned that Dalston is becoming a place to live for young single people.</p>
<p>I would like to express my serious concern and dismay at the proposals to amalgamate Colvestone school. Colvestone is a successful, intimate school in a purpose built listed building offering the children of local families a calm and inclusive educational environment in which they can thrive. Unusually it offers a maintained (ie free) nursery facility in a separate space providing a seamless progression to the main school. More broadly, the proposals seem to ignore the transformative 'Dalston Plan' which comprises of 600 new homes (including 200 affordable family homes). These would place Colvestone as the school nearest to and best serving the new found needs. For years Colvestone has shown great energy and commitment to the local community, be it fundraising for deserved improvements to the school, to fighting insensitive developments encroaching on its space. Far from being threatened with closure it deserves full backing and recognition for the important function it serves in the area. Please reconsider these plans.</p>

PARAG 1217

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Parent 1813

<p>I would like to register concerns from a SEND perspective about closure/merger of Randall Cremer Primary School and Colvestone Primary School.</p> <p>Hackney currently has very significant challenges with inclusion of pupils with SEND and with EHCPs in their mainstream settings. Many of our settings leave a lot to be desired in terms of proactive child centred work to include SEND students. This is not just a secondary school issue. As you will know, Hackney specialist settings and ARPs are full, with many many more requests for placements than we have available. We spend an extraordinary amount on out of borough independent settings for this reason.</p> <p>However, Randal Cremer and Colvestone are in my experience very inclusive and nurturing environments. I am fairly certain children in these settings with SEND are currently doing well, and as such not much on the LA's radar, because their needs are being met there. I am concerned that the proposal has not sufficiently considered both the distress and cost implications of closing our most inclusive primary schools. I think it is likely we will see children come onto our radar, when/if not coping in less inclusive environments, perhaps needing more costly specialist settings. I think this could be avoided by these two schools remaining open, but working with them to expand much needed SEND provision on their sites or as part of their schools. There is an opportunity to build on and expand good practice of SEND provision in mainstream schools here.</p> <p>I would encourage decision makers to consult further with the EHCP and wider SEND Team, as well as the Re-Integration Unit, as I believe my sentiment is shared amongst SEND and inclusion professionals.</p> <p>Ofsted says about Randal Cremer:</p> <p>"Staff and governors share high expectations for their pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are no exception. Leaders work closely with external professionals. Together, they find the best ways to meet pupils' needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also well supported. The partnerships that leaders have formed with families contribute to this work. Pupils' wider development is very important at this school. Pupils learn about life in modern Britain. For example, all pupils took part in a community project with a local organisation. They learned how to celebrate other cultures and faiths".</p> <p>Ofsted says about Randal Cremer:</p> <p>Leaders promote equality and tolerance well. I found pupils to be kind and caring towards each other and adults. Pupils who joined the school recently commented on how they received a warm welcome and settled in within a few days. The vast majority of parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that the school is friendly and inclusive. Parents also noted that the school encourages 'a love of learning'. Pupils told me that they enjoy lessons because they are interesting.</p> <p>Thanks for considering these comments.</p> <p>Kind Regards,</p> <p>*** *** ***</p> <p>T: *** E: ***</p>
<p>I would love to have children in the next few months and this campaign has brought to light what a wonderful school this is. If it closed, I would have to move to a different area as I would like a small school with low pollution levels, and ideally, not have to walk down the A10 for 10 minutes. Colvestone is perfectly situated for our future family! Please keep it open!!! Thanks for listening.</p>
<p>I would strongly encourage you to seriously consider all options and think laterally and with an eye to the long term before making any decision on what might be done with school buildings if schools do close or amalgamate with other schools.</p> <p>Outside of my role as a governor in a hackney primary school, I work in *** and I advise ***** in the urban context.</p> <p>Falling school roles and forced school closures can be an indicator of systematic problems making cities hostile to families and children. Hackney and London are not alone in this struggle and there are innovative and valuable examples to learn from in the international context especially around municipalities and councils retaining real estate even if schools close, to be repurposed to generate income for the municipality and also to be held for use in the event that populations swing upwards in the future.</p> <p>The loss of the existing schools and school communities is challenging and emotional for all involved. The loss of these buildings forever I believe could be a strategic error on the part of the councils which will have further negative impacts on the viability of cities for children and families in the short medium and long term.</p>
<p>I'm not understanding why De Bevoivre can not merge into Colvestone which is a central hub for the market and Dalston</p>
<p>I'm worried about the pressure the closure of De Beauvoir Primary will put on other schools in the area. Our most local school (Hackney New) has no outside space so it is important to us to have other options with outside space when our son starts reception in Sept 2025. We're worried if De Beauvoir Primary closes that not only takes that option away but possibly others as the other schools will be full with children who would have gone there.</p>
<p>If consolidation needs to happen, OK. But to close four schools is disruptive, surely more can be merged. De Beauvoir primary has been improving their standards of teaching and it will be a loss to the local community to see that school close. Especially those in close proximity to the school</p>
<p>If numbers on enrolment are dropping, it makes sense to close the schools</p>

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P0001749

<p>If schools close it will make it progressively more difficult for people to bring up a family in the borough. This combined with lack of affordable housing means that people have to move out of the borough to do so, which seems like it will have a negative impact on being a borough of only transitory people without people making roots in the places where they live.</p> <p>If the school closes I fear for the building, which is both a purpose built school but also a community asset, may be sold off to private owners at a loss to the community.</p> <p>This will also have an impact on the travel distances for pupils and may encourage people to drive to school which has a negative impact.</p> <p>If the Council closes Colvestone primary school, the impact on the local community will be devastating.</p> <p>A unique and historic primary school will disappear, taking with it the Council's chance to use the school as the central part of its ambitious plans for the local area. These plans include affordable housing developments, a new 21st century street, improved transport plus wider activities regarding jobs and culture.</p> <p>The school is academically strong - as proved by my son's excellent Sats results last week - and now led by an excellent team in partnership with the Blossom Federation. Despite the financial deficit, the school is financially viable due to efficient use of resources, and the school would move from strength to strength if given a chance.</p> <p>We have received huge support for our campaign including 2,100 signatures on our petition, press stories from across London, UK and Europe, but critically a real sadness from local people about the short-sighted actions of Hackney Council.</p> <p>Finally, I believe that writing off Colvestone's deficit, and paying for security costs whilst the school is mothballed, is an egregious use of public funds.</p> <p>If we do not close / merge schools even though there are less children, everyone else in Hackney schools will need to pay for it as the £30 million will have to be found somewhere else in the education budget. I strongly support the mergers and closures.</p> <p>If you are closing the school the market is finished and we will lose our business</p> <p>If you close the school, we will lose out on the business of parents and children of the Colvestone school coming to the shop - this will have a huge impact on our business</p> <p>Ill considered and damaging for the children.</p> <p>Ill-thought! Think about the pupils mental state following such sudden change. Kids cannot manage change generally so for it to be so rushed - why?</p> <p>Important school for our family. Have been in the area for 12 years. Another poor judgement from Hackney council</p> <p>Instead of closing long standing primary schools Hackney council and residents should be fighting the creation of yet more schools set up outside council control. These establishments creating yet more tiers within the education system, with many of the children in most need having yet more resource taken from them and their families.</p> <p>It feels that the only consideration for this proposal is to do with pupil numbers and funding. These are crucial, of course, schools have to be viable, but they're not the only factors. I haven't seen evidence that enough consideration is being given to providing a suitable learning environment for children, especially those who learn best in a smaller, calmer environment.</p> <p>It's obvious that some schools in Hackney will have to close, but please consider what makes Colvestone special and unique - it is different from the other schools in the proposal and could be supported as a real asset to Hackney Education, especially in support of children with SEND and neuro-diversity.</p> <p>The proposal is in response to falling family numbers in Hackney but I believe that closing a school like Colvestone will further push families out of the borough. Parents want choice, smaller school options, non-denominational options, and these are being severely reduced.</p> <p>Finally, Colvestone is in a different position from the other schools in scope because it has recently entered a partnership with the Blossom Federation which is having an incredibly positive impact. It's not right to judge the school on the falling numbers of the last few years, we parents really believe Blossom Federation will make Colvestone a really desirable school for future families.</p> <p>It is a good school. I don't want it to close. They help me with my son.</p> <p>It is a historic school, providing an important service to the community. I live on Colvestone Crescent with a new born infant and it is concerning that this consultation did not reach my via the council but the campaign. The proposal ignores the need for local schools serving the educational needs of local children. The dedicated staff and community was evident at a recent event I attended and this type of school community and success should be celebrated rather than shut down.</p> <p>It is a historical institution, a centre of the local community and should be developed as such with Dalston and Ridley Road.</p> <p>Please</p> <p>It is a wonderful school with so much space. An asset to it it's surrounding neighbourhood and it would be a tragedy if it closed...</p> <p>It is crucial to have a small school in the area.</p> <p>Colvestone has had new management and there was no financial deficit this year.</p> <p>We are a crucial element in the council 21st century street plan.</p> <p>We don't want to merge with a school where the pollution is 40percent higher - closing Colvestone in light of this would be an abuse to young lungs and a step backwards as congestion would be increased on A10.</p>

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It is important for the community as well as the benefit of local children to keep Colvestone School open.
It is important to keep many smaller schools across the Borough
It is not in the best interest of the children and community.
It is out of consideration
It is really sad to hear the school is closing. For our children, it is the best school and very close to our home. It is hard to hear from the council. The school teachers are very active in teaching our children's future. I hope they think again about the proposals. I hope the plan won't go through. We need a better future for our kids. Please give our children's future the best.
It is unfair and unjust to be closing an historic and community school. This school has served the local community and more for years, generations have attended De Beauvoir, friendships have been started, children have grown. No school can or will give children what De Beauvoir and its staff can, and to shut it is a CRIME. I hope the building isn't given to a free school when it does. No MORE FREE / INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS e. G. , Hally House etc.
It is unfair to the parent and students. Having a small number of students in a class is good. There must be other ways in which the school could be used to raise money.
It is very bad, we need the school to be open - we will lose on all customers/parents taking their kids to school. I will lose business - kids' parents are the market's customers - you are killing the businesses.
It is very distressing to hear of the proposed closure of De Beauvoir. This school has been part of the community for decades and a place I feel safe for my child to attend. My child has developed friendships, confidence, resilience, but more than that, knowledge and a vast amount at this school. Closing it down would cause such upheaval and distress for my child, myself and many families.
It is very important to retain small primary schools. Some children will be much better suited and have much better learning outcomes from a smaller primary school. Colvestone has had a brilliant track record in the past and we should not lose this choice for parents and children in the area. Dalston has been a brilliant place to raise a young family; we should be fighting to retain the family feel of the area, not adding to transient younger professionals moving into the area.
I understand that there has been a change in leadership and management structure, this is not mentioned in the report. Has this been taken into consideration at all? The school should be given a chance to improve enrolment numbers.
In addition, I am acutely aware that there has been great interest in building development in the adjacent lot, which has not been successful due to covenants. The local area is under great pressure due to redevelopment and must not lose vital community services.
This decision has a huge impact on the area, and will likely shape the character of the neighbourhood. Please save Colvestone and let the more timid children have a chance to thrive in a smaller, close knit school.

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It is with a heavy heart I am responding to this Informal consultation addressing the closure of one of the best schools Hackney Council could have asked for; De Beauvoir primary school. I do wonder if filling this form is merely a process with no clear facts that it would be read and understood. This is because I cannot believe we are even at this stage considering the comments and issues raised at the first stage and the lack of answers and explanations provided by Hackney Council.

First Stage:

The first stage process was an absolute nightmare and scaremonger approach. It seemed the council attendants either rehearsed their speeches or was wobbling their way through it. Many questions were not answered with great certainty, clarity and precision which makes me wonder if this decision has been properly thought through. For example, whether our children are guaranteed places to their chosen school if the school is closed. Children with special needs, where do they go given the competition already to get into those schools? Why could they not seek an open consultation to take to cabinet to address the issue of all these free school openings in the borough which they have no control over and which also has a knock-on effect on the closure of this school? I do not recall the free school issue being factored in as a reason for the low population in state funded schools like De Beauvoir. Every answer was a repeat of what was rehearsed. Hackney Council Head of Education who has brought us here expressed sympathy at the emotions displayed in the meeting as though he could not do anything more than proceed with the decision to close. There was no real sense they would also do their best to save the school or work with us to achieve a better outcome.

Informal Consultation Stage:

The decision made is premature and based on graphs and charts by a prediction which we have no resources to independently challenge or have re-assessed. To this date, I do not know how it can be predicted that the birth rate is going to drop. Our children's future are based on predictions. Predictions such as the cost of living crisis. A crisis which, if put into perspective, is now even more devastating because of the Council's premature approach to close this school. Life is hard enough as it is, so to be adding further pressure on children and families at this difficult time is harsh, immoral, unreasonable and irrational. I look at mortgage rates increasing and, despite the impact, many are finding ways to cope and are not seeking the easier option to sell. Why is the council trying to find an easier option only to make their job easier at the expense of parents and children. Children who are in a safe, secured and currently within their yearly budget.

The Council has no regard to the BEST INTEREST OF CHILDREN. They talk about predictions for years down the line. Predictions that can change. The things I feel are not factored in to this decision are as follows:

1. Predictions can change so we are not dealing with a real time issue that justifies this decision
2. The issue of too many free schools
3. The fact that the school ratings have changed from 2018 to Good in 2022. The increase in pupils changing also as the ratings changing also as the ratings changed. There may have been a drop, as per the graphs which presented what ratings fell. This was not factored in. The school has not been given a chance having worked so hard to improve over the years and during a difficult time such as COVID to now being recognised as a Good school. The school has not been recognised by Hackney Council for its strengths, otherwise they would not have put this school on the list for closure.
4. The fact that there is a cost of living crisis and having to deal with a school at this time is ill-thought and self fulfilling to the Council members who joined together to make this decision to start this process.
5. Some parents arguing that the school building is also a building which should be classified as a landmark building.
6. There is no clear answer on what will become of this building when closed. Are our children being moved out so another financial stream is created whilst our children suffer the loss of a good school; a school with quality and supportive teachers. A school that is safe.
7. The fact that Hackney in general pushes people out the borough through, for example, their own housing schemes, increase in rental properties, lack of initiative to encourage people to come and live in the borough, road closures where many consultation processes showed more voted "no" to closure than "yes" but they still proceeded. They have not factored in their own conduct as a borough into this decision to close De Beauvoir. Why do the children have to suffer?

Solutions:

I strongly endorse that De Beauvoir remains open. The following things could be done by Hackney Council to help:

1. Request for an increase in budget if so needed
2. Merge the school with another school they are looking to close, even on a temporary basis to give the children from both schools the benefit to continue to get the support from teachers and staff they are used to. The merging of the schools could take a temporary approach of 3 to 5 years within their prediction graph to see how it works. Hackney Council made excuses to merge when the question was put forward and made no excuses for closure. They talk about the issue of creating a strong school. You are currently tearing apart a strong school.
3. Merge curriculum or areas from other schools where the budgets will be affected the most and there is an excess or unused amount. This way we can keep all the schools alive rather than trying to maximise on every school budget.

Overall, the decision is premature, irrational and a cowardice approach. The decision does not show children are at the heart of this borough. The decision shows lack of thought and certainty. The best interest of children should remain paramount.

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<p>It makes no sense to close this school. It was second on our list for our [child] (we went with a closer school otherwise would have chosen Colvestone) because we came away with the impression that the quality of care and education our child would get there would be outstanding. All the children looked happy. The teachers, including the new head who we found to be very impressive, were clearly passionate about and committed to giving their students a love for learning. I know ex students who loved it there. The school is central to the Dalston community and its closure would be devastating in many ways.</p> <p>Then you look at the data - it's not a cheap option closing a school (the Council estimate well over a million pounds, plus £250-300,000 each year to maintain closed buildings). The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus - how can closing it make financial sense?</p> <p>- the Council say that it can re-open the school if demand increases in the future, but if it does this under current legislation all new schools are automatically Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land (and will have spent a huge amount of money in the process). This is hugely concerning.</p> <p>What I also find very concerning is that with the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site.</p> <p>Seeing the smaller class sizes as a reason for closure is short sighted - small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities (the school is particularly strong in integrating children with SEN - special educational needs or learning support plans - into the wider community to the advantage all pupils). The small community context is key to this. A single form school enables kids to be supported by their peers across age groups and produces a real sense of belonging and pride in their community.</p> <p>There is so much building going on in Dalston and Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites (200 of which will be affordable family housing). As a small school it only needs a small number of kids per year to be full - it makes absolutely no sense to close it now when it already occupies a strong position at the heart of the Dalston community, providing a diverse range of students with exceptional care and can serve an increase in students in time to come.</p> <p>I strongly oppose the closure of the school and urge you to see the opportunity in keeping it open and serving the Dalston community.</p> <p>It seems that it is only certain parents who fundamentally prefer the aesthetics of the school that are insisting on it remaining open. This preference is to the detriment of properly funded education for the pupils. The council is not to blame for the way in which education is funded, and it is not within the Council's gift to modify the national system of education funding. Wishing that it were different does not address the present problem.</p> <p>Amalgamation of the schools will deliver better outcomes.</p> <p>it seems unfair to disrupt so many children, parent and carer's lives by doing this, especially when new developments are constantly going up in the area and there will likely be more demand in future.</p> <p>Merging schools will increase journey times for many, and will force parents to send their children to a school based on the busy A10.</p> <p>Limiting parents' choice of non-religious schools is particularly damaging, no-one should be forced to send their child to a faith school simply because there is no other option. It is key to keep state-run schools open, in contrast to the academies etc nearby.</p> <p>It will have a seriously detrimental impact on the local community and the children who live in these neighbourhoods. Things haven't been this hard on families for years, and the council and education authorities have a duty to deliver local, high quality and accessible education for all, especially given how far behind they have fallen in recent years. Closing these schools will be yet another failure on the part of the Learning Trust, another casualty of its multi-decade long experiment on our children's educations.</p> <p>It will increase the class size of the nearest school.</p> <p>It would be a disaster to the local community if Colverstone Primary School was moved or closed. The school brings much needed community life to the area and supports so many of my friends and family in the area.</p> <p>It's a single form entry school which is close and serves the local community and is deeply loved . It's a pity</p> <p>It's very sad that local schools have to consider closing. It's another unwanted impact from the cost of living crisis and the environment from the last few years of life. I live by De Beauvoir primary school and it's a pillar of the areas community. It'll affect the community feel if it were to close. What will happen to the school buildings and land if it were to close? Will the council keep ownership and use the space for another positive community benefit? It would be a shame if the space went to waste or to private development.</p> <p>Its a tragedy that hackney is so underfunded that this may happen I think we should demand funding from government rather than closing schools</p> <p>It's an incredibly bad idea.</p> <p>Closing Colvestone means removing a key part of the community that many people rely on, and that cares greatly about their pupils wellbeing and provides incredible support for those with special needs. Furthermore, due to the small size of the school it's very close-knit which allows for tight bonds to be created between different students and the teachers.</p> <p>Also, I have only good things to say about my time Colvestone and while talking to friends I've made in secondary school (who went to different primary schools) I realised this wasn't a common experience. Almost all the people I know constantly complain about their primary schools and talk about how horrible they were, but this is the complete opposite of most people's experiences at Colvestone.</p> <p>It's incredibly disheartening given all the hard work staff have put in over the years to come to such an abrupt end. As a teacher (one of many!) that has started their career at DeBeauvoir as an *** and now in a leadership role, it is strange to think that I will never be able to return to the place that gave me the foundations in my career.</p> <p>My wellbeing is deteriorating as I have to constantly readjust and support my children as their friends leave randomly week by week. The anxiety in my class of *** year olds is completely unfair and out of their control. As someone who has had their own primary school from childhood close down, I know how saddening it is to walk past a derelict building thinking of the memories it once held. Children deserve to feel safe and considered in every part of their education. Right now it doesn't seem like Hackney has considered the children at all.</p>
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<p>I've worked at De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer for *** years. While I understand why De Beauvoir has to close, I struggle to understand why Randal Cremer also needs shutting down. I know both schools really well: staff, families and pupils. These schools share a similar ethos and demographics. Why can't De Beauvoir be amalgamated with Randal Cremer? Randal Cremer has enough space to accommodate all De Beauvoir children.</p>
<p>Just make sure enough funding is in place for teachers and cover any additional needs kids might present.</p>
<p>Keep the school</p>
<p>less than 10 years ago there were not enough school places - surely this could be cyclical so very soon there could be a shortage of places again</p>
<p>Loss of public amenity, costly. I do not want schools to re-open in the future as private as too costly for residents and I do not want any faith based schools</p>
<p>Major disruption for the children involved</p>
<p>Making sudden changes to a child's school can have a negative impact. Children settle and become familiar with their surroundings. I didn't change my [child]'s school even when I moved home only to be told the school will be merging. This was disappointing. I feel Nightingale will not be able to handle the extra children and will also not be able to employ everyone to come over either. Their after school clubs do not tie in well with working single mums as well and it will cause a real disruption to my work as well as my son's schedule. I do not see the point of this merge and can only see Nightingale being overwhelmed by the extra students.</p>
<p>Already a class of 30 students to one teacher is not beneficial and to increase that by merging is jeopardising children's best chance at learning properly.</p>
<p>Many of us picked Nightingale because it's a small school. As a parent of a SEN child, I am worried how a busier school will affect * day. I also hope that the kids won't be torn apart as they a lovely little community with many friendships already formed.</p>
<p>Most of the parents who are collecting their kids from Colvestone stop in my shop and if you close the school, I will lose business. They are part of the Ridly Road community and you are killing the community.</p>
<p>Moving children after settling them in is highly disruptive to their education. A small village-like school in the heart of the city should be praised and supported, not made bigger. Not every child thrives in a big school. Often these are the most vulnerable SEN children who will excel in a quieter, one form entry setting. These are children who need stability, not the disruption of closing their school and putting them into a noisy strange environment</p>
<p>My [SEND] *** attends Colveston School and has thrived in this diverse school community. It makes no sense to move the school out of the area and will increase stress to the pupils and parents with the increased journey times traffic and congestion added to the local roads and the adverse effect of air pollution. The new local developments in housing will have MORE children requiring a local school not fewer school places. The impact on local schools increased classroom sizes will have detrimental effect on educational standards for years to come. I hope the council will reconsider the proposal and realise the terrible impact on the community there action will have</p>
<p>My child and lots across Hackney who started their journey through education in September ***, have had to face an unprecedented impact on the nature of their learning. There are reports currently emerging about the severe impact the pandemic had on the mental health and well being of many, many children. School is meant to be a place that offers learning, security and safety; it can be an anchor for a child in otherwise difficult circumstances. Colvestone Primary School excels in creating a community among its pupils. The power this can have is impressive and the size of the school lends itself to this development.</p>
<p>The merger is a simple exercise in statistics, which can be manipulated to whatever the user of them wants. In-takes to schools across the country have been affected by the last 3 years. Yet within Hackney and specifically around Dalston there has been a noticeable upturn in the birth rate (the lockdown babies). What are the provisions for them in 3 years or less?</p>
<p>Disruption to education is what many children have known. You actually have an opportunity to secure their future and development, not further disrupted it. Colvestone Primary School is part of a community, it is not just some school. I have spoken to people who went to Colvestone Primary School in the 1970s and 1980s, they have nothing but praise for it, and the part it played in their lives and their communities. This school has history and needs to remain as it is, central to the community.</p>
<p>My child has SEN and needs to be educated in a small, calm school. It has taken * three years to settle at Colvestone, so any disruption to her routine will harm * health and education. * also suffers from [health conditions], so both will be exacerbated if transferred to Princess May.</p>
<p>My child went to Concessions from year 2 to year 6. * benefited hugely from the supportive environment that could be delivered by the single form entry structure after moving from a much larger school. The loss of secular single form entry schools puts at risk the well-being of children who are challenged by the pressures of larger schools.</p>
<p>My children now aged *** and *** both attended Colvestone Primary from nursery to Year 6. They received an excellent education in a caring and nurturing environment. Both of my children were diagnosed with ASD and they benefitted greatly from the small one form entry school. I believe that it is short sighted to propose the school closure, in essence robbing the local children, especially those with SEN, of a local school which has a long record of offering excellent and inclusive education.</p>
<p>My children went to Colvestone before and I have a lot of customers whose children go there - I will lose business if the school closes.</p>
<p>My children went to Millfields Community School, an extremely overcrowded school with very little outdoor space. That should not be the norm and had they gone to a school with fewer pupils and more space, their primary school education would have been much better and all children would have been safer and much better looked after. Merging these schools is an ignorant way of solving a primarily financial problem. Why not move some of the children from other schools to balance student numbers? Had these been private schools, these student numbers would be the norm. But we can't allow that to be the case for children who can't afford that, we must put them in overcrowded and at times, unsafe spaces.</p>
<p>My concern is that no information was given about birth rates projections for the future and the level of confidence the council have that numbers will not rise again in the foreseeable future that would impact on these proposals.</p>
<p>I am also concerned about the loss of publicly provided nursery places, I do feel this is a loss to the local area and that alternative provision will not have the same outcomes for the children that they currently get being on the same site</p>

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My [child] goes to Colvestone Primary School which, in the proposal, is planned to close. It is proposed that all pupils be moved to Princess May Primary School however, this is not a school that I would choose for * to attend and was not one of my choices when applying for a primary school in the borough of Hackney. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. Colvestone Primary School is a small, welcoming, creative school with a unique feel and benefits hugely from single form entry in terms of the focus and attention this afford the teachers and pupils. In conversations with other parents the reasons they repeatedly give for choosing Colvestone Primary are exactly these and are the reasons that I chose Colvestone. As a smaller single form entry school I believe this affords more individual attention and a more nurturing environment which has benefitted her development and learning. Choosing a single form entry school was a deliberate choice based on the experience we wanted for our [child] and the closure of Colvestone Primary School would unfairly remove parental choice for this form of school in the borough.

2. Colvestone Primary School is in a sheltered but stimulating area of Dalston which provides distance from traffic pollution but exposes our [child] to the bustling market life of Ridley Road Market and all the community and history that accompanies it. The pollution levels at Princess May Primary were 40% higher than Colvestone Primary School in 2021 due to the extremely busy main road that the school sits on. With 70% of eligible roads in Hackney becoming LTNs and the councils drive to promote LTNs in the borough the diverted volume of traffic is only going to increase this pollution. Also, the risks and dangers of having my child arriving and leaving a school on such a busy main road are not risks and dangers I would ever choose.

3. Colvestone Primary School is not a Free School, a Faith School or an Academy. I chose Colvestone Primary School because I believe in the Council State-run school model. I am bewildered as to why so many Free Schools and Academies have been granted permission to open with no consideration for the possibility of fluctuating pupil numbers. Why was there a lack of focus on the healthy maintenance of th existing schools in the borough?

My [child] has had a fair amount of disruption in * Education already with, COVID, redundancies and a change of Head teacher. The council's proposal to close the school is another forced disruption which is not taking * education and well being as its priority.

The consultation has listed 6 out of 38 primary schools in the borough to merge or close but Paul Senior, in a consultation meeting on the 27th of June, said this is only the first stage of the 'process' and more schools, including faith and free schools, would be consulted in the next stages. If Princess May Primary is included in the next stage of closures this will mean more disruption to my [child]'s education which, as a parent, makes me question whether the well being of my [child] and * education is a priority to Hackney Council and whether the borough is the best choice for raising a family.

This brings me as to why the consultation has chosen Colvestone Primary School as a school that needs to close. The reasons for placing Colvestone Primary School on the list of potential closures is unclear and has been unclear from the start. In a number of meetings with Paul Senior the only reason given was that Princess May Primary is a larger building with a two form entry so can accommodate more children. Again, this does not imply that the children are at the forefront of this 'process' and purely financial and logistical factors are at the forefront. I am aware that all schools in the borough are facing financial challenges due to falling child numbers but Colvestone Primary, under it's new Blossom Foundation partnership and with proactive help from Hackney Council, has started to reverse its financial situation and is on a path to recovery. To close it now would remove the schools chance to complete its journey of recovery and remove its potential to become a strong and flourishing asset to the borough.

I feel that the consultation 'process' as a whole has been completely unfair to the six schools thrown into the melting pot with no solid reasons given as to why they have been singled out. If this was a fair and considerate consultation all schools in the borough would have been included in the 'process' from day one. The six school chosen are now having to fill their enrolment quotas for the coming school year with the shadow of closure hanging heavy above them. This is obviously going to have a massive negative influence on their success. If this was a 'consultation' I do not understand why Hackney Council would put a small number of the boroughs schools at such a debilitating disadvantage.

There have been discussion as to what will happen to the Colvestone School building when it is closed as an educational establishment. The council has stated that it will not be sold and will be kept as a 'closed school' with the potential to reopen. Surely the cost of moth-balling a historic building, already undergoing remedial work, will be considerable. Could we not forecast the potential spending of these funds into the existing and active School? In the duration of this consultation I have not heard of any creative 'outside the box' suggestions to counteract the closure of Colvestone Primary School, only that numbers of children in the borough have fallen and so we must close schools. This also highlights a bigger question as to where Hackney Councils sees the future of the borough and whether this included the a thriving family friendly, diverse and desirable borough with children at its heart.

I am grateful for the chance to put forward my concerns and objections to the closure of Colvestone Primary School as my [child] loves attending the school and the closure would leave a gaping and irreversible hole in the community of Dalston. We, as a family, have chosen to make Hackney our home and I hope the council will listen to ours and all the voices put forward to find a way to prove that children in the borough are its foremost priority.

My [child] has been going to Colvestone for two years, I have already moved * from a different school. * loves Colvestone, * loves * teachers and loves * friends. * would be devastated. Colvestone is also perfect for me to get to work, The breakfast club starts at 7:45 and I head straight to work. Getting to work from Princess May would add more pressure and probably make me late. Princess May also has higher air pollution due to the school being so close to the main road.

My [child] started at Baden Powell primary school when * was 3 years old and * loved the school and still loves it. Please do not close the Baden Powell primary school. All the children have a lot of memories and it is not fair.

My daughters have attended Colvestone school and now my grand[child] is attending this school. * is excelling educationally and because it is one class for each year, * has made friends in each year including year 6, while * is only in year ***.

My grandchildren go to this school and there future is important

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<p>My [child] attends Baden Powell Primary School, the same school I went to as a child. The close nit nature of the school has allowed children to thrive in a comfortable friendly environment. This is reflected by a consistent year on year Ofsted rating of "Good". Nightingale Primary School cannot make such claim. I'm concerned that the increased class sizes and an overall bigger school will destroy the close teacher child relationships found at Baden Powell, and have a detrimental affect on my [child]'s education.</p>
<p>The schools in the current wave of mergers proposed by Hackney Education have a total deficit of £30M. Baden Powell Primary School contributes approximately £300k to this deficit. This represents 1% of the total deficit. How will this help reduce the deficit in real terms? Taking this further, how does Baden Powell's deficit (£300k) compare to other expenses within Hackney Education and the wider council. e.g. Stationary, coffee machines ?</p>
<p>This has the makings of landgrab. i.e. Hackney council are very aware of the increasing land value in the area, and closing Baden Powell is an easy way to sell off valuable land to the next property developer waiting in line. There are already a number of new builds are under construction in the area. The likelihood of young families occupying these units is rather high, thus there's likely to be increased demand for school places within close proximity.</p>
<p>When the performance of Baden Powell is compared to that of Nightingale Primary School, it's clear that Baden Powell is a better performing school year in year out, and that the proposed merger has the potential to reduce or even undo all the hard work that has been done over recent years to get Baden Powell Primary School reaching the high standards it does today. With pupils routinely being exemplars of the school logo "Reaching for the Stars!"</p>
<p>My [child] has [SEND] and will find it difficult to communicate and interact with other school's staff, children and environment.</p>
<p>My [child] is an ex pupil of Colvestone and I have had a lot of dealings with DeBeauvoir School. I feel that the closure of both of these schools would have a real detrimental effect on the area. In an area full of Academies and religious schools both of these schools offer an important alternative and are integral parts of the community. Closing them will only encourage more families to move away from the area and further narrow Hackney's demographic. If "The Dalston Plan" goes ahead there will also be another 600 new homes (200 affordable) in the area and will undoubtedly mean a surge in demand for primary school places. Removing Colvestone school would also seem a bad idea in light of the plan to turn Colvestone Crescent into a play street. Both schools have an important role in the community and closing them, along with the pubs and independent businesses that I see go each month will only create space for more Starbucks and the like which recently appeared on the high street. Please don't let Dalston lose it's identity for the sake of short term financial gain.</p>
<p>My [child] went to Colvestone Primary school for 8 years (* started at the nursery). It felt so good to have this small local school in the heart of the community. London is a big and busy city as it is so small local schools I think is really important to keep the children feeling safe and grounded.</p>
<p>My [child] had a great time at Colvestone - please don't close it! I think we need small local schools in big busy towns. Kind regards ***</p>
<p>My wife and I are expecting our first child and live on Colvestone Crescent and would like to be able to send our child to the school. The area also suffers from significant anti-social behaviour issues and if the school is left vacant these will only increase. The school is the heart of the community and we are very much opposed to the proposal to close it /merge with the nearby school.</p>
<p>Nightingale is already a relatively small school, which also benefits from a distinctive admissions process that prioritises children in care and those subject to a child protection plan. There is a delicate ecosystem and one that will be particularly destabilised by the sudden arrival of so many additional pupils. Proximity should be just one measure of the suitability of a potential merger.</p>
<p>Nightingale school does not have the space to accommodate a merger. It may be possible but the quality of learning and the children's experience will not be fulfilling,</p>
<p>Also I don't think merging the school solves the financial difficulties but merely shifts the problem and slows it down for the time being.</p>
<p>Nightingale school is currently in between residential homes. I believe by amalgamating 2 schools it will become more busier, noisier and the quality given to each child would be reduced. Class sizes should be reduced. I feel we are heading towards Prison like schooling. Condensing kids in a small space.</p>
<p>No short sighted children join mid year overwhelmed school in two years</p>
<p>Not only are you taking away our school, you are taking away our family. My children have progressed so much since they have been here.</p>
<p>On one hand, I understand the proposals as a logical step forward. Baden Powell is an older building in disrepair and it makes sense that we would move into the newer and better equipped Nightingale premises. I have been anticipating this change for sometime and, if it's handled well, I think it could be beneficial for the children and families we work with. On the other hand, schools are important and complex institutions which become an integral part of the community they serve. Schools can be very different. I chose to work at Baden Powell because I liked the atmosphere and ethos of the school. It is a friendly place with happy students and staff. I like that it is a small school with staff who have worked there for many years - it has a close, traditional, family-like feel. I respect the senior leadership there and I am grateful for the way they have supported me to grow and develop professionally. In my role, I have worked hard to implement changes to continually improve and refine the way we do things to make sure the teaching and learning is first class. It would be a shame to lose all of this with the move to Nightingale - it needs to be recognised with the amalgamation that Baden Powell has a lot to offer and everything possible should be done to preserve the soul of the school within the new premises. To do this, I would like to see all Baden Powell children offered a place at Nightingale. I would like all Baden Powell staff offered a job at Nightingale to ensure a smooth transition for the children. I would like there to be extensive collaborative work between Baden Powell and Nightingale in the lead up to September 2024 to ensure that this is a proper amalgamation of systems & ethos and not just Baden Powell becoming taken over by Nightingale. I would like the leadership at Baden Powell to move with us as the leadership in Nightingale. I am not against change and progress, but I think it would be a shame to lose what we have at Baden Powell. If I am offered a position at Nightingale, I need to be sure my skills and experience are recognised. I would want my job, including leadership responsibilities, to be the same or equivalent with opportunities for progression. I would not be satisfied if Baden Powell staff were put second to Nightingale staff. If I am not to be offered a role at Nightingale, I would need to know as soon as possible so I can make plans for my future. I love teaching in Hackney and have worked in the borough my whole career, working passionately to help the amazing children and families in our community. I hope I can continue to do what I love in the Nightingale premises and I believe it will be a terrible shame if Hackney loses experienced and motivated staff (the best!) on the basis of this move. I would also like to see the former Baden Powell site used for something that would benefit the community.</p>
<p>Other schools will be overwhelming and cause alot problems</p>

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<p>Our children is our future in the Country. Education make the change the country and strong our children future. In my opinion continue carry on the the study same School where children and parents fill comfortable and safe , stress free and friendly environment's most important to grow our children .</p> <p>Thanks</p>
<p>Our group of parents has worked tirelessly to articulate the many reasons why closing Colvestone is a bad idea, and to rest their arguments on data, numbers, facts. Something the Council has not done. All of the actual consultation has been done by ourselves, meaning noone from the Council has engaged with the community or even tried to listen to market traders, stakeholders, residents, parents and neighbours. It is hard not to despair at the lack of response we have been getting, at how badly the documents from the council are prepared, at the lack of data, research, or even just answers, at the fact that there is no discernible scope of the actual consultation that has been outlined, and how much this process reveals a broken democratic process and a disfunctional education department. The only financial modelling has been provided by the school itself and our group of parents, and as it emerges that clearly closing the school will be more expensive to the tax payer than keeping it open one wonders if anyone really cares what a decision like this one is being based on.</p> <p>But who do you think these parents are? they are the same people who have been voting and canvassing for labour and there is no way to hide how unpopular and damaging this proposal is for Hackney education, but also for our local representation as a whole. I just vainly hope we will not come out of this process completely cynical and against you, and that our kids will regain some sense of hope and agency in spite of this. Our children do not think you are listening, and I doubt this "consultation" documents will even be read.</p>
<p>Ourselves and many other families from Colvestone have absolutely NO intention of allowing our children to attend Princess may school. Colvestone only needs a handful of students more to become fully functioning allowing us to recoup the historical debt. It is shortsighted to close this school having also approved a development of 600 homes in such close proximity.</p>
<p>Closing it is an ill-considered and damaging move for children and parents in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-fee schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school.</p>
<p>further more, the closure of Colvestone will cost the council a huge amount of money, which I believe to be a miss use of tax payers money that I strongly object to.</p>
<p>Overcrowding of pupils, overload of teachers with workloads, inadequate facilities</p>
<p>People won't come to my shop if they close the school. This will be the end of the market and my business</p>
<p>Pleaae do not go forward with any closures. It is counterproductive and benefits no child.</p>
<p>School classes and schools are already overwhelmed. Closing the school will simply make the problem worse.</p>
<p>I urge you to listen to psrents and think aboutbthe children's education as your own child's education</p>
<p>Please don't close local authority schools in the hearts of already squeezed inner London communities.</p>
<p>Please keep Colvestone open. We would like to move from De Beauvoir Primary to Colvestone. It would be a good transition as they are small and it has a great community. The Save Colvestone Campaign showed us that it would be a great option. I heard the Blossom Federation did a great job to keep it in credit this year. It has just had a fresh start and has good potential.</p>
<p>Please save the Colvestone School as it is heart of community</p>
<p>Post brexit and pandemic naturally There's less pupils in primary schools but closing or merging them isn't the best solution-smaller classes and less staff in existing schools could work better</p>
<p>Pretty simple really. Build more affordable housing so families can afford to stay and live in London. What a dystopian fucking country this is.</p> <p>primarily, the plan has no regard for the value of the school to the local community</p>
<p>- closing a school is very expensive (the Council estimate well over a million pounds, plus £250-300,000 each year to maintain closed buildings). The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus - how can closing it make financial sense?</p>
<p>- the Council say that it can re-open the school if demand increases in the future, but if it does this under current legislation all new schools are automatically Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land (and will have spent a huge amount of money in the process).</p>
<p>- the site has multiple protections - two Grade 2 listings and an outdoor classroom / playground that is an Asset of Community Value - it is not a building easily repurposed but it is an excellent building purpose-built as a school. We also strongly suspect that it has protected educational use and are searching for the deeds.</p>
<p>- with the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site.</p>
<p>- small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities (the school is particularly strong in integrating children with SEN - special educational needs or learning support plans - into the wider community to the advantage all pupils). The small community context is key to this. A single form school enables kids to be supported by their peers across age groups and produces a real sense of belonging and pride in their community.</p>
<p>- Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites (200 of which will be affordable family housing). As a small school it only needs a small number of kids per year to be full - closing it would be incredibly shortsighted (the council should consider demand for places in the mid- to long-term, as per statutory guidance, but it is not factoring long-term demand at all).</p>
<p>- Colvestone is central to the 21st Century Street - the play street and re-greening project that joins Colvestone Crescent to the market. Removing the school will rip the heart out of this project and the neighbourhood.</p>
<p>Primary school should not be closed.</p>

P 02821

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P 0300 42227

Princess May has a highly polluted site and will harm the lungs of my asthmatic child.
Randal Cremer has been a very big part of the local community. All *** of my kids have had the pleasure of studying there and going on to further education. The school really sets up the children well for their future. There is a great sense of community which is key to a child's development. The children have grown to love their school and they should not be made to suffer by having to move schools and be parted from their peers due to funding issues. The closing of Randal Cremer is unfair and should be reconsidered.
Randal Cremer is a school that has long supported children who would otherwise be excluded from other schools in the area. They are a fantastic support for children with SEN and other needs. They have also been a hub for Refugee families and other minority groups within the area. The loss of this school will be an incredible blow to an already marginalised community with no thought to where these families will be sent across the borough.
Randal Cremer is the only school in the borough that will take pupils who have been excluded from other schools. It provides absolutely essential services for pupils who are our most vulnerable, and they have been directly impacted by the Hackney New School opening nearby - but this school won't address the needs of the very disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils served by Randal Cremer. Not enough thought has been given to the long distances children will have to travel, what will happen to the vulnerable children who rely on Randal Cremer and the divide that is opening up between schools serving middle class pupils and those from working class families.
Randal Cremer is a great school. They are great with SEN kids and do their best. Our kids are mentally affected because of the school closing. We want the school to stay open.
Regarding the proposed closure of Baden Powell Primary School at Ferron Rd, Lower Clapton, London E5 8DN, due to the declining numbers of children, it is important to note that there is a growing child population within the Orthodox Jewish community in Hackney, with an annual growth rate of more than 4%. Currently, nearly 30% of children in the borough are Charedi children.
In September 2021, Hackney conducted a Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment for the Stamford Hill AAP, which revealed (in paragraph 2.26) that Orthodox Jewish schools "have a total of 9,354 pupils, while capacity indicates there is space for 7,933." This means that Charedi schools were already overcrowded by more than 1,421 in 2021, and this number has likely increased since. The survey also highlighted that 82.3% of respondents stated that the settings are overcrowded.
Given these circumstances and considering the proximity of this site to the Stamford Hill Jewish community. I request that the council explore the possibility of leasing or selling the school premises to one of the Jewish schools in the area as part of this consultation process. This would alleviate some of the overcrowding issues faced by the Charedi schools and help accommodate the increasing number of students more effectively.
Right now this seems short sighted: Dalston is an area that has seen a large amount of growth in residential properties. There are developments being built nearby the school which will increase the number of students. This in the long run will lead to over crowding in the schools Colvestone is merged with. It also doesn't take into account the number of SEND pupils within the school, who could flounder in a school that is further away and larger. On top of this, the future plans for Colvestone School aren't clear: what will the council be using the site for? Will it benefit the community rather than investors??
School are oversubscribed as the population increases the demand for school is needed by merging school and selling of public land to develops is taking the interest away from residents and more of a money making scheme
School closure is not good for children. It's very stressful for them. They like their building. They know where everything is. They like their classes and playground. Every change of school causes stress for children. They don't understand why school will be closed. They don't understand why there is no money for this school. They want to stay in this school. They feel very good here, a new place will be too stressful. Please don't close this school.
School is heart of community and so any closure or amalgamation hurts the community. Colvestone is the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools and it is important to families. This school is also part of the Dalston plan for affordable housing. Building affordable housing and closing the closest school is not a good idea.
Schools are extremely important for the community. The Colvestone Primary School serves many students with special abilities that will need to find education elsewhere - far from where they live. The school is located in a quiet street and with lower emissions than Princess May Primary School. Better air quality is beneficial for students with asthma and the quiet location is more fitting to students with certain disabilities. The school also serves a less privileged community. Moving it will force students of that community to travel a longer distance to go to school along a large and busy street.
Schools are part of the local life, colvestone is only a 2 entry school and is vital for a lot of pupils in the neighbourhood. Even if number of pupils have reduced in the council the last years, won't be ready if number were increasing again and loose resilience in closing all those schools.
Schools need to stay open and not shut down. Even if there are less children. A lot of people choose to home school because they don't like certain policies. While homeschooling has its benefits it also has the downsides.
You need to let the schools thrive and welcome pupils. Right now you have allowed for several schools to be swallowed up by academies which are money making enterprises, not caring about children. Look at the shoreditch park secondary school and haggerston which have such rough behaviour by the pupils as they go and leave their schools. Why not allow children to develop, learn and grow without cramming them in to institutions that does not help them learn and develop. These schools would be better off at teaching smaller groups and give pupils a chance to learn. Do not shut these schools down.
Short termist. Poor strategic planning. Gentrification programme - eg new flats built in south Hackney and Woodberry Down - means fewer children.
Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes.
Since I entered this school, I recognised its value. Children are engaged in their learning, there is a strong sense of community, not to mention the friendly and warm environment created by all members of staff. It would be a disgrace to lose such a strong, caring and high standard of learning school.
Small classes benefit children therefore there is no need to merge or close schools School estate cannot be returned to the LA once it has gone Demographics and populations change dynamically We need all our community schools
Small school benefit children social and emotional development, specially on their first years. It's of absolute importance to keep them. Big school may come up cheaper but at what cost?! Education is about investing in young human beings not saving at cost of their happiness, fulfillment and mental health. Less is often more!

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PA 000 02823

<p>small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities (the school is particularly strong in integrating children with SEN - special educational needs or learning support plans - into the wider community to the advantage all pupils). The small community context is key to this. A single form school enables kids to be supported by their peers across age groups and produces a real sense of belonging and pride in their community. Coke vesting is essential to the Hackney community.</p>
<p>Smaller local schools have Always been better for children education</p>
<p>Such a great family based school, that also support SEND children so well . They are more then a school Great staff that have the children at heart and will go that extra milestone with you and your child and would be so sad to see this school close</p>
<p>Terrible idea - these are precious schools, especially Colverstone</p>
<p>Terrible idea that will run a great school and waste precious tax payer money at the same time</p>
<p>The amalgamation of Colvestone Primary School would not only mean the closing of an excellent school (where I'd like to send my future children) but it would also decrease safety in the neighborhood. As someone living right next to the school (Time Square), I'm also concerned that all the issues we are currently having around drugs and anti social behaviour will get worse once the school is emptied out.</p>
<p>The benefits of small one form entry schools are well documented. The council is showing an interest only in it's spreadsheets and not in it's responsibility in helping to raise and preserve a generation of well educated citizens that participate fully in society. Where are the long term goals? What about the housing that's planned in the development of the area? It feels very short sighted.</p>
<p>Further to this is the shocking information (taken from the councils website https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality) that clearly shows decrease in air quality on Kingsland road in comparison to Colvestone Crescent. It should not be legal to put schools in areas of moderate risk to NO exposure. Guidelines state that individuals who are unusually sensitive to nitrogen dioxide should consider limiting prolonged outdoor exertion when in an area such as Kingsland road - how are kids to do PE under these circumstances? There has been no consideration for health outcomes from our council (who should be on our side!) when making these decisions.</p>
<p>The closure by amalgamation of Colveston removes a unique, academically strong school, that is a traditional, essential part of the local community.</p>
<p>The closure of Colvestone PS will stop parents who have kids in that school to come and buy from my stand. I will lose my business if I lose my customers.</p>
<p>The closure of local authorities schools is going against the community that is already with overly crowded growing populations.</p>
<p>The closure of schools in hackney seems to be a foregone conclusion. We found out about it earlier this year but I feel this has been years in the making, especially given the councils gentrification of Hackney in recent years. The reasons for closure are valid but most are caused by Systemic issue with social housing and social care that mean people have not been able to stay in the area.</p>
<p>I have had to move *** of my children to a different school and leave *** at Randal Cremer until they go to Secondary school. This is not because I wanted to or because it is a bad school but because I had to give my kids some stability in the situation that Hackney Council have created. There are children still at Randal Cremer seeing their friends leave because their parents, like me want to give them stability. I have no faith that Hackney can meet their promises of supporting parents to find appropriate places. Moreover, I have seen the staff at Randal Cremer lose heart and although they are all doing amazingly to support the children, who is supporting them? They are about to lose community that can't be replaced and jobs that are hard to find elsewhere. To top it off, our head *** is visibly heartbroken each week to see more kids leave. And then there are many kids left with SEN, who have no easy way to stay or move to somewhere else as places are so limited.</p>
<p>Hackney decided to do this, and will continue to justify it but the way in which it has been handled is disgusting and heartless.</p>
<p>The closure of these schools will have an impact on the students and their families but also the staff and their families. Detrimental effect.</p>
<p>However the impact will be so much greater. The schools around those proposing to be closed and amalgamated will also be adversely impacted. The class sizes (which are already too high) will only further increase. And where teachers and non teaching staff are already struggling will only find it harder.</p>
<p>The Colvestone children would be exposed to more traffic pollution and much more noise; removed from a safer dead end street abutting a traditional market; and close to 2 overground stations and more bus routes than Princess May. If anything, Princess May should be absorbed by Colvestone.</p>
<p>The council has no choice but to make these hard decisions, if they don't then a high quality of education is not achievable for all Hackney pupils.</p>
<p>The falling roll in Hackney is certainly an issue and this is recognised. The proposal to merge two different schools has not been thought through. The closure of Colvestone limits parental choices and solutions to this are not available. There is short sightedness of the closure when a proposed development is due in a few years. There is a lack of recognition of the values of a small school and the school was not asked to produce structural options in light of a reduced roll. The lack of council oversight of the previous federation/defederation/deficit increase has contributed to the school being left vulnerable.</p>
<p>The impact of closing De Beauvoir Primary School is catastrophic for the families and children who attend it and devastating for the staff and community. As one of the few community schools in Hackney, De Beauvoir Primary School offers an education to many families who do not feel the other local schools are representative of their families. Whilst the school has had a falling roll for a number of years, the opening of Hackney Free School severely impacted on the number of children applying. When the area was already suffering with many unfilled Reception places, Hackney's decision to allow an additional Free School to be built is baffling. The closure of De Beauvoir, we believe, is related to this decision and seeing as the school has recently achieved a good Ofsted, the timing of the proposed closure is devastating for everyone involved. In addition, due to the lack of specialist places in ARPs/special schools, we are particularly concerned for the high percentage of children with SEND who attend the school (35%) and worry that these extremely vulnerable children will move from a school that knows, supports and actively advocates for them, to non-specialist provisions who may not be able to meet their needs. Our school has offered support beyond the pupils we have, our role has been much greater than the teaching of students from 4-11 years, supporting parents, offering addition resources to families, and once again, we fear that this support may look very different once the school has closed, meaning that our pupils, particularly those PPG students, do not have access to the same resources.</p>

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Part 0229

<p>the locals dont want it closed. it's liable , once closed that the site will be sold. later the numbers may increase but by then it'll be too late. it costs more to close it and keep it vacant than to operate it as a school. even if it does re-open it would have to be as a 'free school' the proliferation of which im oposed to.</p>
<p>The merge will come with its pros and cons. Indeed, the school building will live up to its potential but the new students and the new staff will bring some disruption and moment of instability. But we are sure it will all come together in the end.</p>
<p>The merging of the schools is liable for an increased number of pupils per class, and in the school in general. There is concern for the availability for school places for children/pupils who may want to enrol with school. This particularly for children whose siblings are already at the school. Also, with the increase in pupils number due to the merging, this will impact the learning of pupils - especially with larger classes of pupils.</p>
<p>The proposal is damaging and short sighted ; the plan to reduce hackney to just flats will damage its heart and soul for generations to come. The school supports many local children and with the ever increase in high rise developments the rise in need for local school places will also rise. How about focusing on preserving the integral parts of our community and not only bowing to developers . Be a beacon of hope for current and future generations, protect what we have all nurtured and all care about show that local community can really be a support for everyone and be a council who listens and stands with us. History always remembers those who stood strong for its community and its values; who protected smaller but significant community institutions .</p>
<p>The proposal to close De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer without any amalgamation offer reflects the council's lack of care or consideration for schools with higher levels of disadvantage in their school community. There aren't any other schools in easy walking distance which aren't church schools or part of the consultation process. The children who end up not having a place at their school will end up having to travel to a new school which they didn't choose. The council continue to protect the gentrified schools. We all know that in a couple of years once the dust settles they are going to sell off the school buildings. The council doesn't care about the communities in De Beauvoir or Randal Cremer because they don't reflect the type of people the council wants to have in Hackney. The type of people who will be living in the flats they make out of the school buildings in a couple of years. The council isn't Labour really, it's Tory Lite.</p>
<p>The proposed merger of Colvestone into Princess May is not a merger it is a closure of Colvestone with children being offered a place. My objections to this are the following:</p> <p>Partnership: Colvestone has entered into a partnership with Blossom Federation which has had a positive impact on Colvestone both financially, aethetically, structurally and most importantly academically. There should be time given to embed this partnership which will result in Colvestone being an attractive school to families - which it has until the pandemic - historically been. Working in partenship has also made the school more financially secure and stable. There are many benefits to the partnership from sharing of resourcing to financial management that have had an impact on Colvestone.</p> <p>Community school: Colvestone is a 1-form entry school in a quiet and safe street. There are no other 1 form entry non-faith school near by. It is importat to maintain a balance of non-faith schools in Hackney. It is also more likely that a 1-form entry would fill up than a 2 for entry school. In comparision to other schools that have gone from 2 form to 3 form colvestone has 'lost' less children and therefore could, with the current leadership and positive experiences when entering the building, build back up.</p>
<p>SEND - by proposing to send the children with SEND to Princess May there has been no consideration of the difficulty in taking a child on a longer walk across and alongside a major road. Also the small and supportive community has seen children with SEND flourish at Colvestone. This year there has been a positive impact as SEND is one of the schools strategy.</p>
<p>Loss of Money by council - there has been investment made in the building from the sand blasting of teh outside, the repacement of lead on the roof and the school hall being fixed. This along with the cost of mothballing a school, cost of redundancies and also the loss of any repayment of the deficit is a huge waste of money.</p>
<p>Part of the regeneration plan for Dalston - Colvestone is integral to the Dalston plan. The investement made takes into account the school and making a 21st century street. There is no consideration of this in the proposal.</p>
<p>The school has always been a fundamental part of the Ridley Road community and it shows the kids of the community life.</p>
<p>The school has come so far over the last few years and plays a big part in the local area. Some of the parents of the children were pupils at De Beauvoir themselves and have strong feelings for the school. To close De Beauvoir would be tragic and have a poor impact on the children who attend as well as the parents and staff.</p>
<p>The school has low uptake, perhaps because of second to last Ofsted review. Resources spent here could be better deployed to other local schools.</p>
<p>The school is a community hub for the area and it would be a terrible loss for cross cultural integration and cross curricular education to close it down.</p>
<p>The school is a very good school running for a lot of years now. My kids and I are unhappy with the decision that the school is closing. My child is attached to the teachers because of how friendly and helpful they are, making it a positive environment.</p>
<p>The school is an active part of the street and of the local community. Moreover, as Colvestone Crescent had been neglected in the past years, being one of the poorer maintained road in the neighborhood and therefore preferred spot for anti social behaviors, I fear the closure of the school will have a further negative impact on the street.</p>
<p>The school is an integral part of the community of the local area. The plans to close the school are shortsighted and more funds are needed to save this school and others like it. It isn't right that families from poorer areas of Hackney without the resources to help fund there schools are so detrimentally impacted by the governments cuts to public funding and investment. It should not be the responsibility of parents to protect schools it should be the first priority of government and local authorities.</p>
<p>the school is in perfect condition and is part of the heritage of Dalston and Hackney, it supports the merchants of the district and its inhabitants.</p>
<p>The school is part of the community and bring such a contrast within the Ridley Market area that's great for diversity. It also brings a sense of peacefulness in the area.</p>
<p>The school is part of the community and closing it will have huge damage on the community. The market won't be the same.</p>
<p>The school roll will change in time. This happens to my cousin family in Leeds. When the numbers went up again they had no places and children were bused to schools further away. Public educational building need to be used for education. Make the building a community arts centre and a school. Then the building has dual community uses. There are millions in funding available for the arts in communities like Hackney. You are not thinking ahead, being honest or looking after the interests of the community long term. I am really shocked by this lack of insight and expertise.</p>
<p>The school should remain open</p>

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<p>The school should remain open for the following reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the performance is good 2. staff is brilliant, helpful, understanding and always put children and families first. 3. Children are settled well and by closing the school it has created panic and stress for their children.
<p>The schools are all unique, caring and academically strong.</p>
<p>We need schools of all shapes and sizes within our community to keep it diverse and unique for all children.</p>
<p>They should not be treated as a mass of beings that all need to be trained in exactly the same way.</p>
<p>The schools are vastly different in culture and management. Princess May has a very bad reputation among schools and continues to say one thing and do another. ***** This is not how Colvestone would treat their parents or children. If Colvestone merge into Princess May I fear the culture *** has maintained will continue to affect more and more children in the borough, whether * remains *** or not. Colvestone has a more family oriented culture which will be lost at Princess May. Colvestone children will be done a disservice if they are to merge with Princess May.</p>
<p>The schools will be more populated and the children from both schools won't get along well. The teachers won't be able to support everyone as it will be a packed classroom. My child wants to swap schools but he doesn't understand the outcome because he is still young. We don't want our school to change. We like our school!!</p>
<p>There are a lot of parents and children from the school buying from my stall and if they close the school they won't come anymore - it will have a huge impact on my business - the school is part of Ridly Road community</p>
<p>There are both positive and negative effects to school amalgamations. Positive: increased resources, improved curriculum, larger population, enhance social interaction, extracurricular activities etc. However, I see challenges with student/staff experiences of adjustment, disruption during the process. Students need to be properly supported and needs must be met. The merging of different school cultures whilst creating a cohesive and inclusive environment. Communication is key and concerns should be considered. Possible job losses. Different leadership styles. Poor communication. Children may not identify with the school.</p>
<p>There are kids in the area which need the school</p>
<p>There is a covenant on the school building and the entire cartilage of its site stipulating the school site should be solely used as a school. For Colvestone Primary School to leave this site would be unlawful as it would be contrary to the covenant.</p>
<p>There is a covenant on the school building and the entire cartilage of its site stipulating the school site should be solely used as a school. For Colvestone Primary School to leave this site would be unlawful as it would be contrary to the covenant.</p>

PA 000 23025

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There is no good reason to force this closure on Colvestone Primary School. It is, I believe, unnecessary and wrong - misguided, myopic, and a needless violence.

Under new leadership Colvestone Primary has a lack of recent deficit: Blossom Federation - who also run three other schools successfully in the borough - are the new leadership of Colvestone Primary since 2022. The Federation has turned a budget surplus - despite a low pupil roll - in its first 6 months in charge. So doing Blossom Federation has shown that the school can be financially viable under its new leadership. We, as parents, carers and students, love the stability and improved facilities Blossom Federation has brought the school. Colvestone is financially viable in the future.

Colvestone Primary is core to the future of Dalston: it is situated central to your (now) approved policy 'Hackney's first 21st Century Street' on Colvestone Crescent. Without families, children and the school it was envisaged around, this street will be a tragic token. Furthermore, Colvestone Primary is situated just 200m from the recently approved Dalston 2033 development plans. To me and my family it feels wrong, simply bad policy, and tragically myopic of the council to close this successful, high-academic achieving community school, when plans are in place to build affordable housing, and create civic environments/streets designed to attract families but with no school within a short walking distance.

It is clear from the information we shared with you during our public meeting on April 24th, and the summary document we submitted in advance of the cabinet meeting on May 22nd that with the support of Hackney Council, Colvestone Primary can turn into an even more definitive example of a one-form entry, local authority school to attract pupils from across the borough, and beyond, in a pioneering future facing 21st century street.

As parents we worked hard to produce and submit that summary document of reasons to you in advance on the cabinet meeting on May 22nd 2023. Please read it if you have not done so, and take time (as professionals) to re-read it if you have time. In it you will find our additional evidence for why: Colvestone Primary should be taken off the list; and hackney Education's proposal is flawed.

As you will see, with careful planning, Colvestone can serve as an attractive local one-form community school that parents from the closed schools will want to send their children to. To re-iterate, as well as the lack of deficit under our new leadership, key reasons are as follows:

- Lack of parental choice

The closure of Colvestone (and nearby De Beauvoir) would mean there would be no non-faith, one-form entry local authority schools within a mile of the Colvestone building. Our local area would be dominated by religious schools, free schools and academies, which are currently not being considered for closure, regardless of numbers.

- Impact on the Dalston development plan

Colvestone plays a key role in the Council's development in Dalston. Closing Colvestone could have a significant impact on the new housing development and plans for greener pedestrian spaces. Closing Colvestone will also mark a tragic absence - children and families - in Hackney's 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent.

- Impact on children with special educational needs

Seven percent of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), well above the 4.3 percent average across the borough. Many of these children would find the transition particularly challenging. Closing a school with such an unusually high proportion of the most vulnerable children is cruel. In doing so, you are choosing to harm children.

- Air pollution

The Council is proposing to send students from Colvestone to Princess May, whose main playground is right next to the A10. The Council's (missing words - possibly "environmental report") shows Princess May had 40 percent higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO2) in 2021 than Colvestone. Adding more students to a school closer to the A10 with higher pollution levels is a backwards step in the effort to reduce children's exposure to air pollution. In doing so you are choosing to harm our children.

- Historical significance

Built in 1852, Colvestone is a Grade 2 listed building. Closing it would mean shutting the last surviving example of an important 19th century radical education movement. This is a loss of national significance.

Finally, we did not choose Princess May (it was a second choice school for only a very small percentage of Colvestone families). We do not want our children to go there, and like most families at Colvestone, will not send our children there. We chose and want our children to go to Colvestone Primary School, like all of the other families who send their children to this wonderful school.

As it is clear from the above, there is no reason to force this merger and closure on Colvestone and its families. Doing so, you are choosing to do lasting, life-long harm to children and families. Please do not act with such violence towards our children, us, and Colvestone's children and families. Please do not close Colvestone Primary School.

There is no point closing our school

There needs to be choices of schools - it's important to have different types of schools in a neighbourhood. Why are none of the schools in the proposed mergers and closures faith schools? They are emptier than community schools and it's very strange that Hackney council, which is a Labour council, is protecting them and sacrificing really good and old local school.

Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.

This proposal has made huge improvements already and it seems illogical that the council would sabotage its own actions by closing the school at the heart of the 21st century street.

There should be more choice in primary schools not less due to closure.

PA 09042031

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

<p>There's no point me reiterating all the many reasons why closing Colvestone is a bad idea because I don't think you're really listening anyway. But I will tell you this. My daughter, a student at Colvestone, was getting frustrated when I dragged her to yet another meeting related to trying to get the Council to listen to our arguments. She told me making all this effort to engage with the Council was a waste of my time and hers because no matter what we do the Council was going to close the school anyway. She's *** years old. At such a young age she is already cynical, already has no faith in democratic institutions and processes. She still believes in unicorns, but she doesn't believe in you. This is the lesson you are teaching hundreds of children across the borough, that elected officials lie, that democratic processes are phony, that engagement is fruitless and that they are powerless. So when they grow up and they don't want to vote or get involved with local government or when they turn to more extreme means to respond to societal problems you can know that you helped contribute their sense of hopelessness.</p>
<p>These are community schools</p>
<p>These are public local authority schools. Once closed, because of government policy, they can only reopen as academies, which are secretive schools outside democratic control. Many problems have recently come to light in Hackney academies. Working class and black students are less likely to thrive. It is very disruptive to children's education to uproot them from their school community. School staffs too will experience great disruption. Small classes and small schools are better for children's welfare. I find the financial arguments unconvincing.</p>
<p>These proposals as they currently stand offer no benefit to the children, parents, school staff, or the wider community. All this is as a result of this tory government's dogma of cut and cut again. Unfortunately Hackney Labour Council like a lot of Council's have carried out the bidding of this government which sanctifies profits above the needs of local populations. The Council should join with the parents the local community and the Trade Unions in common cause for the resources that are needed to to take advantage of smaller class sizes for the benefit of children's education.</p>
<p>These schools are these kids' safe space. Larger class sizes do not work for a lot of children. Families love their schools, their kids want to stay where they're happy.</p>
<p>They shouldn't close the school as they (parents and kids) are part of the community and if the school is closed it will have a huge impact on my business and the community</p>
<p>This a huge shame to the local area and the cost to maintain the property when it is no longer in use as a school, are far higher than simply investing in young families in the area and providing jobs and a local vibrancy</p>
<p>This fall in pupil numbers is a real opportunity to provide a proper education in smaller classes and should be welcomed. Why cram everyone together in large classes where it's all about crowd control when you can have smaller classes where children can be supported properly and actually achieve their full potential.</p>
<p>This is a fantastic school because of its size and the single form entry. This give the children an opportunity to mix with all years and have different friendship groups. Please keep this school open!!</p>
<p>This is a great decision for the Government</p>
<p>This is a hugely valuable school to the local community</p>
<p>This is a small school in a close-knit community. It is counterproductive for the area to close this school for many reasons. At primary level, small schools of this kind are very effective in promoting well-fare of the children and their families and of the community. While Colvestone seems to be a particularly small school at the moment, it is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. The school is also central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.</p>
<p>This is an excellent little school and worth saving in an age when bigger is not always better.</p>
<p>This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p>
<p>This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p>
<p>This is giving no consideration to Colvestone Community and to our children.</p>
<p>This is not a consultation process. The decision has already been made. There seems be no opportunity to amalgamate. Parents and staff have not been given adequate notice. It is opportunistic as undoubtedly the building will be sold to developers to turn into private housing for large amounts of Money. Children will have to attend new schools, siblings may have to attend different schools, which amalgamation would have avoided.</p>
<p>This is not an amalgamation: Colvestone primary school would effectively close. If it re-opens in the future, under current legislation it would do so automatically as a Free School, ran for profit by the private sector. This is a gateway to privatising education. Privatisation didn't work for trains, it's not going to work for primary schools. Colvestone is a small school offering amazing value for the local community, don't take that away.</p>
<p>This is short sighted and with proposals to make the surrounding area a pedestrian area will shoot that proposal in the foot! No school - no reason for it to be pedestrian! Short sighted and shameful closing this multi racial school down. Please reconsider this closure - it's such a happy and nurturing school it would be such a loss to this area!</p>
<p>This is the most incorrect proposal for closing the school. For us as parents it is very difficult to talk to children about this. My children are very sad. It is not right to take away the children's right to the school where they have spent their quality time there, they are happy and satisfied with their teachers. This is a bad decision of yours.</p>
<p>This isn't great. Colvestone is one of the only local feel intimate schools across Hackney. It's such a disappointment that it is even thinking of closing.</p>
<p>This proposal is a betrayal of hackney children. Sharing already limited resources will seriously impact on their educational progress. I have been a hackney resident my whole line and each of these schools has benefitted local community and ensure children do not have to travel miles to attend a school. This proposal should be scrapped</p>
<p>This proposal sound like a rushed decision by the Hackney Education council and very unprofessional in the sense that proactive steps should have been made long before now and the parents and members of public should have been involved long before this stage. This proposal/decision is only conducive and only sooth the Hackney Education board just to make them cover their inadequacy for not doing their job. It should not have gotten to this stage at all. I personally do not like or support this merger and I WILL NOT be taking my kids to the proposed merged school. In fact, my kids will not be schooling again in Hackney as it is clear that the Education board only care about the politics and not the effects it will have on kids and family. My *** kids are [SEND]. This is a massive disruption and having a year for the change is not right at all. You all new about this problem and didn't inform the parents long before now. What about the new houses been built around the school. Has consideration been given to when the statistics change.</p>
<p>This proposal will increase lack of confidence and self esteem as to children and parents.</p>
<p>This school had just had a lot of money spent on upgrading it. It is a family school. It has a very strong community and is the heart of Dalston. This area does not need another block of flats or whatever would be built in the beautiful listed building. Colvestone is the heart and soul of the area, so unique and charismatic. It is a safe haven for many children with disabilities and is truly rooted within the community.</p>

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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

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<p>This school has helped many children over the years, especially those with ecp plans when other schools lack in the help. Not only now are children going to lose their school place , they will get moved from their friends and social circles which are vitally important to them.</p> <p>All *** of my children attend here and they have all excelled in their subjects and that's thanks to the teachers who put 110% in and actually care about the children!</p> <p>The teachers are going to be out of their jobs some of the teachers have been there over 20 years!</p> <p>I don't see why you can't merge the 2 schools that your proposing to close, yes there may still not be loads of children but it will be better then closing 2 schools down and distrusting many people's lives.</p>
<p>This school has provided very local, community-focused, excellent education, in a truly multi-cultural, multi-religion setting, provided by local authority not private bodies, where children thrive and develop. The nursery alongside provides continuity from early years. The threat of closure has already been detrimental to children's progress and the local community. I note that of families I have talked with NONE had put Princess May as even their 3rd choice of school for their children! This school is central to a street with plans to become pleasanter, healthier, more community-focused. A further large housing development is due in Dalston soon; a number of these homes will have families and children wanting this local facility. Please keep what is local and good.</p>
<p>This school is a useful iconic and has so many memories for most people in this community past and present. It will be part of history for a lot of this communities and families who have been pupils there.</p>
<p>This school is at the heart of the local community and removing it will have a detrimental impact on the local area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area area, it is being unfairly targeted. It should be kept open to offer parents the choice. Whilst pupil numbers have dropped, there are huge building plans in Dalston and the families moving into the new homes will need a local school. The decision is very short-sighted.</p>
<p>This school is incredibly important to the Dalston Community. Amalgamation is not the answer.</p>
<p>This school should not be closed ever. Please reconsider this proposal.</p>
<p>This will adversely impact the tightly knit local community and in particular its young people. How can it make sense to close the school in light of plans to build 600 homes in the area? Wont there be children who move 8nto those homes?</p>
<p>This is a rare a valuable LA home. The budgetary constraints are known but we beg you not to close a community provision which once lost will be lost forever with lasting impacts for the community.</p>
<p>This will be devastating news to so many families. I'm extremely disappointed to hear that we are closing down schools, which are a pillar of our society. This will be seen as a failure of government, more than a failure of individual schools.</p>
<p>This will her extremely disruptive to all involved and result in the loss of Colvestone as an asset at the heart of the community. If streamlining is required I urge you to explore options for some partnership and shared facilities between these schools which retains their independent status rather than wholesale amalgamation.</p>
<p>This will reduce the care and wellbeing of children of Hackney</p>
<p>This would be terrible.</p>
<p>Those schools shouldn't be closed, while certainly there's enough financial support from the government. Hackney council shouldn't waste money such as Hackney fashion district which is an immense waste of money. Do not closed the schools, they are vitale to our community and children's future. It displaced family, and community resilience and spirits.</p>
<p>Three of my children currently attend this school. They are very happy everyday, the staff are very nice and friendly and push my children to reach their full potential. The headteacher is brilliant, always available and approachable to handle any concerns. I do not wish to change schools as I do not hear the same feedback from parents at other schools.</p>
<p>To some extent, I agree with the proposals as I do understand the reason behind merging the two school together due to financial reasons. However, to some extent I disagree with the proposals as well. I feel it will affect the children who are already at Nightingale Primary School, who have bonded and made strong friendships within the class. Having new staff and new children in the class will be overwhelming for the children. I will be very very disappointed if the class get divided; as I said the children of my child's class have bonded very well and all are very close to each other. I do not want schools merging together to affect my child's emotional and mental wellbeing.</p>
<p>Totally disagree with such decisions being made. Randal Cremer has been around for many years and has a huge reputation. We as a community definitely do not want this school to close. That sounds absurd! For one, I do not want the children's happiness to be taken away from them. As well as their education being affected, I believe a huge change like this will affect the students in their work. They are in a happy environment with the teachers and classmates they have grown with through-out the year. The amount of children that is attending from around the area, every single one will have a hard time moving schools, as well as the parents. I personally am extremely sad and anxious about such proposals and to not condemn this action. My little brother is currently at Randal Cremer and I do not want him to move into a new school! This will affect him hugely, especially mentally! I do not want his confidence to be taken away from him. I would like this to be taken into serious considerations and am totally against this proposal. Hoping this message will help give you understanding on such matter and make the right decision.</p>
<p>Unfortunately these schools have falling numbers of children attending. No fault of the schools problem across London. But the way school are funded it unfair to disportiontantly spend money on these few children when this money could be spread out amongst all Hackney schools.</p>
<p>Uprooting all these kids in the middle of a key development phase will not only cause distress to the child, but add more financial pressure onto each parent from having to buy new uniforms for their children and additional travel costs, which in this day and age is one more nail in the coffin</p>
<p>Very few parents from Colvestone will move their children to Princess May, if this merger goes ahead. They will seek to move to an alternative school. Therefore the number of children at Princess May will pretty much remain the same, meaning this amalgamation will not work to increase the number of children at Princess May.</p>
<p>We are about to have a kid. We need these primary schools to stay open. They are needed by families in Hackney.</p>

We are in favour of keeping Colvenston open

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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

We are writing to express our disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Dalston (Hackney) by Hackney Council.

We are very disheartened by this proposal and in the worst case scenario that this is going ahead, in total honesty, this will have a tremendous effect on [child]'s education and subsequently in * future academic life as * would take a really long time to adjust to a new setting and it will take years for [child] to re-access education. Princess May has never been a choice of us to move [child] to, it is a two forms school (too big and not safe for [child]), the school run would be too noisy and too dangerous, not a all a good school that would suit [child]'s need.

We believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children especially for our SEN children, parents and carers and the community in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.

We live on *** and have been part of the Dalston community for a long time, we love our diverse community. We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [child], who is *** years-old and [SEND] because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([child] has a experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [child] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [child] to be happy and settled in * school (** years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredible difficult impact on * and it will be practically impossible for * to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on * mental health.

Let me give you a brief history of [child]'s life so that you have an insight of where * is coming from:

[Child] was diagnosed at 2.5 years' old with [SEND] by Hackney Ark (with severe delays in communications, severe delays in social interactions and severe repetitive behaviour). [Child] regressed from age 18 months, * was prior to that stage able to say 5 words: Maman, Daddy, cheese, hello and bye (I am *** and [parent] *** - I only spoke *** to [child] from note to 2) and literally became non-verbal and lost * sounds capacity A, E, I, O, U, [child] was now only screaming, lost eyes contact and only presented with repetitive behaviours. With tremendous tenacity we managed to access straight away hackney services of Speech Therapy (once a week where Specs was implemented) and Portage ([child] attended the later services for one year, at home and at the Garden (in pre-school) once a week alternatively). At this point when I thought I would get back to my career I realised that [child] needed so much support and decided to stopped my career to support [child] full time and at this point I went on a mission and to become my child's therapist and a nucleus that would utilise all services offered and my own therapies. I taught myself an american therapy which is called ESDM (Early Start Denver Model), taking my child everyday to Gymboree (a pre-school private center) and implementing ESDM at the same time, helped also [child] to support * physical mobility as at this stage * upper-body and hands were going inwards (I used daily a home a school bench at home, making [child] copying me standing on one leg and other leg and also using a climbing wall we had at home). With all these combination of supports from hackney services and my own therapies, [child] progressed, we retrieved * eye contacts and * body posture developed now to a straight posture. At the end of the year, when [child] turned 3, Portage Coordinator asked me what we foresee for [child] academically and I expressed at this point that [child] could go mainstream to a nursery, which was 7mns from home, Portage facilitated transition to nursery and [child] entered nursery with an EHCP and worked hard at making sure * has all support needed so that * attend nursery. The setting kept on using pecs for promoting speech and in 2019, when [child] started to make the sound A, I, O, I found the Gemini therapy programme and within a month [child]'s perceptive communications improved tremendously. We have used this programme since then and [child] is now talking more, single words and understand everything we are saying to *. [Child] attended nursery for two years 3 days a week with allocated one to one.

We then chose Colvestone Primary School because it is a one form small school and just 5 mns from home. [Child] remained in one corner of the Reception class for a term and half and by the end of that year * had ventured in all corners of the school with a phenomenal support of * allocated TA. * attended Reception (with of course the pandemic, and attended school during the second lock-down)

When [Child] was in year *, after a week at school (***) * refused to go to school and leave the house, it took us 7 months to bridge * back to school and as you can imagine, it was a real isolated work for us as [child] didn't want to go out anymore but with great effort, determination and tedious work we thankfully managed for [child] to be happy going out and then managed to bridge * back to school, with the School Senco we worked very hard collaboratively to get [child] back and * did for the end of year one. [Teacher] has done a tremendous work. Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support which as you may have heard from other families is not a given, [child] has an EHCP and now a level 5 in funding which goes towards * SEN and * needs to be cared by someone all the time.

But even thought, we have all in place on paper, the tremendous work we have had to do with the school in order to secure [child] 's support has been a real effort, as well as working hard to make sure that [child] is happy attending Colvestone and this in view to attend * years at Colvestone to year ***.

To be honest I can't believe we have to write this and the idea of this plan going ahead is very difficult for us and we are trying not to think about it! We have put a considerable effort for the past *** years for [child] to be finally happy where * is.

We know our child feels safe and happy at Colvestone, * receives a wonderful SEN support with a fantastic experienced SEN one to one *** and a brilliant *** **. Moving our child to another school will be strongly difficult and disruptive in our child's education and have consequences on * achieving long term education goals. And it will take us years to get to where we are and by then, it will be the end of primary school. This will literally damage all the hard work we have put together for the past *** years. I hope you realise the difficulty of what we have to do on a daily basis to get to where we are. We are working hard at [child] 's school foundation so that * can thrive in the future and become the astronaut * want to be (I asked lately [child] what * wanted to be and * astonishingly responded to me: "Astronaut" and repeatedly saying: "Captain ***, to the rescue".

In January, [child] was awarded a Colvestone's Achiever for:

"[Child] enjoys the creative aspects of the curriculum. In art lessons and in Music, [child] shows good level of engagement. [Child] takes part in daily phonics lessons where * is exploring environmental sounds with * peers. [Child] enjoys drawing and will often draw pictures that are detailed in design. [Name] has drawn pictures linked to * favourite stories, such as "Class *** at the Zoo". Which * enjoys listening to and reading alongside the adult, some of the known phrases. [Child] takes part in PE lessons and will join the class line when * knows that it is time for PE. Well done [child]! - [Child] went to receive * award in front for Y***/Y*** assemlée.

In April [Child] was awarded 100% attendance Award, there again [child] during full school assemble stood up when * name was called and went to receive * award and came back to sit with everyone else aside *** Yes 100% attendance! Incredible! What a journey, what an amazing achievement! And this done to the wonderful work of the school, one to one, Senco, staffs and the Leadership team, *** and team. [Child] has received a fantastic report for this year and this is done to the great work of ***, *** ([Child]'s one to one) with our constant support to take [child] to school and support * with learning at home.

Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, which we strongly beleive in and is required. We strongly hope that our wonderful Colvestone Primary School can stay open and all is done to support our school and for our [child] to keep accessing education as well as all the SEN children and all the children.

The council is making such a fundamental mistake in planning on closing Colvestone:

- Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.

Princess May 43035

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<p>We believe it is a huge mistake closing De Beauvoir! It is such a wonderful community school, with amazing staff and children. Our [child] went there and our [child] has year *** left to go. There are many kids and families at De Beauvoir who need additional support and I worry that they won't continue getting such dedicated levels of support if the school closes and they have to find new schools. Why can't Colvestone merge into De Beauvoir? De Beauvoir has space and the schools are near to each other.</p>
<p>We chose Nightingale largely due to the fact it was a single form entry school and our child does not thrive in environments that are too busy or noisy. We feel quite strongly that the proposed merger will have a negative impact on his confidence, security and ability to learn.</p>
<p>We don't want the school to close.</p>
<p>We have an amazing school with amazing staff. We maybe a small school but we are valued. I could have sent my child to any school, Morningside is the end of my road. But I didn't I chose to send her to Baden Powell as its a better school with good of steady. Even during covid the school was beyond supportive and after they worked hard to help our children be where they should be. I could not be more grateful for Baden Powell it is an experience you will not receive anywhere else. Please do not deprive other parents and future children this wonderful experience.</p>
<p>We have customers who come all day with their children because they come from Colvestone school, they shop in my business, buy trainers, tracksuits, sweaters. If you close the school, I will lose all of my customers.</p>
<p>We have lived in Dalston for the last 16 years. Next year our daughter will go to school. We wanted to send her to Colverstone primary. We will not consider Princess May as it's too big and next to a main road. We will instead consider moving out of Hackney to find a more family friendly environment. The other day I spoke to *** from local council, even * agreed that nobody wants this merger.</p>
<p>Please do not take an affluent small neighbourhood away from Dalston. The result will be a corporate class moving in replacing the families. Dalston will be for bankers and city clerks who want cocktail bars. Preserve Colverstone Primary and Ridley Road Market as areas of the community.</p>
<p>Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. • Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. • Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.
<p>We have more and more beautiful children being born and we need more schools not close them down.</p>
<p>We need local authority schools serving the community.</p>
<p>We need more primary schools and spaces and smaller class sized. Closing down schools is also a detriment to the local community.</p>
<p>We should be encouraging families to stay in Dalston, not closing local authority schools at the heart of the community.</p>
<p>We should be keeping schools local & small. Creating bigger schools does not support students with additional needs & will cause significant stress to many having to move.</p>
<p>Once a school is shut, it will most likely never re-open again.</p>
<p>It is a loss to our community & distills the creativity & uniqueness of each school. We should be fighting to keep them open.</p>
<p>We want to move from De Beauvoir to Colvestone. Please KEEP IT OPEN!</p>
<p>We will lose Colvestone - we love the school, it is part of our community</p>
<p>We will not be sending our child to Princess May school. Absolutely no chance we are sending our child to a school on one of the busiest roads in London. We are also extremely unhappy regarding the process the council has taken in putting forward this proposal; in particular the lack of alternatives for a school like colvestone</p>
<p>What will be happening to the buildings once those 4 schools close?</p>
<p>Where are all these kids going to go? I don't want my kids in a class where 35 kids is the norm. You are pushing families out of central London. This is gentrification in full effect.</p>
<p>While I appreciate the problems associated with falling numbers in the Borough, I am also aware of the recent increase of young professional adults in Dalston and am certain that the birthrate in the Borough will be starting to increase. It will be tragic if there are no local schools to send their young children.</p>
<p>My children went to Colvestone. It was a 4-minute walk to a beautiful building. A very mixed demographic. A lovely community and a strong sense of identity. Friends just around the corner. Having to go further away for ones early school experience would interfere with these important early life experiences. Important bonds between the parents would be harder to forge for similar reasons.</p>
<p>Primary schools must above all be local.</p>
<p>Furthermore, smaller class sizes are better for young children. As I understand it, Colvestone has a relatively large proportion of children with additional needs. The small size of the school gives them a better chance to develop skills and confidence.</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Whilst falling school rolls may be a fact, the plan to close Colvestone Primary School is a badly thought through response.

To date, the 'consultation' process has been unclear and feels like a sham. And worse than this – that a Labour administration is primarily targeting and closing local authority schools is unforgivable.

If the Council does close Colvestone primary it will have a deeply felt impact on the local community. We have received huge support for our campaign including 2,100 signatures on our petition, press stories from across London, UK and Europe, but critically a real sadness from local people about the short-sighted actions of Hackney Council.

We are constantly told that Hackney Education is one system, that needs to meet the needs of all our schools - including Academies, Free Schools and Faith Schools. But the only perception we have is that local authority schools have been unfairly targeted in these proposals. If there is ONE system - then it needs to be considered as A WHOLE. Not in this piecemeal manner, crudely picking off the easiest, and smallest targets.

As a result, the plans have not been properly thought through. The 'term' merger does not fool anyone. It is a closure of Colvestone with a presumption that our pupils will transfer to Princess May. This is not borne out in our consultation with parents and carers at Colvestone - and betrays a real lack of understanding behind parental choice. There is a real demand for a single form entry Local Authority school in Hackney. That need should be respected and met. Colvestone IS that school.

Colvestone Primary is a unique opportunity for Hackney!

We understand the pressures of falling pupil numbers. But a way of addressing this is not to simply force children into schools with empty spaces – but to attract them back into vibrant, caring community based environments. After a period of disruption, Colvestone has turned a corner. We have just had significant investment in the physical structure of the school with the Grade 2 listed building restored and accessible. Colvestone has a new and highly successful partnership with the Blossom Federation. Having returned the school to be running in surplus for at least the next two years, the new leadership team has proven itself, and the school is benefitting from its new partnership. The school is academically strong as shown by my [child]'s excellent Sats results last week.

We need very few pupils to join our school to make a massive difference. There are a number of factors that could affect this – but as no 'creative' or positive solutions have been proposed in the Strategy – these appear to have been individually discounted and their cumulative effect not considered.

For example, the proposed closure of nearby De Beauvoir Primary, a 700m walk away, could have a substantial impact on us. Keeping Colvestone open would give parents at DeBeauvoir an option that is close to them, is small and non-denominational like DeBeauvoir and has enough space to allow friend and family groups to remain together. This, could have been prepared for if it was not for the threat of closure that also hangs over our head. Again the manner and nature of the proposal put forward is itself the most damaging factor in Colvestone's continued turnaround of its fortunes, both financial and in pupil numbers.

Colvestone Primary School is in the centre of the Dalston Plan which commits to building 600 new homes in Dalston, with nearly 200 being affordable 3-bedroom family homes. The overwhelming majority of these will be built at Kingsland Shopping Centre, with a number of smaller development sites nearby. For almost all the new developments, Colvestone would be the closest school.

Colvestone Primary School is also central to the pioneering decision to turn Colvestone Crescent into a 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, spaces for congregating and innovative play spaces. Councillor Mete Coban confirmed that work is due to commence as early as next year. This would in no doubt further improve Colvestone's appeal as a destination school and be a showcase for Hackney's commitment to the future. A small, village school, in the heart of Hackney on a pollution-reduced, tree lined 21st Century street. What's not to like?

We firmly know and believe that closing Colvestone would be a bad decision, not just for the school, but for Hackney too. It does so little to address the over capacity of the system. So why close a genuinely diverse, financially-viable school with a recently much-improved parental offer and an academic record that outperforms Borough and National averages? When simply removing the threat of closure could be a springboard to the financial viability that is attainable.

Why are families not being consulted or involved in any of the decisions?

Why do you close a school after you leave children to spend 1 to 5 years there. Then you decide to close it. Why not leave all the children to finish their primary school and do not let any more children join this school, and after 6 years when everyone has finished then you can close it for good because this is unfair for the kids and parents.

Why is this proposal being made

why merge a good school that is perfect for SEN children to a big school that would increase their anxiety, chances of being bullied, not enough time for their learning, higher level of noise pollution that these kids can't cope with, high level of dangerous location (princess may school location). don't merge colvestone primary school pls. it is a safe haven for our children.

Why shut down a good school that has served the community so well for so many decades. The staffs and teachers are friendly, dedicated and helpful, the children attitude to learning is fantastic. Also in colvestone, the air and noise pollution is minimised. It also a school where the children with special needs are being looked well after.

Without the school many children with special needs are going to suffer greatly. Children with autism in particular are going to feel the effects in very negative ways. Not only will they not receive the wonderful educational benefits of the small school environment. But also the upheaval in their day to day routine that will set them back. Some to the point of not being able to cope with a new travel route, larger environment, bigger classes. Not having the trained staff needed.

Would be a crying shame for the kids to lose this special school that supports so many families

Yes I agree

We need more housing

Ore more business

Ore more green spaces

P 43237

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

You can't close schools, what happens if there is a population increase - where will the children go. This affects my child's education..never mind the fact that your poor housing policy - which has led to a lack of affordable and social homes in hackney is largely to blame for this.

You have no clue what you are doing

You're dressing this up as a 'merger' but it a closure, pure and simple. You have no intention of taking any Colvestone teaching staff who children (particularly those with SEN)are familiar and happy with.

There is no parental choice being told your child is going to Princess May with the only other alternatives in the area with current space being a free school or faith school.

Paul Senior - Princess May is not a 'good offer'

Comments on Proposals - Email

Dear all,

I am extremely concerned that the informal consultation documentation sent out to schools has not been provided in other languages for parents/families for whom English is not their first language. This is hugely disadvantageous for a large number of parents and carets who will be unable to express their views.

In fact if a school or family want it in another language the only way to do so is buried on the final page : "If you require this document in a different format please contact us and we will get back to you in the next five working days." Which obviously if English is not your first language or a language you fluently read and speak would be difficult to find and understand.

I know that this was raised by *** after the first parental engagement documents and I raised this when I was sent the document at the end of last week.

Other schools must have the same concerns. Already we have had parents/families who are unsure of what is happening as they are unable to read this. The least we would expect is for the documents to be available in the main languages spoken in Hackney or for the census information submitted by the schools to be used to ensure that the documentation would be produced in other languages. Alongside that adjustments should also have been made for families who are unable to read in English or their home language as well.

Please can you let us and the other schools know how this will be rectified.

Many thanks

Colvestone Primary School

Hello Hackney,

De Beauvoir is an old school. It has something to offer to the community.

For historic reasons alone, please keep De beauvoir for the coming generations. Let it reach 200 years. it is nearly there.

Hackney, WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT!!

A parent

I wish to object to the closure of Colvestone Crescent School and THE AMALGAMATION OF

COLVESTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH PRINCESS MAY

PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM SEPTEMBER as from 2024

1. A crucial part of the community in Dalston and Hackney.
2. Proving the community a place for their children to be educated which is close by to their residents
3. Will have a detrimental effect on the education of so many important younger members of the community
4. A historic school that will probably now be converted into another block of flats
5. A local community school and should not be closed
6. Good ofsted reports and will have a detrimental impact on all the current and future children who will be given a crucial educational
7. A decision based on cost saving and not the requirements of the community

An absolutely outrage.

To whom it may concern,

Please see the attached response and objection to the proposal of a closure of Colvestone primary school and merger/amalgamation with Princess May Primary School from the Colvestone Governing body.

Also attached are the objections from the parent / carer group Save Colvestone Primary School which you should have also received separately.

Please confirm receipt of this email by replying to this email address,

Many thanks,

Colvestone Primary School

In partnership with Blossom Federation

[Attachment: Objections to the Informal Consultation by Hackney Council to 'merge' Colvestone Primary School on the

Princess May site. See Additional Responses Report appendix 2]

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Hi there.

Attached our response to the consultation regarding schools in Hackney.

Please can you confirm safe receipt?

Thanks.

[Attachment: Save Colvestone. See Additional Responses Report appendix 3]

Hello all

Hope you are well. Thanks again for the time given to Colvestone parents at Cabinet. I have had a few questions from parents regarding the pre-consultation and next steps for Colvestone.

I understand that a meeting is scheduled for 27th June but none of you will be in attendance, parents would like the opportunity to continue discussions with you as key decision makers - particularly after the responses & engagement at cabinet. I wasn't aware of the meeting on the 27th - are ward councillors being informed of meetings & activities in schools in their wards? They would also like to know a bit more about the format of the meeting on 27th.

Other questions/ comments:

Will responses / input sent in previously count during this consultation phase or do they need to be sent again?

Consultation response format is very structured and does not really allow for real consultation. The consultation is structured to only give comments about individual schools in response to restricted questions. Will you be expecting input in other formats?

There are also the emails from *** who is yet to receive a response, *** emailed again on 19 June.

Best wishes

[Council member]

PA99943739

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Dear Councillors Caroline, Antoinette and Mayor Granville

I hope my emails finds you well.

I am reaching out to follow up the council meeting we attended two weeks ago.

I was hoping to be in touch sooner than now, however with half term holidays and busy work, it has been a challenge finding time to compose my thoughts and an email.

To put a face on this email, I am ***** and was at the council meeting accompanied by my son ***.

Firstly I would like to thank you for the impromptu meeting outside the chambers, all be it brief, it was great to be able to have a bit of a conversation regarding the situation we are in, as we were unable to do so during the official meeting, and have not been given much opportunity to discuss our concerns.

I must admit that I am extremely disheartened that the meeting as well as the whole process of the consultation, feels very much like a done deal.

We do not feel heard, we do not feel supported by the council, we do not feel like we matter.

During the meeting in chambers I mentioned how disappointed we have been upon receiving a standardised reply to most of the emails we have sent yourselves and the rest of the councillors and team working on this consultation.

I am hoping that this email will receive a more detailed reply to the actual questions I am going to be asking.

To make it easier I will bullet point the subjects and highlight my actual questions in blue, so that there is nothing missed.

*Please note that capitals are used in the email only for emphasis and not in frustration :)

Regarding SEND services and the creation of an APR unit in Colvestone:

As I mentioned in my email dated 25th of April, there are currently only two schools in Hackney that have an APR unit and they are both two form, and oversubscribed.

I understand that there are more APR's being created, but those are again in naturally unsuitable, very busy and overwhelming two form schools.

Colvestone would be AN IDEAL candidate for an APR. PLEASE I implore you to consider the possibility of creating such a unit in our school.

If the council really cares about SEND kids and wishes to support them in getting the education they have a legal right to, they need to acknowledge the scientifically proven fact that SEND kids do better in smaller, less busy environments.

Question 1: Why is the council ignoring this scientific fact and refusing the right to a suitable education to these SEND children? Why is the school not considered for an APR unit and what do we have to do to make it so?

Regarding the Deficit of the School and Due diligence from Hackney council:

During our informal chat outside chambers I cheekily asked Councillor Bramble if she could promise that if one school was to be saved it will be Colvestone. She replied something along the lines of: "How would it look if we save the school with the biggest deficit?"

It is my understanding that Colvestone pupil numbers have been falling over the last 5 years, however the deficit of the school dates prior to that, and that it is one of the highest deficits in the Hackney area. This deficit was created whilst the school was at full capacity.

Fast forward to the current academic year, where the school is operating with a reduced capacity and therefore reduced income, but has a better management and is managing to be viable.

Question 2: When the deficit first appeared in the school, why did Hackney council continue to pour money into the school but did nothing about auditing the books and checking how the deficit was created in a fully subscribed school. Was due diligence done in this instance?

According to the reasoning behind this merger, a school that is not full can not sustain itself. Why was then a full school not sustaining it self? Why did Hackney not investigate when this deficit was being created?

Regarding the merger with Princes May:

During the impromptu chat we had outside chambers, Mayor Granville said something along the lines of: "it is interesting that parents from Colvestone are really opposed to their children attending Princes May- we had not realised"

How can that be the first instance the Mayor was made aware? How can he not be aware of our preferences and opinions regarding Princes May when:

1) We were very clear during the meeting at the school on the 24th of April. ***, one of the Y3 parents specifically asked Paul Senior " what will the council do if we all refuse to send our kids there?"

2) I mentioned it in my original email on the 25th of April to all of you.

3) It is included in the 62 page document we have composed and send you prior to the council meeting. We run a sensor and the results were overwhelming. Not only parents do not wish to send their kids to Princes May, but they never had the school in their choice of schools when applying. Please see a more detailed analysis in the folder we have already provided.

Question 3: Has the Mayor actually seen our dossier? Is he now in possession of all our evidence and campaign points?

Question 4: What will the council do when most of the Colvestone families refuse to go to Princes May?

Question 5: When can we expect to have a further meeting with the council regarding the consultation and what is the council planning on doing to ensure that there is an open channel of communication?

There are many other points that we would like to discuss but if I can get some answers on my above questions it would be a great start.

Thank you all for your time, I appreciate this is a challenging task for you all.

I very much look forward to hearing from you

Best wishes

PA 0909 24035

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Dear Anntoinette,
I hope you are very well. Thank you for the updates on the proposed school closures.
I'm getting in touch as residents and ward members have raised the issue of the school buildings and what might happen to them. They are concerned first of all that these historic schools could be closed at all, leaving us with less local authority run schools in a borough with a high proportion of academies, which are harder to hold to account and often do not recognise unions and employ staff on less favourable contracts (such as Mossbourne Primary, who hires new staff on less favourable contracts than the previous local authority school on the site ever did, leading to old staff on old contracts anecdotally feeling hounded out). Residents have asked for guarantees that any closed schools will not be sold off and turned into flats, which would leave us in a difficult situation if the population of children were to increase and we wanted to reopen a school on the same site.
Do you have any information or guarantees about the sites that I could share with residents?
Thank you very much, [Council member]

Dear all,
Re: Consultation, Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy - falling rolls, parent consultation, April 24th 2023
I am writing again to request the financial modelling data and projected budgets prepared by Hackney Education that challenge the projected budgets submitted by Colvestone Primary School / Blossom Foundation prior to the pre-informal consultation phase of the above consultation.
These materials were requested in the public meeting at Colvestone on April 24th, 2023. Paul Senior (Interim Director of Education and Inclusion) stated then that the financial modelling and projected budgets prepared by Hackney Education in regards to Colvestone Primary School would be sent at speed to the Governing Body. In the Council's minutes of that meeting, page 193 of the Public Information Pack prepared prior to the Cabinet meeting on the 22nd May, you will see the response to this request summarised as follows:
'We can make this information available to the Full Governing Body [action] if they haven't received it already.' (Red highlight in original).
We are still waiting for these materials over 2 months later. You will also note that we are now almost half-way through the informal consultation period and we have still not received this information - despite the school, governing body and parental body requesting it both in private meetings, by email, and in public engagement events.
We have been repeatedly told by the Interim Director of Education and Deputy Mayor Bramble that 'financial viability' is the key determinant of Colvestone being in frame of this consultation. How Hackney Education's modelling and budget projections for Colvestone differ from those prepared by the school are therefore essential in understanding why Colvestone is in the consultation - and to allow stakeholders to democratically interrogate the modelling and assumptions made by Hackney Education to arrive at the conclusions they have. Without this information it is impossible to know how Hackney's projections differ from the School's own or to scrutinise the Council's methodology.
Given that this modelling is so central to the Council's case it must have been prepared - the response from the Interim Head of Education implies that it has been, its forwarding to the Governors a formality. Why are we still waiting for this vital piece of financial modelling that underpins Hackney Education's case for including Colvestone in the current consultation?
Given that we have already been waiting over two months for this, I would appreciate this budgeting, financial modelling data and analysis being forwarded to us (I'm cc'ing *** from our Board of Governors if you would prefer to send it to *) by the end of the week (30th June 2023) so that we have time to digest it and respond before the end of the consultation period.
If this modelling and projected budgeting has not been prepared, I would appreciate a response from Group Director (Children and Education) Jacquie Burke, within the same timeframe, to explain why it has not been - given how fundamental we have been informed it is to Hackney Education's decision to consult on closing Colvestone Primary School.
I have cc'd *** and *** from the Scrutiny Commission, who heard us request these materials again yesterday and are scrutinising this consultation. I am also cc'ing *** from Governance, Cllrs Bramble and Woodley who were present at the meeting on the 24th April (the Deputy Mayor having responsibility for the preparation of the above-named report) and the school's local elected Councillors. My apologies for filling everyone's inbox, but it has been extremely frustrating attempting to get anyone to honour this straightforward request and promised reply.
I thank you in advance for your rapid response.
Best wishes, yours sincerely

Save Colvestone Primary School

PARAG 361

Consultation On Amalgamation Or Closure Of Six Hackney Primary Schools

Additional Responses & Engagement Workshops

Report Date: September 2023

Report author:

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Additional Consultation Responses

Introduction

Additional responses to the consultation were received by email, sent to school.sufficiency@hackney.co.uk, Council members and the Mayor's Office. The comments in the additional responses have been classified in line with Kwest's qualitative analysis classifications.

Responses

A total of 9 additional responses were received by email during the informal consultation period (5 June to 16 July 2023.)

Key themes identified

The chart below presents the key themes identified across the additional responses.

Classification key theme	
General statements:	13
Criticism of consultation / expectation buildings will be sold	5
Comments on the decision to consult & wider context	4
General comment that do not want school to close / amalgamate	4
Positive comment about existing schools:	13
School is at the heart of local community	5
Staff go the extra mile / school has a good reputation / facilities	3
Existing school provides good support for children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities)	2
Small class sizes / schools are better for children	2
Other positive comment about existing schools	1
Other:	7
Comments about school places:	6
Demographics of population can change	2
Impact of free schools / and religious schools in the area on enrolment at the school(s).	2
Other comment about school places	1
Other local schools do not have many spaces	1
Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:	5
Move will negatively affect children	2
Parents will need support with paperwork etc	1

Impact on staff and potential loss of jobs	1
Other negative comment about other schools / process of moving	1

Overview of comments

A summary of the comments within the additional responses is provided below. Where the responses were significantly longer and included comment on a larger number of issues, a summary of the key themes has also been provided. Please note that Hackney Education responded directly where questions were raised by email respondents about the proposals or consultation process.

Responses related to Colvestone Primary School

Response 1

The respondent raised an equality concern regarding the translation of consultation documents and support for parents/families for whom English is not their primary language. The respondent requested for information to be translated.

Response 2

The respondent objected to the closure of Colvestone and amalgamation with Princess May. The respondent stated that the school is a “crucial part of the community in Dalston and Hackney” and that it is close to residents, that the closure will be detrimental to children’s education, that the school is a historic school and expressed concern that flats would be built on the site, that it has good Ofsted reports and lastly, that a decision should not be made for cost saving reasons.

Response 3

The respondent requested financial modelling data and Hackney Education projected budgets. The email states that this information had first been requested during the Colvestone engagement session in April 2023, prior to the consultation, and requested the data be provided before the end the consultation period. The respondent states that: “How Hackney Education’s modelling and budget projections for Colvestone differ from those prepared by the school are therefore essential in understanding why Colvestone is in the consultation - and to allow stakeholders to democratically interrogate the modelling and assumptions made by Hackney Education to arrive at the conclusions they have.”

Response 4

Submitted by the governing body of Colvestone Primary School, the document sets out objections and concerns over the proposed closure of Colvestone. The document notes that the governing body does not view the proposals as an amalgamation as the proposals only offer children a place at Princess May and do not include an amalgamation of staff and education. The document also states the view that the term “merger/amalgamation” has been chosen by the Council to avoid being seen to close four schools. The objections are divided into two parts. The full document is provided in Appendix 2.

Part 1 refers to the Hackney Education webpage on the proposals and responds to the

following factors considered by the Council when considering alternatives and solutions to the proposals. It raises objections and concerns related to:

- School at financial risk
 - Objections: The response states that the school has indicated it is financially viable for 2023/24; the partnership with Blossom Federation enables financial savings and has the potential to continue beyond the next academic year; there is an in year surplus this year and for two years running; and there has been significant capital investment in the last financial year and so no additional costs will be required in the future.
 - Concerns: The response states that final SMRA data has not been taken into account and was commissioned to make cost savings; the data was used unfairly to support closing Colvestone; and that Colvestone has future-proofed with recent capital investments.
- Number of vacant places
 - Objections: The response states that more children could attend Colvestone in reception if De Beauvoir closes, due to oversubscription of other local schools; that there would have been more interest in the school this year following partnership and repairs work; that it would be easier to fill a one form entry school; there has been less movement of pupils this year compared to pandemic years; and that many parents have remained at Colvestone despite the proposals.
 - Concerns: view that Hackney Education modelling was not accurate and the changing circumstances of the school have not been taken into account.
- Physical size of school
 - Objections: States that Colvestone has the ability to provide high quality education as a 1 form entry school on an “appropriately sized” site with all aspects of the site utilised and in a manageable condition; and proposes that the school keeper’s house could be used as an ARP.
 - Concerns: States that no risk assessment or costs of the size of schools has been done, or comparisons of schools.
- Geographic partnership
 - Objections: States that Princess May was selected as a merger site based on distance and that other nearest schools are church schools with full ARP; comments on the proximity of schools in the proposals (Colvestone, De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer); sets out concern about the route to Princess May and the proximity of the playground to the A10 and the impact of pollution; and states that Princess May is not geographically closer for many families.
 - Concerns: States that pollution has not been considered; and parents/carers have not been surveyed about their preferences.
- New neighbourhoods and new builds create significantly more need for school places in the future
 - Objections: The response refers to plans for 600 new homes in Dalston; shares view that Hackney Education and Planning do not have a coordinated strategy and belief that the school is key to planning aims; similarly, refers to Colvestone school as a part of aims for Colvestone Crescent, 21st Century street; and states view that the 21st Century street would bring more families to the area and school.
 - Concern: States that there has not been a discussion of the role of the school in the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Streets.
- Current OFSTED grades and predicted outcomes for children
 - Objections: The response refers to the ‘Good’ Ofsted rating; and to significant improvements at the school in EYFS data.

- Concerns: States that schools have been told that Ofsted grades are not relevant as the majority of Hackney schools are good or outstanding.
- Community impact
 - Objections: Located near Ridley Road Market, the response raises the historic significance of the area; the school is a Birkbeck school and is of historical significance.
 - Concerns: The response shares the belief that the local community has not been consulted; and again raises concerns regarding the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Street.

Part 2 states that the merger/amalgamation with Princess May has no benefits for Colvestone. The objections cover the following points, referencing the benefits of a merger stated by Hackney Education

- Context [of the Colvestone as part of the Blossom Federation]
 - Part 2 highlights successes and achievements of the school as part of the Blossom Federation. The objection states that “The deficit, the restructuring of support staff and the lack of infrastructure in the school to support teaching learning was a direct result of the previous federation.”
- Creation of one new, stronger school community, maximising the funding available to it
 - Objection: The response quotes a parent survey and states 100% of parents surveyed believe that the Blossom partnership has had a positive impact; and raises the positive impact of the partnership on the governing body.
 - Concerns: The respondents believe this has not been considered by Hackney Education in the Cabinet proposals; and the response states that governors were told that the school would have been considered for closure, if not for the Blossom partnership.
- Increased specialist expertise from a wider teaching and pupil support team
 - Objections: The response states that specialist expertise is already in place through the Blossom Federation.
 - Concerns: The respondents believe that the partnership has not been considered by Hackney Education.
- Increased potential for school improvement and targeted support in response to local needs
 - Objections: The response states that teaching and learning has improved with the development of middle leaders supported by the executive head and head of school.
 - Concerns: Questions Hackney Education processes to ensure a school does not have a deficit and states that issues were not raised in a remote audit.
- Stronger finances, with consistent resources and stable staff workforce
 - Objections: Colvestone has identified a surplus this year; the surplus has come from funding from the Schools Contingency Fund, which it had not previously accessed and objects to the suggestion that the surplus has been achieved due to emergency intervention from the Council; the respondents believe that Colvestone budgets are achievable and states that systems are in place to resolve historic debts; surplus has been achieved despite historic debts and again the respondents raise questions about the Hackney Education audit; it is also stated that the federation delivers IT support and PE support.
 - Concerns: The respondents ask whether any schools have gone into deficit within a year.

Key themes:

- Comments about school places:
 - Demographics of population can change
 - Other local schools do not have many spaces
 - Impact of free schools / and religious schools in the area on enrolment at the school(s).
 - Other comment about school places
- General statements:
 - Comments on the decision to consult & wider context
 - General comment that do not want school to close / amalgamate
- Positive comment about existing schools:
 - School is at the heart of local community
 - Staff go the extra mile / school has a good reputation / facilities
- Other
 - Other comments raised in the summary that do not fit into the key themes are included in the summary above.

For the full comments provided in the Objections document, see Appendix 2.

Response 5

The Save Colvestone document was submitted twice by email.

Save Colvestone states that Colvestone Primary School is a pillar of the community and should be able to continue in its role. The document details reasons for the school to remain open, opposition to the proposed merger with Princess May, and raises multiple questions regarding the decision to include Colvestone in proposals and raises criticism about the consultation process. The summary below provides an overview of the issues and arguments raised in the document. Headings are taken from the document. The full document is provided in Appendix 3.

- Key benefits of Colvestone remaining open
 - The response states that Colvestone as an academically strong, non-denominational, one-form entry school and the attraction of Colvestone to Dalston families.
 - Keeping Colvestone open is an opportunity for Hackney Council to recover the budget deficit.
 - The response discusses the role of Colvestone Primary School within the Dalston Plan and Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street.
 - Provision of non-faith education at Colvestone, quoting a survey of resident support.
 - States that there is strong SEND provision at Colvestone.
 - Keeping Colvestone open would avoid the costs associated with closing the school and paying off the deficit.
 - View that Colvestone remaining open reassures residents that their views have been considered and increases faith in consultation processes.
- Key risks of closing Colvestone
 - The response states that closing Colvestone exposes pupils to air pollution at Princess May.
 - Comments on the negative impact of closing/amalgamating schools at once and cost impact.
 - Comments on the cost of closing schools.
 - Again discusses the role of Colvestone Primary School within the Dalston Plan.
 - Suggests that the closure will also negatively impact developers associated

- with the Dalston Plan.
- States that there will be a lack of school places in the area, with the proposed closure of De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer.
- Raises concern that Colvestone could be reopened as a free school.
- States that it will have a negative impact on children with SEND.
- States that it will have a negative impact on school engagement and Emotionally Based School Avoidance and damage the local community
- Challenges GLA predictions.
- States that the closure would have an impact on faith in the Council and Labour Party.
- Flaws in the consultation process
 - View that the consultation did not follow statutory guidance or the Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy.
 - View that the Cabinet Briefing Report did not include sufficient detail.
 - View that the design of the consultation is ineffective.
 - View that the consultation was inaccessible to some groups.
 - View that the consultation process has been damaging to the schools in scope.
- Reports and underlying data
 - Resubmission of the full report prepared in the pre-engagement stage, May 2023 (referred to as the 'pre-informal' stage of the consultation.) The document states that the views in the report were not considered in the Cabinet report ahead of the decision to informally consult.
 - The Case for Colvestone Primary School
 - Addressing falling role
 - Positive financial management
 - Strong Academic record
 - Correcting future development impact assessments
 - Air pollution threat
 - Historical significance and site protections
 - Risk of current proposal: parental choice
 - Alternative options
 - Conclusion
 - Submission to the School Sufficiency team at Hackney Council, for inclusion in the Cabinet Report ahead of the meeting on Monday 22 May 2023
 - The case for Colvestone Primary School
 - Colvestone: A village school in the heart of Hackney
 - Context for Colvestone
 - Financial viability
 - Academic record
 - Parent choice
 - Impact on children with special educational needs
 - Impact on local development
 - Air pollution
 - Historical significance and protections
 - Campaign summary
 - Petition
 - Local support
 - Press coverage
 - Appendices - 1) Colvestone Parents Choice Factor Survey
2) email from a parent of children with SEN.

Key themes:

- Positive comment about existing school
 - Existing school provides good support for children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities)
 - School is at the heart of local community
 - Staff go the extra mile / school has a good reputation / facilities
 - Small class sizes / schools are better for children
- Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:
 - Move will negatively affect children
 - Impact on staff and potential loss of jobs
 - Other negative comment about other schools / process of moving
- Comments about school places:
 - Impact of free schools / and religious schools in the area on enrolment at the school(s).
- General statements:
 - General comment that do not want school to close / amalgamate
 - Comments on the decision to consult & wider context
 - Criticism of consultation / expectation buildings will be sold
- Other
 - Other comments raised in the summary that do not fit into the key themes are detailed in the summary above.

For the full comments provided in the campaign document, see Appendix 3.

Response 6

The respondent, speaking on behalf of parents of children with SEND at Colvestone, expressed that the consultation feels like a done deal and Colvestone parents feel unheard and unsupported by the Council: “We do not feel heard, we do not feel supported by the council, we do not feel like we matter.” The respondent also expressed disappointment at receiving a standard reply to emails and raised the following comments and questions:

- Questions about the SEND services and the creation of an ARP unit in Colvestone. The respondent stated that ARP units in Hackney are oversubscribed and that Colvestone would be an ideal candidate for an ARP, citing that SEND children do better in smaller classes.
 - “Why is the council ignoring this scientific fact and refusing the right to a suitable education to these SEND children?”
 - “Why is the school not considered for an APR unit and what do we have to do to make it so?”
- Questions regarding the deficit of the school and due diligence from Hackney council
 - “When the deficit first appeared in the school, why did Hackney council continue to pour money into the school but did nothing about auditing the books and checking how the deficit was created in a fully subscribed school. Was due diligence done in this instance?”
 - “According to the reasoning behind this merger, a school that is not full can not sustain itself. Why was then a full school not sustaining itself? Why did Hackney not investigate when this deficit was being created?”
- Questions regarding the merger with Princess May, stating that Colvestone parents had made their views on Princess May clear in April, 2023 and had included survey evidence stating that Colvestone parents did not wish to send their children

to Princess May:

- “Has the Mayor actually seen our dossier? Is he now in possession of all our evidence and campaign points?”
- “What will the council do when most of the Colvestone families refuse to go to Princes May?”
- “When can we expect to have a further meeting with the council regarding the consultation and what is the council planning on doing to ensure that there is an open channel of communication?”

Response 7

Member enquiry raising a number of questions from Colvestone parents regarding the workshop events for parents:

- Whether ward councillors would be informed about parent meetings at schools in their wards
- Whether responses and information shared in the pre-engagement stage would need to be resubmitted to be included in the consultation.
- Criticism of the consultation format and structure and asked whether consultation responses could be submitted in other formats, external to the consultation questionnaire.

Responses related to De Beauvoir

Response 8

The respondent stated that “for historic reasons alone” De Beauvoir should not close. The parent referenced the age of the school and stated that it is part of the local community.

General responses or responses related to all proposals

Response 9

Member enquiry raising questions from residents and ward members regarding the use of school buildings, namely:

- The loss of historic school buildings.
- As a result of closures, concerns that there will be fewer local authority run schools in the borough and a higher number of academies.
- Resident requests for a guarantee that school sites will not be turned into flats.

Engagement Workshops

Parents and carers were invited to attend workshops at each of the schools to provide an opportunity to ask questions about the consultation proposals. Workshops were developed in partnership with school leadership teams and were adapted to meet the needs of each school community. Schools were asked to identify the language support needed for each event and interpreters were provided at the events to support parents and carers who speak English as an additional language and who may need additional support to engage with the consultation.

Overview of the workshops approach

All workshops followed a similar format and agenda, agreed with school leadership teams ahead of the events. This included a presentation from Hackney Education to provide, or reiterate, the context behind the proposals. Participants were then given the opportunity to ask questions. After the Q&A, participants could speak to Hackney Education officers about admissions, SEND support, and general concerns specific to individual circumstances in a smaller group, surgery style format. Participants were also encouraged to share their views and comments through the formal consultation process by completing the consultation questionnaire.

The above format was adapted for each school following school leadership teams' direction and understanding of their school community's needs. Baden Powell held two workshops, one focused on SEND and one on admissions. Colvestone held one workshop for parents and another for staff. The Princess May workshop was held online.

As stated, interpreters were provided at events to help parents with limited English or who do not speak English as a primary language. Schools were asked whether interpreter support was needed, parent/carer invitations were translated into the languages requested and interpreters were provided at the workshops. Colvestone requested support for Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish speaking parents and Baden Powell requested support for Turkish speaking parents.

The following details the questions and comments raised at the engagement events.

Overview of workshop questions and comments

Comments and questions in each of the workshops have grouped to align with the broad themes identified in the Kwest Consultation Report.

Baden Powell Primary School
Two workshops were held at Baden Powell, the first focused on admissions and the second focused on SEND.

1. Workshop 1, 26 June 2023, 3:30pm

Negative comments about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants were concerned that the move to another school will negatively affect children, stating that the move will “mentally damage” children.
- Participants asked why Baden Powell had been selected for closure and not Nightingale. Other participants questioned why Nightingale had been built, if school rolls were declining. Some participants compared staff at Nightingale and Baden Powell, stating that there is more parent interaction with teachers at Baden Powell while other participants stated that “parents at Nightingale say they do not want our children to go there.”
- Participants questioned whether there would be enough space and facilities, such as playground space and swings, for all pupils on one site.

Other comments:

- Participants made a range of other comments including:
 - Stating that closing children’s centres and nurseries would make more sense.
 - Asking what the plan is for children with EHCPs.
 - Asking whether the Scrutiny Committee had reviewed the proposals.
 - Asking how parents can know whether their voices will be heard.
 - Suggesting the government could afford to keep schools open.

Comments about school places:

- Some participants commented that current nursery enrollment is not low, stating 2020-2022 nursery children are expected to go to Baden Powell. Participants stated that most years are full at Baden Powell currently. Other participants thought enrollment could increase with new house building.

Positive comments about existing schools:

- Participants stated that they were happy with Baden Powell and praised the education at the school. One participant stated “we want a small school.”

General statements:

- One participant stated that it felt like parents do not have a choice about the closure and amalgamation.

2. Workshop 2, 3 July 2023, 3:30 pm

The second Baden Powell workshop focused on questions around SEND.

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Multiple participants commented that they do not know what Nightingale is like as a primary school and requested an open day at Nightingale to view the school and meet the teachers. Some participants asked whether the schools could work together through the amalgamation.
- Participants largely wanted Baden Powell children to move to Nightingale with their friends, in the same classes and be taught by Baden Powell teachers. Some parents shared that their children are anxious about the move: “My child is anxious about some lessons and needs more help.” One participant was concerned about bullying at Nightingale.
- These concerns were particularly shared by parents of children with SEND. Participants asked whether their children will have EHCPs and asked about the impact of the transition on children with SEND’s CAT and SATs tests. One parent stated that it would be helpful for their child to visit Nightingale weekly.

- Some participants expressed the belief that Nightingale children and parents do not want Baden Powell children to join the school and are not welcoming. Other participants stated that they would not send their children to Nightingale.
- Participants were concerned about staff jobs, asking about the number of redundancies.
- Participants also commented on the size of Baden Powell.

General statements:

- Participants stated that the decision to close the school had already been made. Some felt that the decision had already been made by the council, others felt that there was no choice other than to close Baden Powell and wanted the process to be completed: "We would rather it was decided and we had longer to prepare."
- Participants also asked if alternative solutions had been considered.
- Multiple participants raised issues including increases in cost of living, affordable housing and gentrification, commenting that housing is unaffordable and "we are being forced out of Hackney." Participants felt that other issues affecting residents in Hackney were not being adequately addressed and are a more urgent issue than school enrollment.
- Some participants also suggested that information about the proposals had been unevenly shared between schools, stating that Nightingale parents knew about the proposals before Baden Powell parents.

Other:

- Participants raised a number of other comments including:
 - Questioning whether government intervention or funding could prevent schools from closing and asking how the school will be funded if the merger does not go ahead.
 - Other participants asked how involved the headteacher of Baden Powell would be at Nightingale.
 - Other participants wanted to explore alternatives to closing, one participant suggested only closing reception.

Randal Cremer Primary School

Workshop, 30 June 2023, 9am

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants commented on the negative impact of the proposals and transition to a new school for children, causing stress for children and their families.
- Two participants commented on the negative impact on children with SEND and the need for more support for children.
- One participant also talked about the costs associated with moving schools such as buying uniforms.
- One participant also commented on the negative impact on staff and the stress caused by the proposals.

Comments about school places:

- Participants wanted to know when they should move their children to a new school and whether they should wait for the final cabinet decision. Parents were worried about losing out on places at their preferred schools and being able to find a school that could accommodate siblings, and the impact on children with SEND and those with an EHCP.

- Participants also commented on the impact of the proposals on enrollment at Randal Cremer and concerns about moving children to a school that may be in scope for closure in the future.

Positive comment about existing schools:

- One participant praised the SEND support their child has received at Randal Cremer.

Other:

- One participant asked why academies have been opened while birth rates and enrollment has been declining, and the level of control Hackney Education has over the opening of academies.

Colvestone Primary School

Colvestone Primary School held two workshops, one for staff and one for parents.

1. Staff workshop, 27 June 2023

General statements:

- Staff stated that they should have had the opportunity to meet with Council representatives at an earlier stage.
- Participants also wanted more clarity about the proposals and what a merger would entail: "Is it a physical move to Princess May? There needs to be clarity."
- Participants also made broad statements such as "more needs to be done" and asked that learning be taken from this process, if further closures are proposed.

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants asked about the process for redundancy, pension entitlement, and whether there is scope for pay protection.
- Participants commented on the negative impact of the proposals and potential job loss on staff. One participant stated: "There has been a lack of professional respect."
- One participant also stated that unions had not been in contact with staff.

Comments about school places:

- Participants asked about enrollment data and why more schools have been built if enrollment and birth rates have declined.
- One participant also commented that parents have not been given enough time to look for a new school.

Positive comment about existing schools:

- Participants stated that the quality of education has not gone down at Colvestone and that staff are dedicated to pupils. Participants cautioned that messaging needs to be sensitive to the dedication of staff.
- Participants also alluded to the changes in leadership at Colvestone: "There has been no acknowledgment of the changes we have had."

2. Parent workshop, 27 June, 2023

General statements:

- Participants raised multiple questions about the data behind the proposals, challenging birth rate data in Hackney, asking about the budget for schools in

Hackney and future modelling. Participants stated that requests had been made for financial modelling data and requests were repeated in the session. Participants also stated that Colvestone had higher enrollment than other schools in scope. Participants stated that they had provided information to Cabinet and Hackney Education and felt that their contributions had not been reflected in the previous Cabinet report.

- Participants were critical of the consultation process, asking what the purpose of the consultation was and whether consultation responses would be considered in the decision making process. Participants also asked how local residents were being consulted, stating the belief that residents had not been included in the consultation.
- Participants were dissatisfied with the workshop approach, stating that they were not aware that the workshop had been planned with space for individual conversations. One participant also stated that parents had asked for a SEND specific meeting. Participants also stated that they wanted the opportunity to talk with Councillors.
- Participants asked what information they would need to present to stop the proposals from going ahead.
 - "What do you need to decide not to close the school?"
 - "If we could wipe the deficit out, would we not be in scope?"
- Participants also expressed frustration with communication and the provision of information. One participant stated that they hadn't received a reply to email requests, another participant asked if more information was available.
- One participant commented that other schools have closed across the country.

Comments about school places:

- Participants questioned why free schools and faith schools had not been included in the proposals and asked what Hackney Education will do in regards to faith schools.
- Participants asked whether Colvestone could be a school for pupils with SEND and asked whether SEND children will be provided with alternative places in the borough. One participant stated that as a small school, Colvestone supports their child with SEND.
- Participants stated that the proposals and consultation had a negative effect on enrollment at the schools, one participant stated that it had been a "death sentence because potential parents expect closure." Participants felt that the news prevented the school from improving its enrollment figures.
- Participants also asked whether more schools would be identified for closure, including secondary schools. One participant was concerned about sending their child to a school that could also close.
- Two participants also stated a preference for one form entry.

Positive comment about existing schools:

- Participants commented on the strengths of Colvestone. One parent stated "This school is a safe haven for my child, a mini heaven, comfort zone." Participants commented on the small class size, the environment and lower pollution levels.
- Participants were also positive about joining the Blossom Federation and asked for more time to improve under the federation: "Take us off the list for two years to allow the partnership to take effect."
- Participants also referenced developments in the area, specifically new housing developments.
- One participant also commented that the school has good transport links.

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants stated that they did not want to send their children to Princess May, with two participants stating that their children were scared of going to a new school. One participant was concerned about bullying if their child moved to Princess May.
- Participants also wanted to know when the decision would be made and stated that December 2023 would be too late for a decision.
- One participant commented on the impact on staff, stating that morale was low.
- One participant stated that closing the school would negatively impact the local community.

Nightingale Primary School

4 July 2023

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants were concerned about the negative impact on Nightingale families and stated that better communication was needed throughout the process. This included the need to communicate the benefits of the merger to parents and the details of the proposals. Participants also wanted the school to provide more information to parents. One respondent commented on support for non English speaking parents.
- Participants were concerned about the impact of stress and increases in responsibilities for staff and the headteacher following a merger.
- Participants also warned that the merger will be disruptive and impact Nightingale pupils' education. Participants asked how pupils will be supported and stated that a transition plan should be in place for all children.

Other:

- Participants made other comments related to:
 - Managing the merger: Participants wanted to ensure the merger would be managed for Nightingale and Baden Powell families alike. Some suggested that there should be an induction for new parents or events to help parents to transition. Participants also wanted parents to have information about and set expectations about education.
 - Activities, clubs and trips: Participants wanted to know whether activities and school trips would be available following the merger and commented on the cost of Forest School.
 - Funding: Participants asked whether the merger would provide more funding and whether parents would have a say on how additional funding is used.

Comments about school places:

- Participants also asked a number of questions about the process for selecting schools included in the proposals, including asking about the impact of falling birth rates, demographics, and the number of schools in the area:
 - "Was the birth rate a factor?"
 - "If the birth rate keeps falling, will there be another merger?"
 - "Has Hackney closed schools before?"
 - "Apart from capacity and numbers, which factors did you consider?"
 - "Were space, money, demographics considered?"
 - "Did you look at how many schools there were nearby?"
 - "Are potentially closing /merging schools taking children for 23/24/25?"
 - "Why were parents not directed to schools with low numbers?"

- Participants asked multiple questions about the process of amalgamating Nightingale and De Beauvoir:
 - "Is there a set number of SEND children you can take on?"
 - "How are places allocated?"
 - "Why are closing schools open for 24/25/26 applications?"
 - "Will Baden Powell applicant automatically go to Nightingale?"
 - "Will there be another meeting to tell us the merger is happening?"
 - "Will parents need to apply to other schools apart from Nightingale?"
- Participants also asked whether schools in scope could become academies.

General statements:

- Participants wanted more information on the benefits of the proposed merger with some participants expressing scepticism that there would be any benefits for Nightingale: "We are worried we will not get the benefits of merger."
- Participants asked about the next steps in the process, including the date of the Cabinet meeting following informal consultation and how soon parents would be informed of a Cabinet decision.
- Other participants questioned why falling enrollment had not been addressed earlier.
- One respondent stated that the proposal would go ahead, regardless of comments provided at the workshop.

Princess May

6 July 2023, 11am

There were fewer comments and questions at the Princess May workshop, reflecting a lower turn out of parents. Five questions were asked, primarily around SEND management and funding:

- The school's senior leadership team asked how additional children with EHCPs from Colvestone would be managed alongside children with EHCPs at Princess May and stated that a support plan is "most important for the children that need specialist provision as moving to a mainstream school is a huge transition for these children and their families."
- The team asked about funding, stating that funding is Princess May's main concern and asked if the school could move to a two-form entry to provide additional teachers to support the increased class sizes following a merger. It was emphasised that the financial question and avoiding a deficit is the most serious concern for Princess May.

De Beauvoir Primary School

14 July 2023, 9am

General statements:

- Participants were highly concerned about the use of the school site, if the school closes. This included concern that the school site could be sold and converted to housing or that a free school would be set up. One participant commented on house prices in Hackney.
- Participants stated that the views of children have not been gathered as part of the consultation and engagement process. However, in response the headteacher stated that children's responses had been gathered at the start of the process.
- Participants also asked how their comments would be included in the consultation

- and how information would inform the decision making process.
- Other participants felt that the decision had already been made

Comments about school places:

- Participants asked whether alternative options had been explored, such as merging with De Beauvoir with Princess May. Many participants were concerned about securing a place in a nearby school, stating that some schools in the area have full enrollment. Other participants stated that other schools were not in walking distance or felt that other school options were not suitable, for instance faith schools.
- Participants asked about the criteria for proposing mergers and the data used to select the schools included in the proposals. Questions included:
 - "Who decided which schools would merge?"
 - "What basis was used to decide which schools merge?"
 - "Why were parents not consulted about the schools chosen?"
 - "Do you consider all years when considering which schools to close?"
 - "Do you consider where children live when deciding on closure?"
 - "Have you considered pupil/parent satisfaction?"
- Participants also asked about the impact of the proposals and consultation on enrollments, which the headteacher addressed, stating that 20% of children have already left De Beauvoir.

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants were concerned about the impact on staff, asking whether staff will be supported to find jobs and asking how their mental health has been supported through the process. Participants commented on the role of staff in supporting the children. Other participants praised the support they received from the headteacher, one stated: "Every point I have raised has been dealt with properly by the Head."
- Some participants also commented on the impact on children, stating that moving to an "unwanted" school would affect mental health and children would be exposed to pollution when travelling to school.

Positive comment about existing schools:

- Participants stated that the school is a historic building and has existed for a long time. Participants asked why closing a newer school had not been considered.
- One parent stated that "the school has done a lot for my child."

Main Report – Final

Prepared August 2023

Hackney Council

Consultation On Amalgamation Or Closure Of
Six Hackney Primary Schools



**Kwest
Research**

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Appendix 1 - Report from the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Appendix 2 - Copy of the Questionnaire Used in the Consultation

1. Introduction & Background

During June and July 2023, Hackney Council undertook an informal consultation on the following proposals:

- Closure of De Beauvoir Primary in September 2024
- Closure of Randal Cremer Primary in September 2024
- Amalgamation of Colvestone Primary and Princess May Primary, onto the Princess May site, in September 2024
- Amalgamation of Baden Powell Primary and Nightingale Primary, onto the Nightingale site, in September 2024

The consultation ran for six weeks between 5th June and 16th July 2023 and aimed to gather feedback on the proposals, not just from parents and staff of the schools in scope, but also from wider categories of stakeholders that may be impacted by the decisions.

The consultation was hosted on Hackney's Citizen Space and was open to residents and stakeholders across the borough. A copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix two.¹

In addition, paper consultations and questionnaires were sent to the following numbers of staff and parents at each affected school:

- Randal Cremer - 400
- De Beauvoir - 250
- Baden Powell - 300
- Nightingale - 350
- Colvestone - 300
- Princess May – 350

In June 2023, Hackney Council commissioned Kwest Research to analyse and report on the results of individual paper and online forms returned during consultations on the proposals.

Additional responses to the consultation, not submitted through the consultation form are being collated by Hackney Council in a separate report and will be added, by the Council, as an appendix to this report. Similarly, responses and comments shared during consultation events will also be included in Hackney Council's report.

1.1 Response Rates

At the end of the consultation period, a total of 613 postal and online questionnaires had been received, three-quarters of which were commenting on the proposed amalgamation of Colvestone Primary with Princess May.

¹ <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-amalgamation-closure/>

The following table shows the number of responses to each proposal that were received by the time the consultation closed on 16th July 2023.

Proposal	Number of online replies	Number of paper forms	Total responses
Closure of De Beauvoir	117	37	154
Closure of Randal Cremer	98	8	106
Amalgamation of Colvestone with Princess May	400	63	463
Amalgamation of Baden Powell with Nightingale	116	41	157

Table 1 Number of responses per proposal

Some of the online questionnaires contained a paragraph of identical comments so a review of the IP addresses used to complete the forms was conducted to check for the likelihood of multiple submissions from the same source. The vast majority of online forms (403/467) were found to come from a unique IP address. There were three IP addresses where four forms in each case were submitted, one with three forms and 25 where two forms were submitted.

The source of these identical comments has been identified as the Save Colvestone Primary School website. This contains a link called “council consultation tips” which leads to a list of points that can be used when responding to the survey. ²

² <https://www.savecolvestone.com/council-consultation>

2. Overview Of Response To The Proposals

The proposals are universally unpopular, with 89% of respondents reporting that they disagree and 8% that they agree.

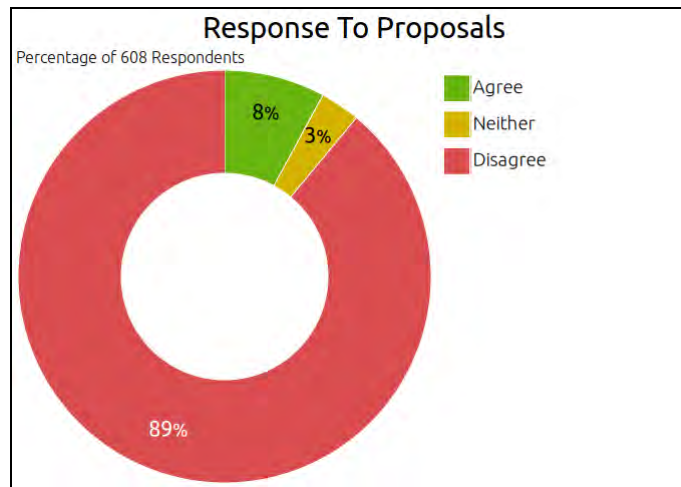


Figure 2.1

A breakdown of the results for each proposal is shown below.

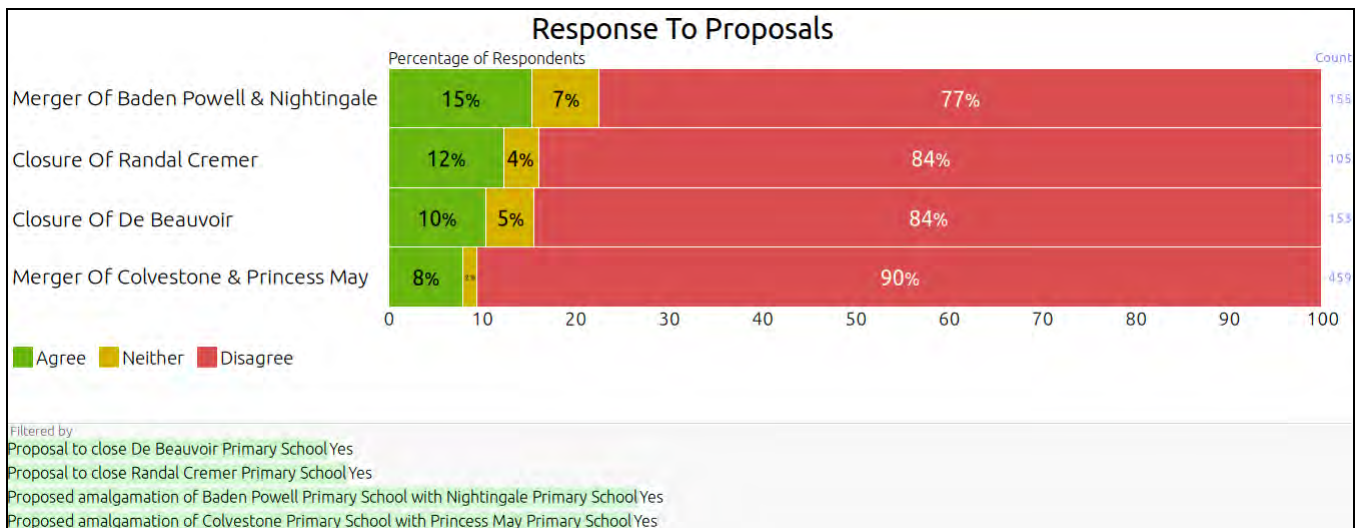


Figure 2.2

The graph below shows the results from the different respondent groups to the consultation. This is shown at an overall level due to the small number of responses in each group when broken down by proposal. It should be noted there were only 19 responses from staff or governors at schools included in the proposals and only 12 from those at another school in Hackney. Therefore, when looking at the percentage of these respondents who agree/disagree with the proposals the accuracy of the data is extremely poor.

Response To Proposals By Reason For Interested In Consultation

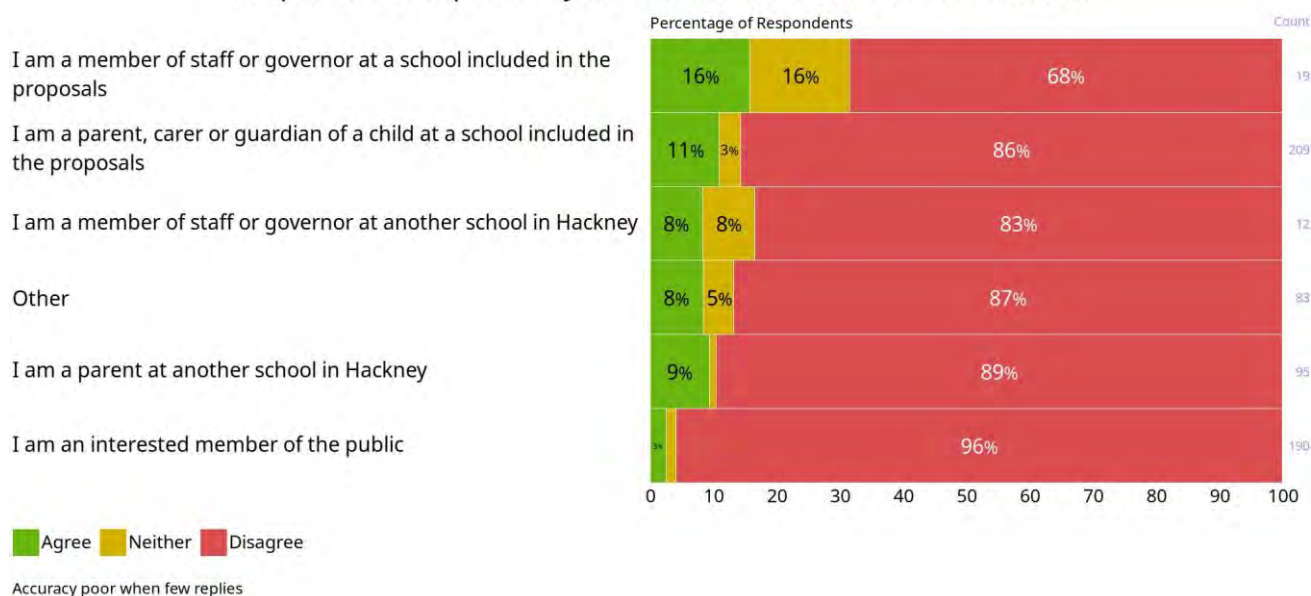


Figure 2.3

2.1 Strategic Themes In The Consultation Feedback

The consultation feedback received is wide ranging, including many testimonials from parents in support of their current school. The key themes in the comments are discussed in more detail in the sections on each individual proposal.

Some of the feedback received was more strategic in nature, offering alternative approaches to the issue of falling rolls and/or suggestions on how to move forwards, and the key points from these comments are discussed below.

Use Existing Schools To Address Borough-Wide Shortage Of SEND Places

A number of SEND professionals responded to the consultation making the case for keeping one or more of the schools open and working with them to expand the SEND provision on their sites. The feedback encourages decision makers to consult further with the EHCP and wider SEND team, as well as the Re-Integration Unit, with a view to building and expanding on the good practice of SEND provision in a mainstream setting that already exists in Randal Cremer, De Beauvoir and Colvestone. In addition, De Beauvoir and Colvestone receive extensive praise from parents of pupils with SEND who chose these schools due to their small size and worry about whether their children will be able to cope in larger schools.

More Mergers Instead Of Closures

Some respondents have asked why the Council is considering school closures, rather than mergers, since this would ensure friendship groups could stay together and potentially allow some staff to transfer alongside them, thus making the process slightly less difficult for children and parents.

Some respondents consider De Beauvoir and Colvestone to be schools with a similar ethos, and as they are located half a mile apart, several respondents suggest this would be a more suitable merger than Colvestone and Princess May.

Many respondents say they chose their children's existing school specifically because it was single form entry.

Future Use Of School Buildings

Respondents comment that some of the schools are listed buildings which are over 100 years old. A Buildings and Heritage Conservator responding to the consultation points out the fragility of listed buildings when left unoccupied. As an original Birkbeck school, Colvestone Primary is believed by some respondents to have a restrictive covenant meaning it can only be used for educational purposes.

There is a perception amongst respondents that the buildings are likely to be sold off for development, into further unaffordable housing, increasing the perceived "gentrification" of Hackney.

One respondent to the consultation states that they work in "child-friendly urban planning and design", advising cities across the world. Their comments are shown below.

Falling school roles and forced school closures can be an indicator of systematic problems making cities hostile to families and children. Hackney and London are not alone in this struggle and there are innovative and valuable examples to learn from in the international context especially around municipalities and councils retaining real estate even if schools close, to be repurposed to generate income for the municipality and also to be held for use in the event that populations swing upwards in the future.

The loss of the existing schools and school communities is challenging and emotional for all involved. The loss of these buildings forever I believe could be a strategic error on the part of the councils, which will have further negative impacts on the viability of cities for children and families in the short, medium and long term.

A respondent from the Orthodox Jewish Community makes the point that Charedi schools in Stamford Hill are oversubscribed. Referring specifically to Baden Powell primary school, they suggest:

Given these circumstances and considering the proximity of this site to the Stamford Hill Jewish community. I request that the council explore the possibility of leasing or selling the school premises to one of the Jewish schools in the area as part of this consultation process. This would alleviate some of the overcrowding issues faced by the Charedi schools and help accommodate the increasing number of students more effectively.

6. Annex B: Summary of informal consultation findings, prepared by Kwest (Appendix P, Briefing Report, Informal Consultation)

Impact Of Extended Consultation Process On Trust & Confidence In The Council

Many respondents to the Schools Consultation suggest the decision to close or merge these schools has already been made. There are concerns among respondents about the process exacerbating the sense of disempowerment amongst communities already feeling marginalised and neglected in local planning decisions taken as part of the perceived 'gentrification' of Hackney.

There are questions raised in respondents' comments about the data being used and the lack of answers provided by Hackney Education. Respondents express frustration at being "refused all meetings" with officials in charge of the process, about the lack of data and financial modelling provided, and the lack of Council engagement with the local community.

The following comment encapsulates the feelings expressed by these respondents.

*There's no point me reiterating all the many reasons why closing Colvestone is a bad idea because I don't think you're really listening anyway. But I will tell you this. My daughter, a student at Colvestone, was getting frustrated when I dragged her to yet another meeting related to trying to get the Council to listen to our arguments. She told me making all this effort to engage with the Council was a waste of my time and hers because no matter what we do the Council was going to close the school anyway. She's *** years old. At such a young age she is already cynical, already has no faith in democratic institutions and processes. She still believes in unicorns, but she doesn't believe in you. This is the lesson you are teaching hundreds of children across the borough, that elected officials lie, that democratic processes are phoney, that engagement is fruitless and that they are powerless. So when they grow up and they don't want to vote or get involved with local government or when they turn to more extreme means to respond to societal problems you can know that you helped contribute their sense of hopelessness.*

3. Response To The Proposal To Close De Beauvoir Primary

At the start of the consultation period, 250 forms were given out to parents and staff at De Beauvoir primary school, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 154 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close the school.

32% of respondents are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 27% are interested members of the public, 21% are parents at another school in Hackney and 6% are staff or governors at the school.

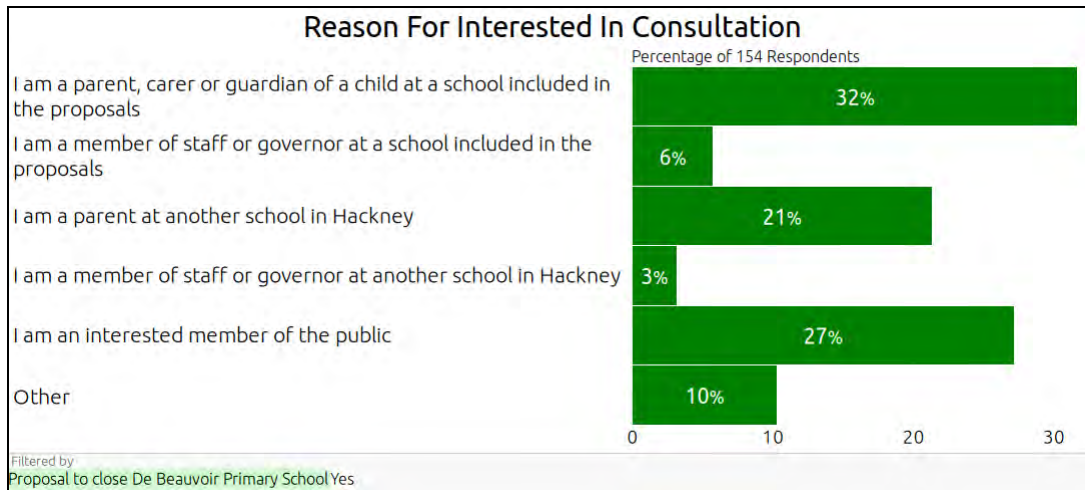


Figure 3.1

Overall, 10% of respondents agree with the proposal to close De Beauvoir, whilst 84% disagree.

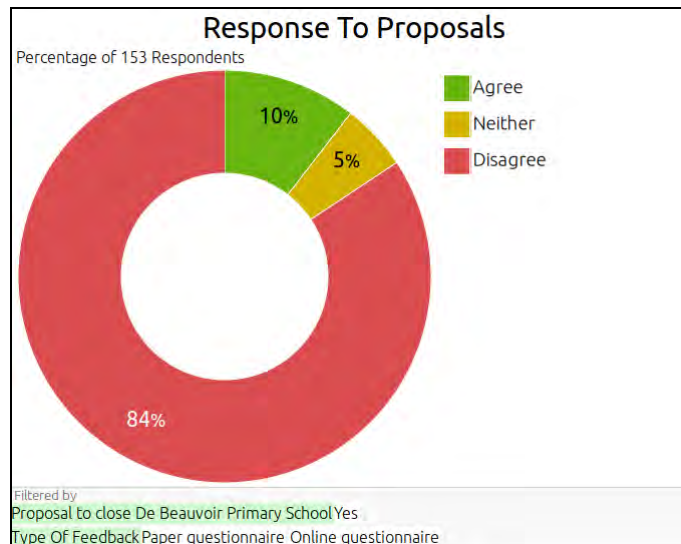


Figure 3.2

6% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 12% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the small numbers of respondents.

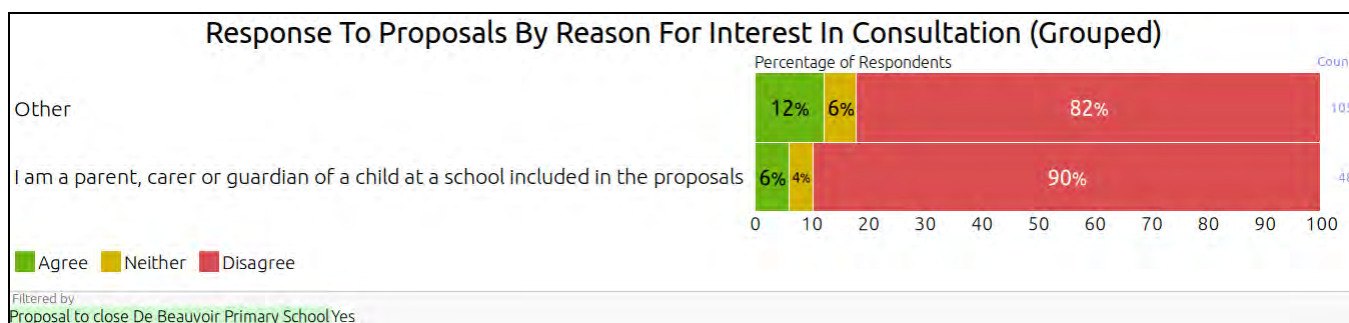


Figure 3.3

3.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Close De Beauvoir

Respondents were able to comment on the proposals and the feedback received has been classified into a number of broad themes. 43% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 26% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 24% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 23% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

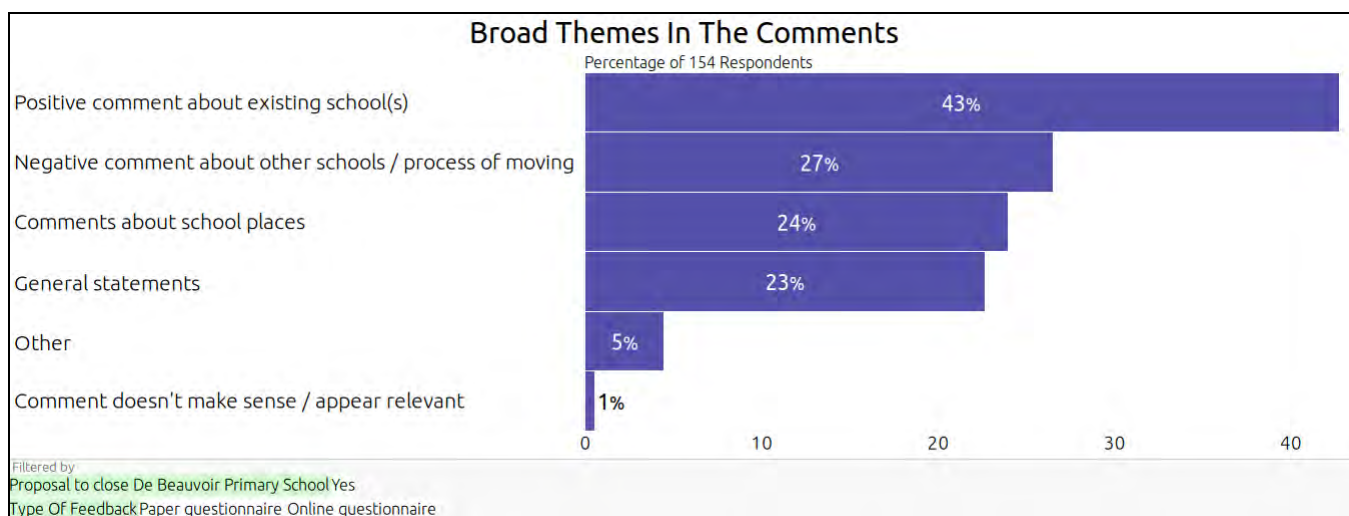


Figure 3.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes, which are shown in the graph below and discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

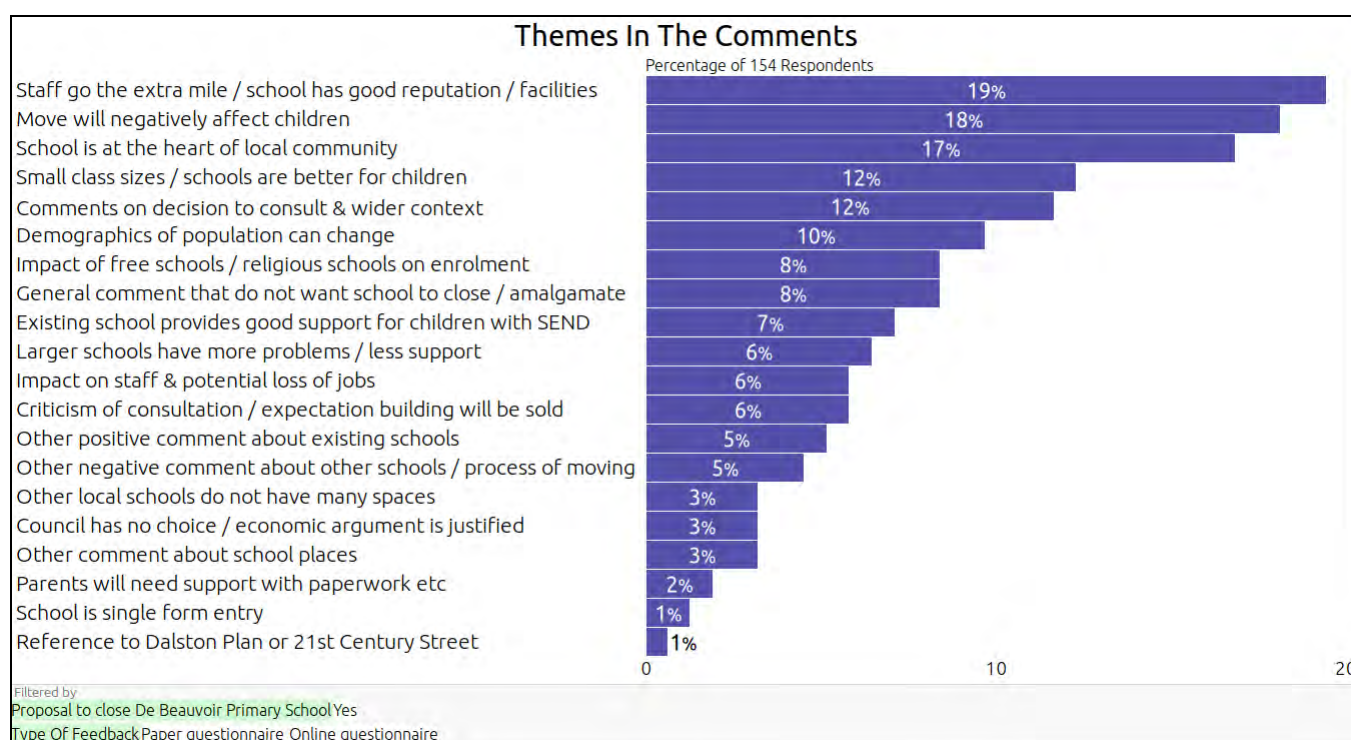


Figure 3.5

3.2 Positive Feedback About De Beauvoir

19% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

17% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

12% think that small class sizes are better for children

Some specific points raised by respondents in their comments include the following:

- The latest OFSTED inspection (2022) is cited by respondents, one of whom points out that this rated De Beauvoir as 'Good with Outstanding Features', despite approximately 65% of children being in receipt of pupil premium and a similar proportion living in homes where English is not the first language.
- The school is currently believed by respondents to be operating with a surplus budget.
- A high proportion of children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) attend the school (one respondent puts the figure at 35%). Concern was expressed, by several respondents, about the lack of specialist places for such children in the borough. A health and social care professional responding to the consultation urges the Council to consider the loss of this resource to the community, scope the SEND work the school is currently providing and carefully consider how these needs would be met in other settings. They consider De Beauvoir to be a model of good practice and excellence in this regard.
- Alternatives to closure were also suggested by respondents, including amalgamating with one of the other schools in the consultation.

The comments also include many testimonials from parents about how they and their children love the school and feel well supported by staff. A selection of this feedback is shown below.

Four of my children have attended this school. [Name] and the teachers and staff at this school have been extremely supportive when I have had health and personal issues. My children love coming to this school and are devastated about the possible closure. This school is one big, supportive family. It is not just bricks and mortar. I highly doubt that I will have this support from another school.

The staff are caring and nurturing and have successfully adapted teaching and learning styles to suit all types of learners. As a parent who is unable to drop off and pick up my child regularly, I have been able to reach out to staff whenever needed, including sending late night emails which have received instant replies. During the Covid 19 lockdowns, the school was quite quick in implementing online learning which many private schools still have not been able to implement.

*My children are at the school and have learning disabilities and struggle with transitions who is to support them or me, I have my own health I have ***, ***, ***. Who will support me with a new setting for my children? De Beauvoir was a decision I made thoroughly I put a lot of thought into choosing a school for my boys and now it's closing. I will keep them in there until the last day and probably won't get them back into a school until something magical happens and a school pops up like De Beauvoir small, intimate, family friendly environment, everyone knows everyone, everyone feels safe.*

3.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

18% think the move will negatively affect children

6% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

6% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments are shown below:

- Respondents believe that walking to school is encouraged by the Council. However, if De Beauvoir closes and parents want to keep their children in local authority maintained schools, respondents fear there may be insufficient places to allow children to walk to school. The only nearby non-voluntary primary school not proposed to close is Princess May, and it is mentioned by respondents that this is also included in the consultation process and so may not be attractive to parents.
- Respondents make a comparison between one of the nearby free schools, Hackney New, which does not have a playground, and De Beauvoir, which has ample outdoor space and is on a quiet side street with no through traffic.
- Concern was also raised by respondents about the potential impact on local traffic flows as they feel that large schools in busy urban areas can be overwhelming for residents at pick up and drop off times.
- Staff members taking part in the consultation report a deterioration in their own well-being as they try to help children manage their anxiety.

Some parents and school staff submitted anecdotal evidence of how their children have been or will be negatively affected by the move. A selection of this feedback is shown below.

Moving [my son] will make him feel alienated and in a completely new environment and I know this will affect his mental wellbeing as it will be difficult to handle this change and will be a completely new academic curriculum which will in turn worsen his grades.

*Since this proposal has come to light, my eldest [child] has been feeling very anxious and upset as some of * friends have left during this process.*

Uprooting all these kids in the middle of a key development phase will not only cause distress to the child, but add more financial pressure onto each parent from having to buy new uniforms for their children and additional travel costs, which in this day and age is one more nail in the coffin

I have direct access to children crying and emotionally drained as their peers leave for another school one by one. I have direct access to children as young as 4 only having 1 day to process that it would be their last day with their friends and favourite teachers; as parents frantically do in-year applications. I have direct access to parents who struggle with the English language asking for support and guidance on how to do transfer applications.

*My wellbeing is deteriorating as I have to constantly readjust and support my children as their friends leave randomly week by week. The anxiety in my class of *** year olds is completely unfair and out of their control*

3.4 Comments About School Places

10% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

8% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

3% believe that other local schools do not have many places

3% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

Examples of specific points raised by respondents in their comments include:

- There is confusion amongst some respondents about why there is now a surfeit of primary school places when permission was given recently for Hackney New Primary school, in De Beauvoir's catchment area.
- Respondents consider it unfair that free schools, academies and faith schools cannot be included in action taken by the Council to address falling rolls. There are questions in the feedback about the rationale behind closing and amalgamating so many local schools, whilst leaving the voluntary sector out of the equation, particularly when any future new schools in the borough would have to be free schools.

- Other local schools are believed to be mostly full already following the proposals being publicised. One respondent makes reference to a government website that they say shows many local schools, particularly those to the south of Dalston Lane, have been largely unaffected by the fall in pupil numbers, with some having as little as 2% of spaces free, despite an overall maximum pupil number of 500+.
- Respondents comment that some children at De Beauvoir are resident in Islington and may have a preference for relocating to an Islington school, where they believe they will have no priority in terms of waiting lists.
- There is doubt amongst respondents about the evidence for the predicted decline in demand for school places. Brexit, covid and cost of living, all cited as possible influences, are perceived as recent events, whose longer term impact may still be unknown.

Some examples of the comments received on these topics are given below.

Hackney council have told parents that De Beauvoir school should close because pupil numbers are falling and will continue to do so in the future. The council cited three driving factors; Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis; all of which were pushing families out of London. [...] Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis are all recent events. Although they have had an impact on pupil numbers recently, there is no evidence that these trends will continue in the long term. In fact shortly before these events, pupil numbers in Hackney had been rising.

A school does not go from being oversubscribed in several year groups 6 or 7 years ago meaning my children had to wait until nearly the end of the school year for a place, to virtually empty now in comparison, as has happened with De Beauvoir. When this has happened elsewhere it has taken decades. I do feel like the council have somehow pursued an internal unwritten policy of diverting potential pupils whether they are reception age or in year admissions for older year groups, away from De Beauvoir and into other neighbouring schools, to keep pupil numbers up at the other schools so they don't have to consider closing more schools and the council admitted at a parent's meeting that they have no power to close free or academy schools and religious schools, so siphoning children into those schools saves the headache of trying to reason with those schools to close of their own accord.

There is low public confidence in the data interpretation. Many parents are sceptical, and cite examples such as the closure and reopening of Hackney schools previously.

Whilst the school has had a falling roll for a number of years, the opening of Hackney Free School severely impacted the number of children applying. When the area was already suffering with many unfilled Reception places, Hackney's decision to allow an additional Free School to be built is baffling. The closure of De Beauvoir, we believe, is related to this decision and seeing as the school has recently achieved a good Ofsted, the timing of the proposed closure is devastating for everyone involved.

I'm worried about the pressure the closure of De Beauvoir Primary will put on other schools in the area. Our most local school (Hackney New) has no outside space so it is important to us to have other options with outside space when our son starts reception in Sept 2025. We're worried if De Beauvoir Primary closes that not only takes that option away but possibly others as the other schools will be full with children who would have gone there.

3.5 General Feedback

12% commented about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

8% just said they do not want the school to close, with little additional detail

6% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some specific points raised in the feedback from respondents around these topics include:

- There are questions in the feedback about the slow response to the problem of falling rolls and the pressure this has placed on schools. Respondents believe that other local authorities took action sooner to address the issue.
- The feedback suggests many parents feel they are not being listened to, that the Council has already given up and the outcome of the consultation is a foregone conclusion. There are references to the ‘gentrification’ of Hackney as well as other council consultations where the proposals have subsequently been adopted despite a majority expressing disagreement.
- There are concerns in the comments about the perceived lack of answers from the Council to questions raised during meetings about the proposals. Additionally, there are reports of low public confidence in the data being used to inform decisions.

Examples of comments around these issues are shown below.

I do wonder if filling this form is merely a process with no clear facts that it would be read and understood. This is because I cannot believe we are even at this stage considering the comments and issues raised at the first stage and the lack of answers and explanations provided by Hackney Council.

Hackney in general pushes people out the borough through, for example, their own housing schemes, increase in rental properties, lack of initiative to encourage people to come and live in the borough, road closures where many consultation processes showed more voted "no" to closure than "yes" but they still proceeded. They have not factored in their own conduct as a borough into this decision.

There are few spaces for children and young people. The school is a much valued community resource for families. I'd argue that the tokenistic closure consultation process has served to further disempower local residents who perhaps already feel marginalised and neglected in local planning decisions. The decision of the council to close the school will have a social impact beyond the disruption of those children who are currently being educated.

I think it would be wise for a third party to check the data informing the school closure policy. There is low public confidence in the data interpretation. Many parents are sceptical, and cite examples such as the closure and reopening of Hackney schools previously

I understand the rationale for the consultation for the closure of schools in Hackney. My concern is the length of time it has taken the Local Authority to address the problem of falling rolls - it has been clear London, including Hackney, was likely to be put into a difficult position. Other LAs adjacent to Hackney acted sooner.

4. Response to Proposals To Close Randal Cremer Primary

At the start of the consultation period, 400 forms were given out to parents and staff at Randal Cremer primary school, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 106 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close the school.

35% of respondents are interested members of the public, 25% are parents at another school in Hackney, 17% are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school and 3% are staff or governors at the school.

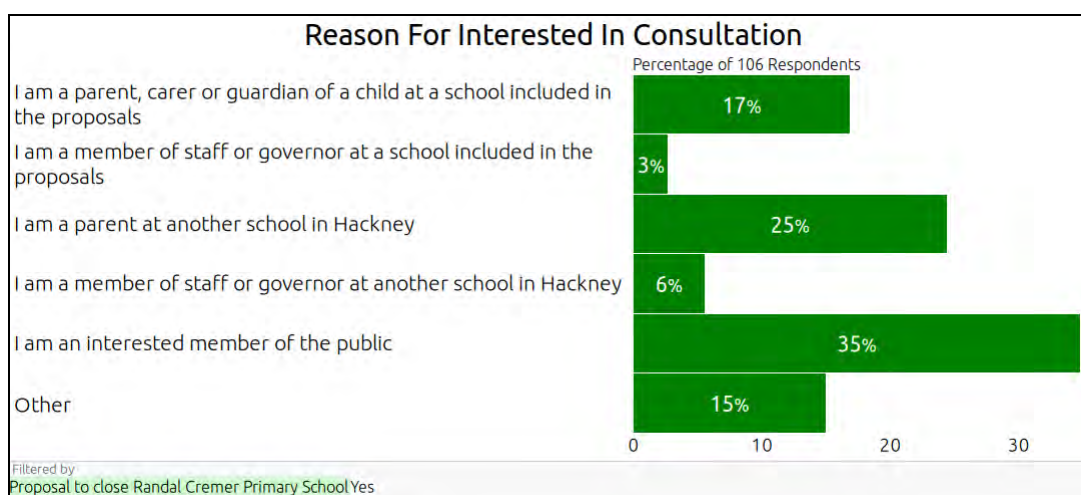


Figure 4.1

Overall, 12% of respondents agree with the proposal to close Randal Cremer, whilst 84% disagree.

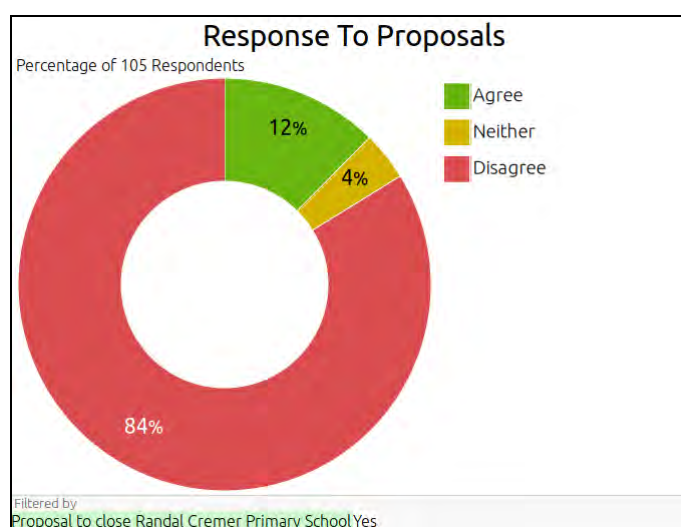


Figure 4.2

6% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 14% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the very small numbers of respondents.

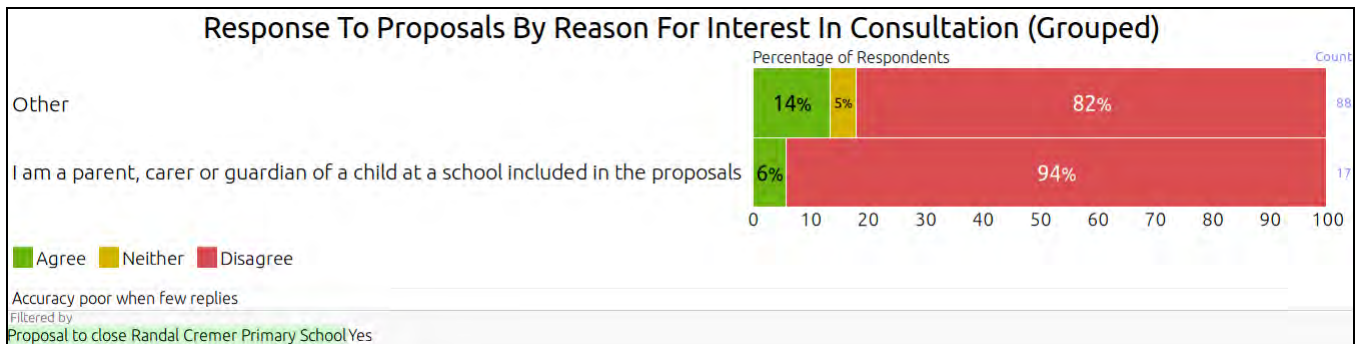


Figure 4.3

4.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Close Randal Cremer

32% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 25% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 22% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 18% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

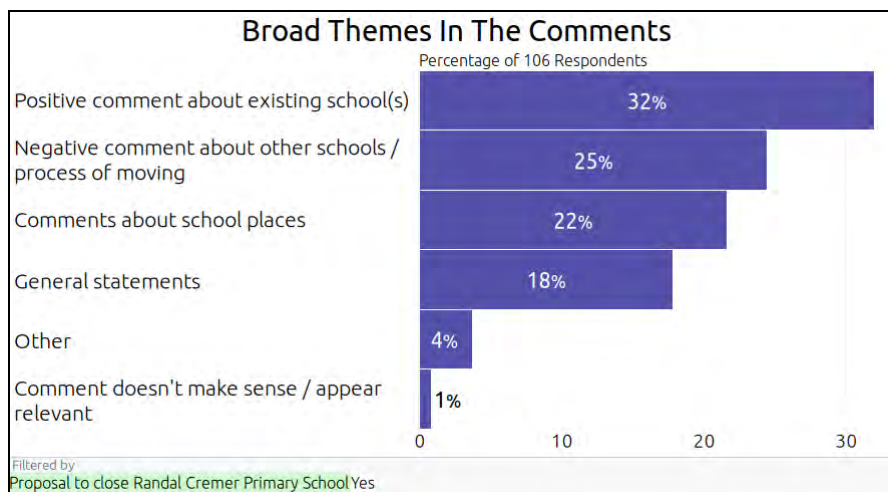


Figure 4.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

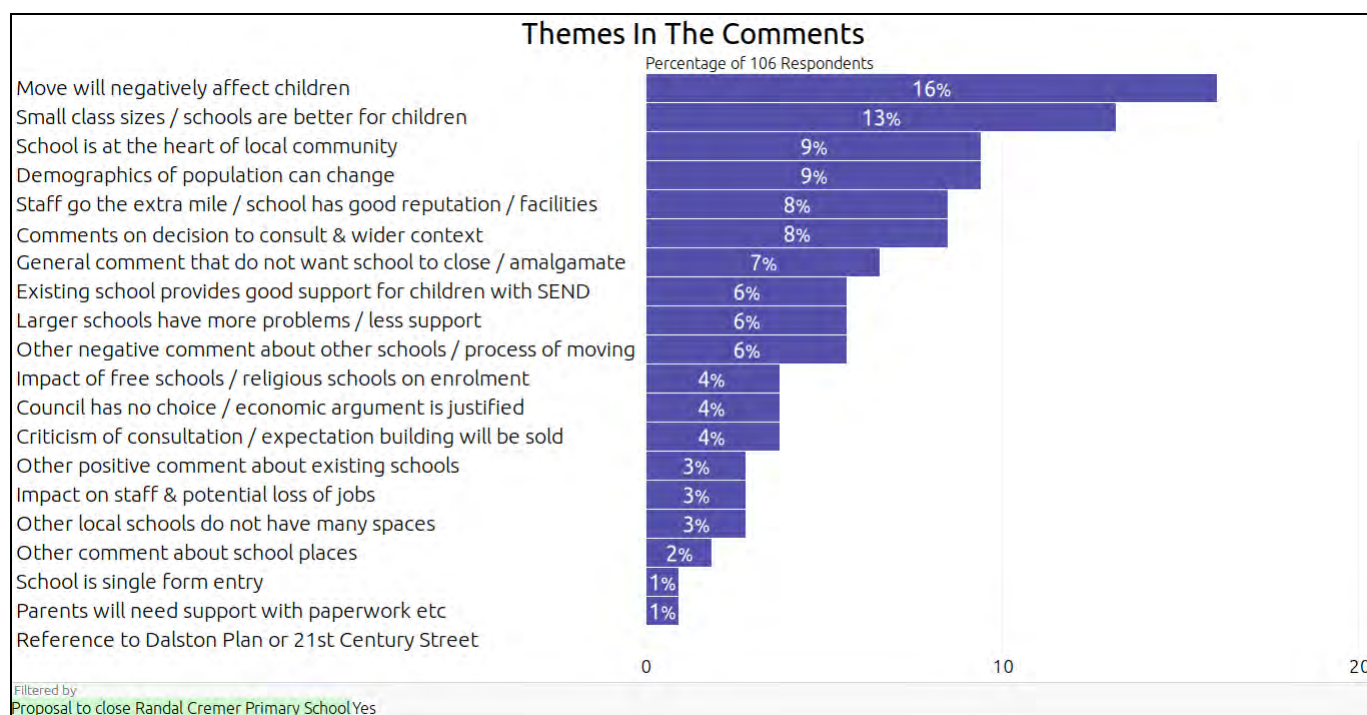


Figure 4.5

4.2 Positive Feedback About Randal Cremer

13% think that small class sizes are better for children

9% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

8% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments include the following:

- An Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team has responded to the consultation to raise concerns about the closure from a SEND perspective.
- Randal Cremer is also seen as a hub for refugee families as well as other minority groups.
- Additionally, the school is described by respondents as being somewhere that accepts those who have been excluded from other schools.
- Alternatives to closure were also suggested by respondents, including amalgamating with one of the other schools in the consultation.

The Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team highlights the very significant challenges the borough faces with the inclusion of such pupils in mainstream settings. With specialist settings and ARPs full, and more requests for placements than space available, “an extraordinary amount” is spent on out of borough independent provision.

Due to the inclusive, nurturing environment at Randal Cremer, the respondent feels that the children with SEND are less on the local authority's radar because their needs are being met, whereas this is likely to change if these children are required to move to a larger, less inclusive environment. There are concerns that these children may then require more costly specialist settings. The respondent expresses concern that "the proposal has not sufficiently considered both the distress and cost implications of closing our most inclusive primary schools". This could be avoided by working with Randal Cremer to expand on its current SEND provision. The respondent encourages decision makers to consult more widely with the ECHP, wider SEND Team and the Re-integration Unit.

Randal Cremer is also perceived to be a hub for refugee families. A respondent cites the latest Ofsted report, which confirms that pupils who do not speak English as a first language are well supported, helped by the partnerships the staff have formed with their families. There are concerns expressed by respondents about what will happen to these children if the school closes.

A selection of the positive comments about the school is shown below.

Randal Cremer is the only school in the borough that will take pupils who have been excluded from other schools. It provides absolutely essential services for pupils who are our most vulnerable, and they have been directly impacted by the Hackney New School opening nearby - but this school won't address the needs of the very disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils served by Randal Cremer.

They are a fantastic support for children with SEN and other needs. They have also been a hub for Refugee families and other minority groups within the area. The loss of this school will be an incredible blow to an already marginalised community with no thought to where these families will be sent across the borough.

I feel that Randal Cremer is a strong community school which works well with marginalised families and children with high levels of SEND - perhaps it would be of great benefit to offer more funding to increase and extend this work.

4.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

16% think the move will negatively affect children

6% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

3% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

The feedback collected in the consultation includes testimonials from parents about the negative impact the situation is having on their children.

Everyone in the school is stressing about this proposal. I have two special needs kids. You are not thinking about us at all. Kids are struggling

*I have had to move *** of my children to a different school and leave *** at Randal Cremer until they go to Secondary school. This is not because I wanted to or because it is a bad school but because I had to give my kids some stability in the situation that Hackney Council have created. There are children still at Randal Cremer seeing their friends leave because their parents, like me, want to give them stability. I have no faith that Hackney can meet their promises of supporting parents to find appropriate places. Moreover, I have seen the staff at Randal Cremer lose heart and although they are all doing amazingly to support the children, who is supporting them? They are about to lose community that can't be replaced and jobs that are hard to find elsewhere. To top it off, [teacher] is visibly heartbroken each week to see more kids leave. And then there are many kids left with SEN, who have no easy way to stay or move to somewhere else as places are so limited.*

Not enough thought has been given to the long distances children will have to travel, what will happen to the vulnerable children who rely on Randal Cremer and the divide that is opening up between schools serving middle class pupils and those from working class families.

4.4 Comments About School Places

9% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

4% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

4% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

3% believe that other local schools do not have many places

A selection of the comments on this topic is shown below.

Birth rates and population rates rise and fall. What evidence does the council have that birth rates and population of Hackney will continue to decline? History says this is unlikely to be the case as dips in birth rates often follow a rise.

These are public local authority schools. Once closed, because of government policy, they can only reopen as academies, which are secretive schools outside democratic control. Many problems have recently come to light in Hackney academies. Working class and black students are less likely to thrive.

Unfortunately these schools have falling numbers of children attending. No fault of the schools - a problem across London. But the way schools are funded, it's unfair to disproportionately spend money on these few children when this money could be spread out amongst all Hackney schools.

4.5 General Feedback

8% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

7% just said they do not want the school to close, with little additional detail

4% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some specific points raised in the feedback from respondents around these issues are:

- Many parents feel that the decision has already been made and the outcome of the consultation is a foregone conclusion.
- There are references in the comments collected during the consultation to the 'gentrification' of Hackney and concerns that long-standing council policies have created the current situation.
- Respondents suspect that the land will be sold to developers.

Some of the comments illustrating these points are shown below.

The closure of schools in Hackney seems to be a foregone conclusion. We found out about it earlier this year but I feel this has been years in the making, especially given the council's gentrification of Hackney in recent years.

This is not a consultation process. The decision has already been made. There seems to be no opportunity to amalgamate. Parents and staff have not been given adequate notice. It is opportunistic as undoubtedly the building will be sold to developers to turn into private housing for large amounts of money. Children will have to attend new schools, siblings may have to attend different schools, which amalgamation would have avoided.

5. Response To Proposals To Merge Colvestone & Princess May Primaries

At the start of the consultation period, 300 forms were given out to parents and staff at Colvestone primary school and 350 to those at Princess May, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties.

In total, 463 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close Colvestone and merge with Princess May.

Colvestone parents have created a website setting out their “case for Colvestone” with a link to the consultation and tips for what to say in response. Many comments received in response to the proposals appear to have been copied and pasted from the website.

40% of respondents are interested members of the public, 21% are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 19% are parents at another school in Hackney and 1% are staff or governors at the school.

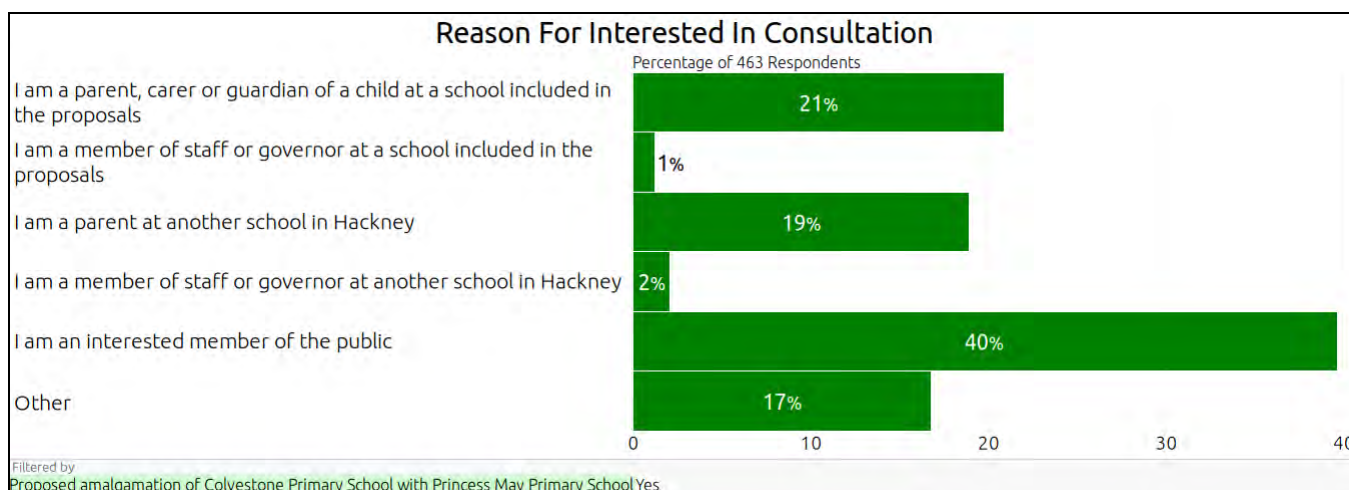


Figure 5.1

5.1 Response To Proposals

Overall, 8% of respondents agree with the proposal to merge Colvestone and Princess May, whilst 90% disagree.

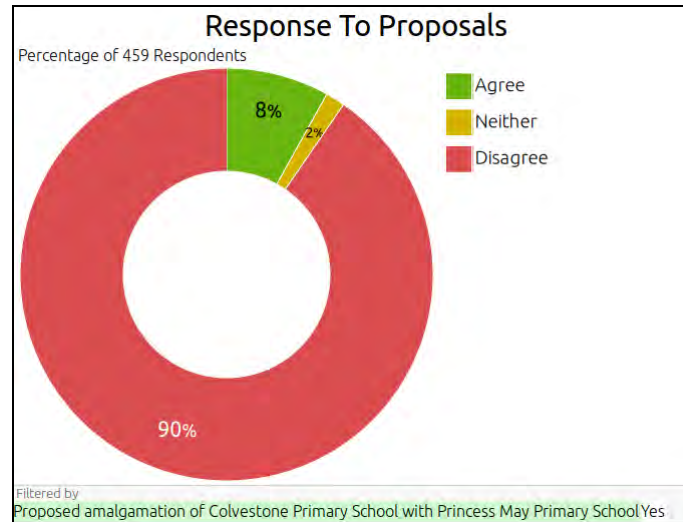


Figure 5.2

Due to the larger number of responses to the Colvestone consultation compared to the other proposals, it is possible to break results down in more detail by 'reason for interest in the consultation'.

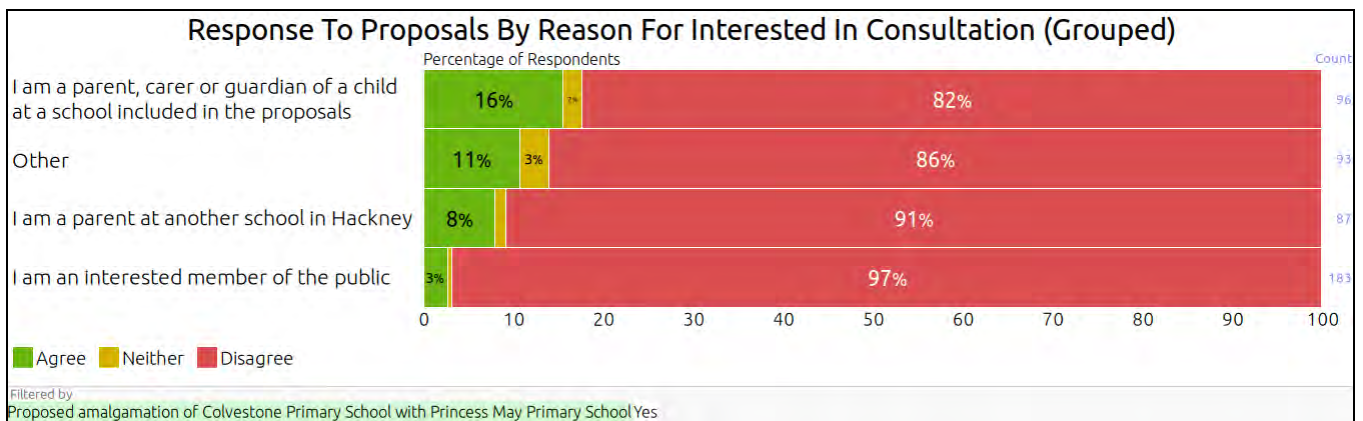


Figure 5.3

5.2 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Merge Colvestone & Princess May

58% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 24% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 26% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 19% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

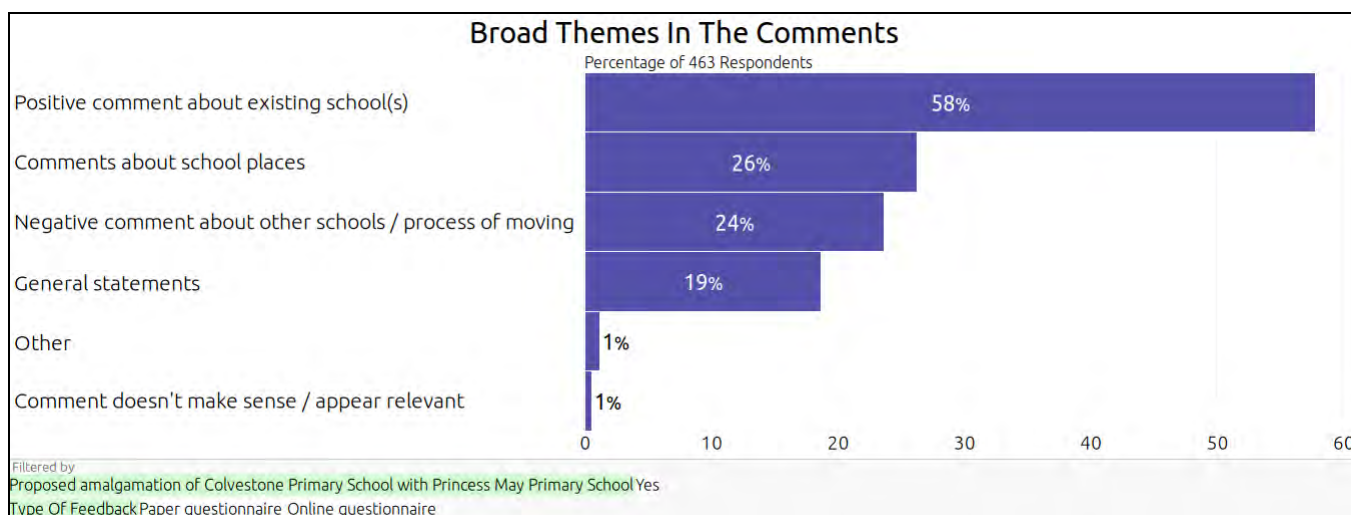


Figure 5.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

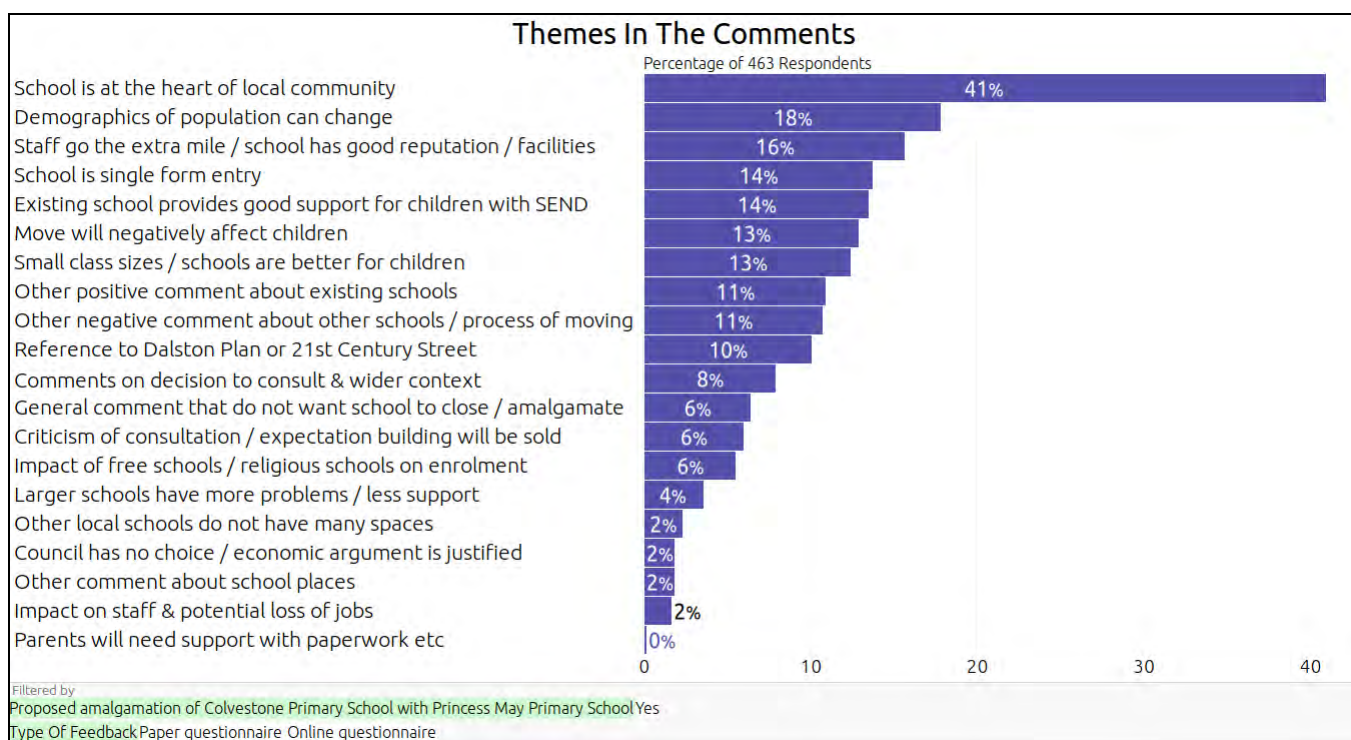


Figure 5.5

5.3 Positive Feedback About Colvestone

41% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

16% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

14% mention that the school is single form entry

14% feel the school provides good support for children with SEND

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments include the following:

- 10% of respondents mention the Dalston Plan and/or the 21st Century Street that is to be created in Colvestone Crescent, the area around the school.
- The comments suggest that the school has strong links with the local community. Traders in Ridley Road market responded to the consultation expressing concern about the reduction in footfall as the parents and children of the school are currently regular customers.
- Respondents state that 7% of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), well above the 4.3% average across the borough. In addition, a number of SEND and Inclusion professionals responding to the consultation express concern about the merger. They consider the small, single form entry school to be “exactly what local authorities need right now to tackle a number of growing problems in our student population”.
- The grade two listed school buildings are believed to be of historic significance, being part of the original Birkbeck Schools founded by William Ellis. Some respondents believe there is a restrictive covenant on the building, barring its use for anything other than education provision. Respondents report that the building has also recently undergone an extensive restoration process.
- Respondents feel that joining the Blossom Federation in September 2022 has had a positive impact on Colvestone. The introduction of the new leadership team has been well received and the school is perceived by respondents to be on an upward trajectory with proactive steps being taken to address its budget deficit, including running an in-year surplus for 2022. Respondents believe this partnership deserves to be given more time.

Dalston Plan & 21st Century Street

The Dalston Plan aims to shape the future of the area by building over 600 affordable new homes. A key feature of the Plan involves turning Colvestone Crescent into the borough's first 21st Century Play Street. As the primary school is located at the end of Colvestone Crescent, a number of respondents to the consultation feel it is an integral part of the creation of the Play Street. This is viewed by respondents as being the case as the Plan aims to create a child-friendly, safe environment. Similarly, Colvestone is the closest primary school to the main location proposed for the new homes.

A selection of comments about the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Street is shown below.

The school is pivotal in the plan to turn Colvestone Crescent into a 21st Century Street, the borough's first permanent play street. This will not only be an incredible community asset, but will make Hackney an example for other boroughs to follow in the necessary move to make cities more human-friendly and sustainable, which is all key to ensuring improved mental health across our city communities.

Whilst pupil numbers have dropped, the local area has huge plans for residential development so I strongly believe this to be a temporary issue.

The 21st Century Street by Hackney Council is a brilliant plan and demonstrates everything Hackney is and what the residents want it to be like in the future. Colvestone Primary School is at the centre of this plan. The vision for such a street is built on creating a child-friendly safe environment. Closing the school makes no sense, whilst the plan itself is funded to go ahead. Without a school in that street, this investment is entirely pointless and a misuse of public finance.

The Dalston area has a Plan to build more housing very nearby. The proposed closure feels extremely short-signed in light of this - will families have the choice they deserve? Or will families even choose to live there if there is no community school nearby

Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes the commitment to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. This is part of an important move to try and get families to stay in the borough and keeping this local school is a huge part of that.

SEND Provision

An Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team has responded to the consultation to raise concerns about the closure from a SEND perspective, highlighting the very significant challenges the borough faces with the inclusion of such pupils in mainstream settings. They state that as specialist settings and ARPs are full, and there are more requests for placements than space available, “an extraordinary amount” is spent on out of borough independent provision. Due to the inclusive, nurturing environment at Colvestone, the respondent feels that the children with SEND are less on the local authority’s radar because their needs are being met, whereas this is likely to change if these children are required to move to a larger, less inclusive environment. There are concerns that these children may then require more costly specialist settings. The respondent expresses concern that “the proposal has not sufficiently considered both the distress and cost implications of closing our most inclusive primary schools”. They feel this could be avoided by working with Colvestone to expand on its SEND provision. The respondent encourages decision makers to consult more widely with the ECHP, wider SEND Team and the Re-integration Unit.

These comments are echoed by a CAMHS social worker responding to the consultation, employed by another borough, whose children went to Colvestone. They consider the school to be a “huge resource precisely because it is small and nurturing” and suggest it would be waste of resources to close the school. Their suggestion is to use money from the SEN budget that is currently spent on alternative provision, out of borough, and work to enhance the SEND provision already offered by Colvestone. Similarly, an Inclusion Expert responding to the consultation suggests converting the currently vacant school keeper’s house into a resource base for children with SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs) and Neurodiversity. They believe this could be staffed with specialist teachers and teaching assistants who work to support children in mainstream classes.

Many parents of children with SEN included testimonials within their feedback about how happy and well-supported their children are at the school. Some examples are shown below.

*My older [child] with [SEND] went to *** schools in Hackney, including outstanding schools. * was facing being out of mainstream education and Colvestone showed * love, acceptance and support which totally changed things around and * is now at a mainstream secondary. The fact that Colvestone accommodates for so many children with additional needs and keeps them in mainstream schools saves Hackney a lot of money. My younger [child], like so many other children, is on a 2-3 year wait list for a diagnosis with CAMHS and therefore is not part of the SEN stats*

*My child has SEN and needs to be educated in a small, calm school. It has taken * *** years to settle at Colvestone, so any disruption to* routine will harm * health and education.*

*We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [child], who is *** years-old and [SEND] because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([my child] has an experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [my child] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [my child] to be happy and settled in * school (*** years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredibly difficult impact on * and it will be practically impossible for * to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on * mental health.*

Historical Significance & Future Of The Building

Colvestone has been a school since it was built in 1852 as one of the six Birkbeck schools. Respondents report that there has recently been investment in the fabric of the building: the exterior has been sand blasted and the lead on the roof replaced.

Campaigners believe there is a restrictive covenant on the site, which prohibits its use for anything other than education. The example of Hackney Downs School is cited in the feedback with respondents suggesting it closed and then had to re-open as a school (Mossbourne Academy) due to restrictions preventing the site being used for anything else.

Council figures are cited by respondents in reference to the cost of maintaining an empty listed building: £1m to close the school and £250-£300,000 each year to maintain the closed buildings. In addition to these costs, respondents comment that the Council would have to absorb Colvestone's historic debt, which respondents believe is currently being reduced under the new management.

Local residents of Colvestone Crescent responded to the consultation expressing concern that an empty, disused building could increase the risk of anti-social behaviour in the area. Many stated that they feel the school is an integral part of the community.

Examples of comments about the historical significance and future use of the building made in response to the consultation are shown below.

The site has multiple protections - two Grade 2 listings and an outdoor classroom / playground that is an Asset of Community Value - it is not a building easily repurposed but it is an excellent building purpose-built as a school. We also strongly suspect that it has protected educational use and are searching for the deeds.

Colvestone is the beating heart of Dalston. It creates natural surveillance in the area and makes Dalston the vibrant, diverse, friendly community that it is. Without it I believe we would soon see a rise in the levels of anti social behaviour.

The decision to close a school without any plan for the future of the site is bizarre. I understand it is to be a community asset, but this is vague and without a clear plan and funding will likely see the site lay vacant for a long time, draining further resources. This lack of plan is compounded when you consider the very recent (and long overdue) capital works to the buildings.

I believe that writing off Colvestone's deficit, and paying for security costs whilst the school is mothballed, is an egregious use of public funds.

Impact Of Joining Blossom Federation

Respondents to the consultation are very positive about the stability, new leadership and improved facilities Blossom has brought the school since it began in September 2022 and they believe the school is now running an in-year budget surplus and can start to reduce its financial deficit.

Feedback has also been provided in the consultation about the previous partnership with Thomas Fairchild primary as part of the Soaring Skies Federation. Substantial criticism is levied by some respondents towards the previous leadership of the school and the oversight from the Learning Trust. Respondents feel the new leadership and partnership with Blossom has seen the school turn a corner and they feel this should be given further time to develop to fulfil its potential.

Some of the comments about the new partnership with Blossom are shown below.

This year has seen huge developments at Colvestone since the Blossom Federation partnership, which can clearly be recognised in all the ODR and SIP reports - yet we need more time to be given a chance to develop further (and build a new reputation under the new leadership) to attract new families, increase our numbers of children, and therefore really begin to lower the deficit again.

It seems as though we are in this process mostly due to the large historic debt but Hackney Education supported the school to choose Blossom Federation as new leadership going forwards and they are taking proactive steps to address the deficit. YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN THEM A CHANCE.

The Federation has turned a budget surplus - despite a low pupil roll - in its first 6 months in charge. So doing Blossom Federation has shown that the school can be financially viable under its new leadership. We, as parents, carers and students, love the stability and improved facilities Blossom Federation has brought the school.

Being on the list to close (or merge - which essentially means our school will close), completely diminishes our chances of attracting more families - and yes, if we were not on the list, with all the work that Blossom have helped the school to do this year, we would have absolutely taken a lot of the surplus school children in the area looking for Reception places because that's how much we believe in the impact they have made to our school!

5.4 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

13% think the move will negatively affect children

11% comment on other negative aspects of moving

4% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

The feedback from respondents in the consultation suggests that many Colvestone parents are unhappy at the idea of sending their children to Princess May. Some say they will chose another school, even if they have to move out of the area. Their comments cite a number of specific reasons for this:

- Several respondents mention a poll of parents that revealed that over 90% did not include Princess May as one of their original options when applying for a school place for their child. 13 respondents explicitly state that they will not be sending their child to Princess May and many others express concern about doing so.
- There are multiple references in the feedback to a meeting on 27th June 2023 with Paul Senior (Hackney Education) who confirmed that Princess May is on the list of schools to be considered for consultation next year. Thus, there is a fear amongst some respondents that sending children here may result in them being subject to a second school closure or amalgamation in the future.
- Many comments make reference to Princess May being on the A10 with its playground backing directly onto the main road. Additionally, to get to the school, respondents say many children would have to walk directly up the main road, which they believe is very polluted and congested, and would be particularly difficult for children with SEND.

Examples of the comments on these topics are shown below.

The pollution levels at Princess May Primary were 40% higher than Colvestone Primary School in 2021 due to the extremely busy main road that the school sits on. With 70% of eligible roads in Hackney becoming LTNs and the council's drive to promote LTNs in the borough, the diverted volume of traffic is only going to increase this pollution.

If the pupils currently at Colvestone are forced to move to Princess May, I feel the care afforded to children and the educational options available to their parents will suffer a serious deterioration, as they would likely be forced to disturb their children's education and transfer them to a school exclusively for SEND children.

It has become clear that many of the wonderful staff from Colvestone will not be transferred to Princess May and based on this information and the survey that was carried out, many, if not most of the families (ourselves included) will not go to Princess May. So the result would be that Princess May will still suffer from low numbers and also face closure in the not too distant future.

Had you chosen to merge De Beauvoir and Colvestone this would have been a different matter as they are very similar in ethos and size but going to Princess May is not an option for us.

5.5 Comments About School Places

18% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

6% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

2% believe that other local schools do not have many places

2% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

Many of the comments about future changes to the demographics of the population refer to the Dalston Plan and the intention to build 600 new affordable homes by 2031. Colvestone is believed to be the closest primary school to the main site earmarked for this development so many respondents argue that closing it is short-sighted.

Other specific points about school places raised by respondents in the consultation feedback are shown below.

- Merging Colvestone with De Beauvoir is suggested as an option by some respondents, since otherwise children may have to travel long distances, if parents reject Princess May, as they believe that many other schools in south Hackney are oversubscribed.
- Without Colvestone, many respondents believe there will be a lack of future parental choice as those schools that remain are religious, academy or free schools. The comments mention the perceived unfairness that only community schools can be included in any consultation.
- There is concern amongst some respondents about the loss of the maintained (free) nursery facility on the site, which currently enables seamless transition to the main school.

A selection of comments about school places is shown below.

Colvestone as a merger school for De Beauvoir. They are a much better fit and are not far geographically. Initially there may have been too many pupils at De Beauvoir but many of these have now transferred to other local schools. In fact we understand that as families have moved away from Randall Cremer and De Beauvoir in light of the proposal many of the schools in that part of the borough are now FULL and these families need another option.

I do not want to send my child to a religious school (especially as a gay parent) or a free school (the funding of which is cloaked in secrecy) therefore there are no other options available to us a family in this area. The schools we would otherwise choose are full.

Out of interest I looked at the reception intake for 2023 and saw that all the schools in my locality have a full allocation for this September, the only exception being Princess May. This was not on my list of schools and I would not send my child to this school. I'm concerned about the lack of parental choice if Colvestone closes. Also given that a high percentage of current Colvestone parents will not send their child to Princess May, would there be capacity in the other non faith (and potentially non free) schools in the area to accommodate these children?

It seems that it is only certain parents who fundamentally prefer the aesthetics of the school that are insisting on it remaining open. This preference is to the detriment of properly funded education for the pupils. The council is not to blame for the way in which education is funded, and it is not within the Council's gift to modify the national system of education funding. Wishing that it were different does not address the present problem. Amalgamation of the schools will deliver better outcomes.

The closures planned are unfairly hitting Dalston, with too many community schools close together being affected. You have not put any faith schools in this plan, which means there is nowhere left to go for pupils who do not want to go to faith schools. Leaving the one school with a strong community to continue, as a single form school, would be a fair way to rectify this problem.

5.6 General Feedback

8% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

6% just said they do not want the schools to merge, with little additional detail

6% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some respondents mention that they have formed a campaign group, Save Colvestone Primary School, but say that they do not feel the Council is listening to them. Criticisms from respondents of both the wider context and the Council's approach to the consultation include the following points:

- Respondents comment that despite being told that Hackney Education is one system, that has to meet the needs of all the borough's schools including academies, free and faith schools, the perception is that local authority schools have been unfairly targeted in the proposals. Their argument is that "if there is ONE system - then it needs to be considered as A WHOLE".
- Respondents believe that the threat of closure makes it impossible to increase numbers on Colvestone's roll. However, they think that the campaign has raised the school's profile and those involved feel it would be possible to increase numbers if the school is removed from the list.
- These respondents do not see the proposals as a merger but rather a closure of Colvestone with a presumption that children will transfer to Princess May.
- Campaigners believe they have articulated the reasons not to close Colvestone using facts, data and numbers, whereas, in their opinion, the Council has not taken this approach. For example, respondents say that financial modelling has only been provided by the school itself and the campaign group, rather than by the Council.
- Respondents describe officials as reluctant to discuss the proposals, with meetings with councillors said to have been blocked, although the comments also make frequent references to meetings, including with the Director of Education & Inclusion. Campaigners argue that a genuine consultation requires the Council to respond to the information received and that to act "on weak data or inertia or an ill-thought through proposal would be an act of gross dereliction of duty".
- The perception of respondents is that the Council has not engaged with the wider community, such as the market traders, neighbours and other local residents.
- Many comments from the campaign group express increasing cynicism as well as concern about how the experience is affecting their children's view of the democratic process.

The graphical documents provided to the Council alongside this report include all the comments submitted as part of the consultation. Extracts from the campaigners' responses to the consultation are shown below.

I feel that the consultation 'process' as a whole has been completely unfair to the six schools thrown into the melting pot with no solid reasons given as to why they have been singled out. If this was a fair and considerate consultation all schools in the borough would have been included in the 'process' from day one. The six schools chosen are now having to fill their enrolment quotas for the coming school year with the shadow of closure hanging heavy above them. This is obviously going to have a massive negative influence on their success. If this was a 'consultation' I do not understand why Hackney Council would put a small number of the borough's schools at such a debilitating disadvantage.

It is hard not to despair at the lack of response we have been getting, at how badly the documents from the council are prepared, at the lack of data, research, or even just answers, at the fact that there is no discernible scope of the actual consultation that has been outlined, and how much this process reveals a broken democratic process and a dysfunctional education department. The only financial modelling has been provided by the school itself and our group of parents, and as it emerges that clearly closing the school will be more expensive to the tax payer than keeping it open one wonders if anyone really cares what a decision like this one is being based on.

The plans have not been properly thought through. The 'term' merger does not fool anyone. It is a closure of Colvestone with a presumption that our pupils will transfer to Princess May. This is not borne out in our consultation with parents and carers at Colvestone - and betrays a real lack of understanding behind parental choice. There is a real demand for a single form entry Local Authority school in Hackney. That need should be respected and met. Colvestone IS that school.

6. Response To The Proposal To Merge Baden Powell & Nightingale Primaries

At the start of the consultation period, 300 forms were given out to parents and staff at Baden Powell primary school and 350 to those at Nightingale, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 157 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to merge the schools.

40% of respondents are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 24% are interested members of the public, 20% are parents at another school in Hackney and 3% are staff or governors at the school.

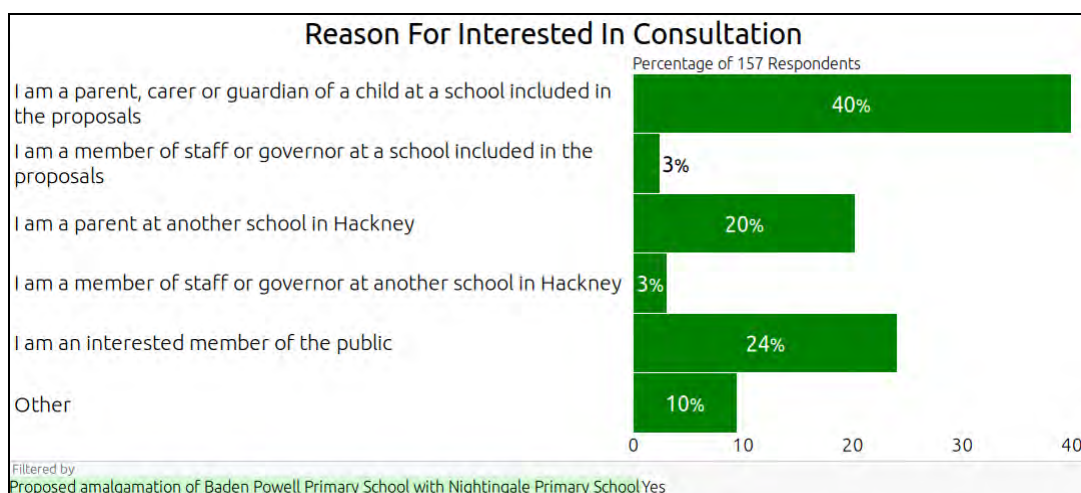


Figure 6.1

Overall, 15% of respondents agree with the proposal to merge Baden Powell and Nightingale, whilst 77% disagree.

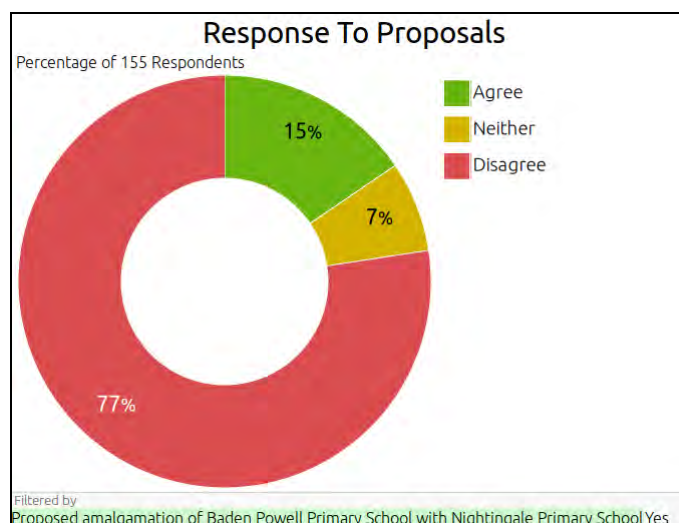


Figure 6.2

11% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 18% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the small numbers of respondents.

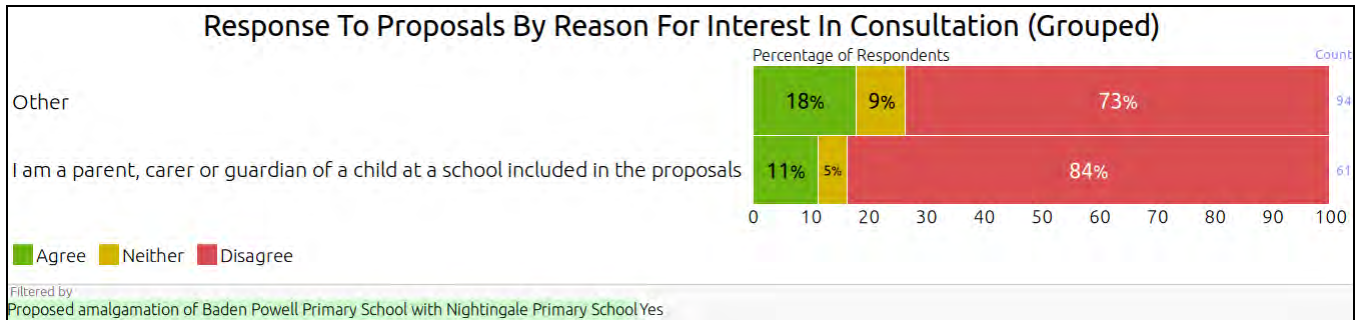


Figure 6.3

6.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Merge Baden Powell & Nightingale

31% of respondents made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving, whilst 27% gave positive feedback about the school. 20% discussed the wider context of the consultation and 17% gave broader feedback about school places in general.

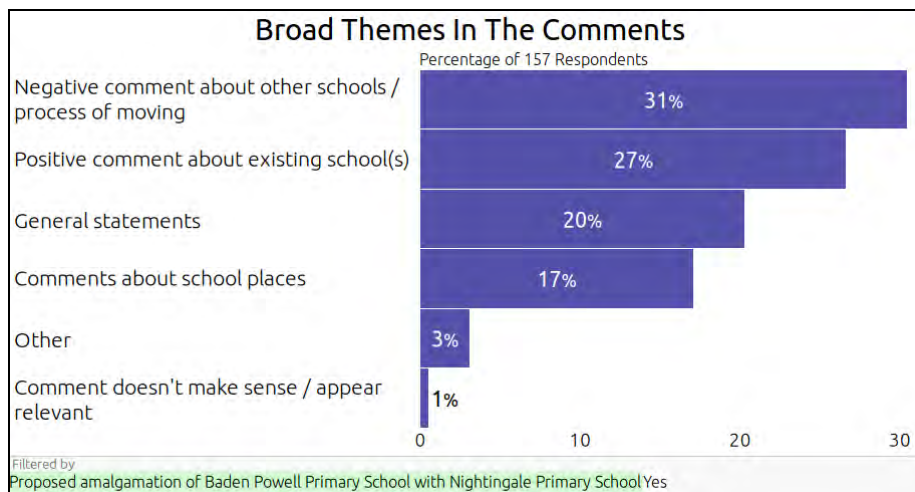


Figure 6.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

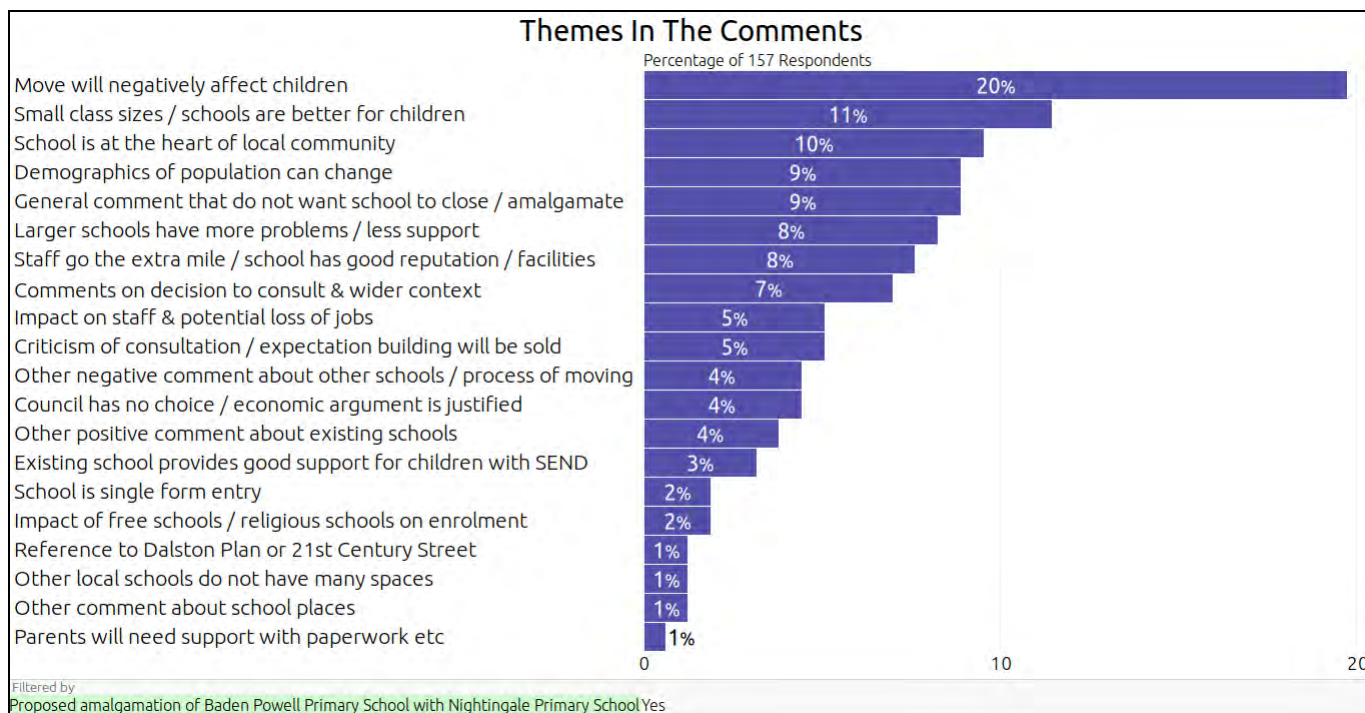


Figure 6.5

6.2 Positive Feedback About Baden Powell

11% feel small class sizes / schools are better for children

10% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

8% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

Many comments included testimonials from parents about the school as shown below.

BP school is over 30 years old, staff are very friendly and dedicated to their jobs and pupils. They take responsibilities really seriously: looking after the kids, helping them with classwork and encourage to achieve the best grades of education. Teachers give regular updates to the parents on how their kids have been in the classroom that day. At this moment the school has two amazing young pianists, a few talented chess players, 2 wonderful violinists etc.

Generations and generations of children have been attending this school and Baden Powell has been in the heart of the community of Hackney for many, many years with nothing but good things to say about it.

We are all very happy in our school and we love our little community. Children are learning, playing and growing up in a close and peaceful environment. I deliberately have chosen a one entry form school for my child.

*I have an [SEND] child and one with needs in years ** & **. They both don't like change and do not like too many children around them. It took more than a year for each of them to get settled in Baden Powell. It is going to be so unsettling for them to change into a large school with so many pupils. I chose Baden Powell as it was small for both their needs. We love all staff. All staff know the pupils and parents. Please don't merge. If you do I will move them to a smaller school like Baden Powell.*

Although there are only a small number of responses that were clearly from families of Nightingale pupils, their comments also related to the benefits of small schools, as shown in these examples.

Nightingale is already a relatively small school, which also benefits from a distinctive admissions process that prioritises children in care and those subject to a child protection plan. There is a delicate ecosystem and one that will be particularly destabilised by the sudden arrival of so many additional pupils. Proximity should be just one measure of the suitability of a potential merger.

*Many of us picked Nightingale because it's a small school. As a parent of a SEN child, I am worried how a busier school will affect * day. I also hope that the kids won't be torn apart as they are a lovely little community with many friendships already formed.³*

³ Nightingale has capacity for 60 children per year group but currently operates to 30 children per year group.

6.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

20% think the move will negatively affect children

8% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

5% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

Many respondents are worried that children will struggle to adapt to the change, especially those with SEND. There are also concerns expressed by respondents about whether all Baden Powell staff will be offered a job at the merged school.

Examples of the comments on this topic are shown below.

Moving to a new school, some pupils will develop anxiety and stress, friendships between kids would be broken, some teachers would lose their jobs and Baden Powell Primary School structure would be shattered.

*It's going to be devastating for year * children to move once in year * and then move to a secondary, which is a huge change in their life in general. My [child] has [SEND] and * struggles to cope even with little changes during * daily routine. This will completely mess * up.*

I feel Nightingale will not be able to handle the extra children and will also not be able to employ everyone to come over either. Their after-school clubs do not tie in well with working single mums as well and it will cause a real disruption to my work as well as my son's schedule. I do not see the point of this merger and can only see Nightingale being overwhelmed by the extra students.

I would like all Baden Powell staff offered a job at Nightingale to ensure a smooth transition for the children. I would like there to be extensive collaborative work between Baden Powell and Nightingale in the lead up to September 2024 to ensure that this is a proper amalgamation of systems & ethos and not just Baden Powell becoming taken over by Nightingale. I would like the leadership at Baden Powell to move with us as the leadership in Nightingale.

6.4 Comments About School Places

9% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

4% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

2% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

1% believe that other local schools do not have many places

Many of the comments received on this topic are general in nature, as shown in the examples below.

Firstly, I do not understand why the school budget has been cut and they have to merge schools. What happens when they agree to close the school and the birth rate goes back up?

I am a parent of a 2 year old in Hackney Downs that would likely have enrolled in one of the 4 schools involved in the merges. I was not aware of the falling enrolment numbers but agree Hackney council should protect the funding and quality of the school provision by merging. My only concern is whether there will be enough places in future years if numbers start to rise again and the closed school buildings have been repurposed/sold to developers.

My concern is that no information was given about birth rate projections for the future and the level of confidence the council have that numbers will not rise again in the foreseeable future that would impact on these proposals. I am also concerned about the loss of publicly provided nursery places, I do feel this is a loss to the local area and that alternative provision will not have the same outcomes for the children that they currently get being on the same site.

6.5 General Feedback

9% report they do not want the schools to merge, with little additional detail

7% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

5% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

There are concerns amongst respondents about what will happen to the school buildings if the merger goes ahead. A representative of the Orthodox Jewish community taking part in the consultation suggests the Council should consider the possibility of selling or leasing the school to one of the local Jewish schools as there is extensive overcrowding in these establishments.

Examples of the comments received about the building/repurposing are shown below.

I am worried if Baden-Powell is closed that Hackney council will build a tower block in its space blocking out light and scenery, making it harder to find a parking space due to more people living on this road. And you will probably only provide a minimal amount of social housing.

This has the makings of landgrab. i.e. Hackney council are very aware of the increasing land value in the area, and closing Baden Powell is an easy way to sell off valuable land to the next property developer waiting in line.

I would also like to see the former Baden Powell site used for something that would benefit the community.

Merging schools and selling off public land to developers is taking the interest away from residents and is more of a money making scheme.

The loss of the existing schools and school communities is challenging and emotional for all involved. The loss of these buildings forever I believe could be a strategic error on the part of the council that will have further negative impacts on the viability of cities for children and families in the short medium and long term.

7. Feedback - Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

The Hackney Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission met on 27th June 2023 to scrutinise the proposals and has submitted a short summary of its conclusions in response to the consultation.

The Scrutiny Commission's role is strategic and, therefore, its submission to the consultation avoids commenting on the proposals for specific schools. Instead, it aims to highlight issues that can positively contribute to decision-making. The summary report, which is presented in full in Appendix 1, makes the following key points:

- Any decision to close a locally maintained school is likely to be irreversible, as the 2011 Education Act requires future demand to be met by the academy or free school sector.
- The impact of falling rolls is a long-term policy issue, as GLA modelling does not suggest a stabilisation until the end of the decade. Therefore, the Commission suggests conducting broader engagement with stakeholders and the public across the borough about the implementation of the School Estates Strategy. This would also provide an opportunity for the Council to clarify the restrictions of the existing legal framework, which does not permit them to effect direct change equally across all schools.
- The Commission acknowledges that the 20% pupil vacancy rate across the borough's primary schools is not sustainable and the Council needs to act to maintain the quality and integrity of education in Hackney.
- A number of concerns with the approach used in the consultation are highlighted in the Commission's report. In particular, it was not clear to the Commission how the information would be analysed and used to develop proposals for the next stage of the process, given the volume and wide ranging nature of the feedback likely to be received.
- Whilst accepting the financial impact falling school rolls is having, the Commission would have welcomed the provision of further evidence to demonstrate this impact on schools. More details from the affected schools would have helped those responding to the consultation to understand the implications of the situation and the Commission believes this could assist the case for change.
- The Commission also considers that it would be helpful for the Council to provide further information, going forwards, on the number of school places that need to be removed and a more detailed review, with costs, of possible alternative models for delivering the required reduction. For example, other local authorities have chosen a merger-led approach rather than school closures.
- Falling school rolls impact the wider community. In addition, they are an indication of a loss of children and families from the area, which will need the Council to make maximum use of all available options to deliver on its broader aims to create diverse and sustainable communities.
- Financial viability is clearly a key factor to be considered when determining the future of schools with falling rolls. The latest figures indicate the number of local schools carrying forward a budget deficit at the end of 2022/23 will rise from 11 to 13. However, the picture for the schools in the consultation is mixed, with some managing to maintain a surplus whilst others have a substantial deficit.
- If all the proposals go ahead, the cost to the Council is estimated to be £3.4m, of which £1m will be ongoing (for security of the vacant sites).
- The provision of further information on the additional support that may be made available to help children with SEND transfer to new schools might give some reassurance to parents.

8. Demographic Profile Of Respondents

Postcode Areas Of Respondents

Responses were received from postcodes across the borough and further afield.

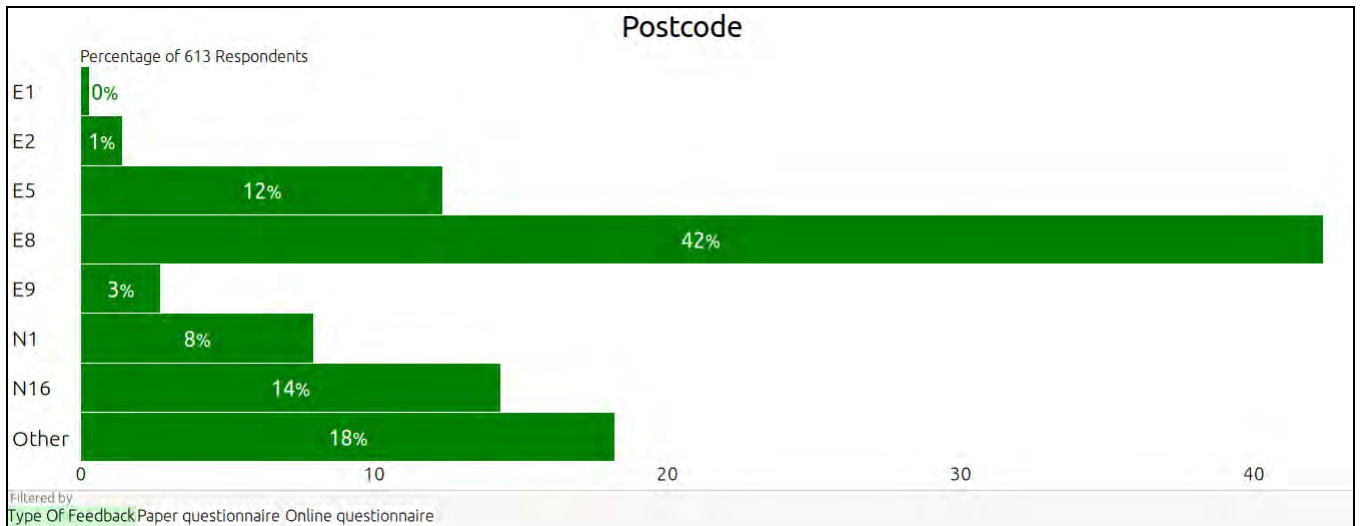


Figure 8.1

Gender Of Respondents

68% of respondents were female and 29% are male. 1% describe themselves as non-binary and a further 1% using another term.

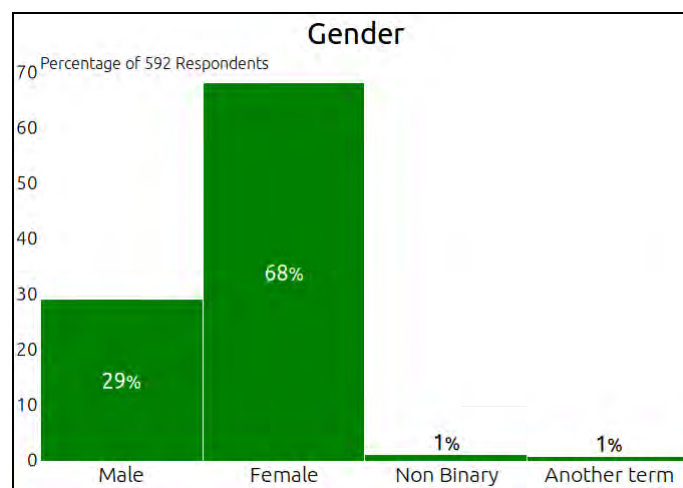


Figure 8.2

Age Profile Of Respondents

Responses were received from a broad cross section of age groups. Eight in ten respondents are under the age of 55, whilst the remainder are aged 55 or over.

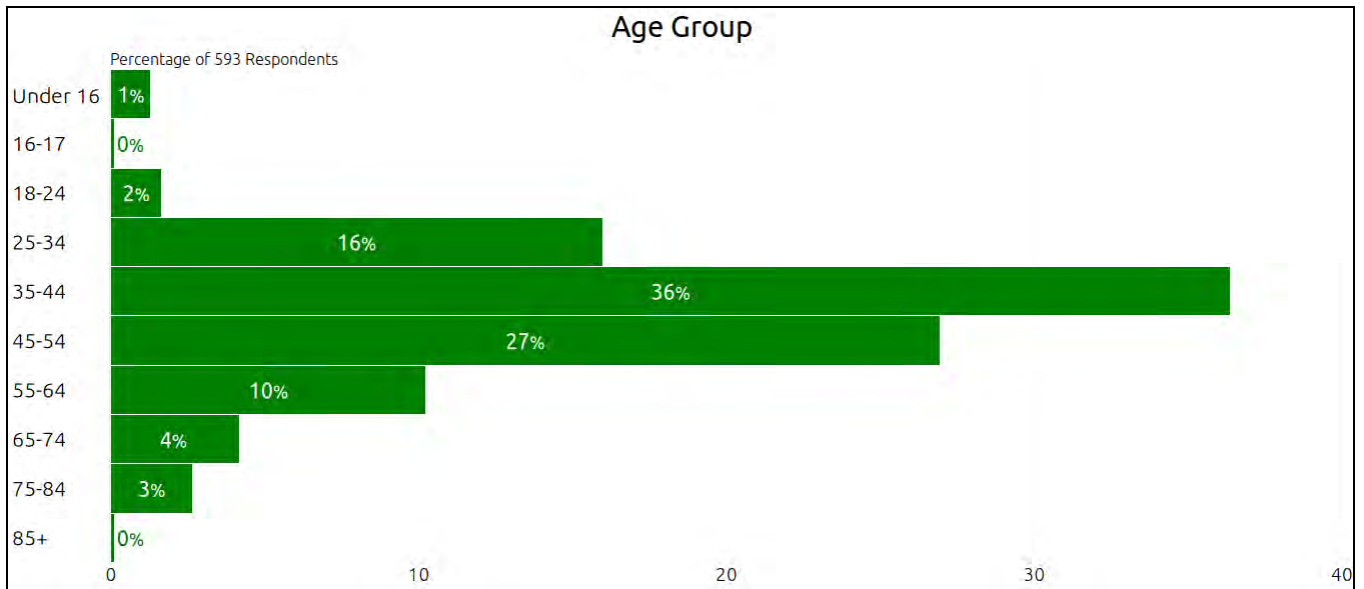


Figure 8.3

Disability

10% of respondents have a disability and 18% have caring responsibilities.

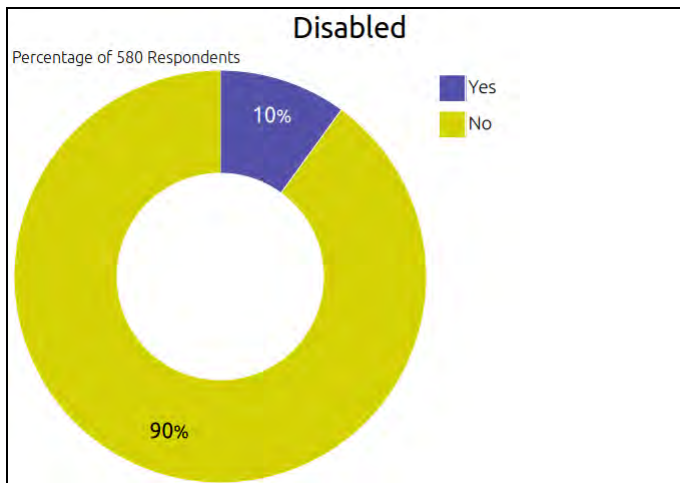


Figure 8.4

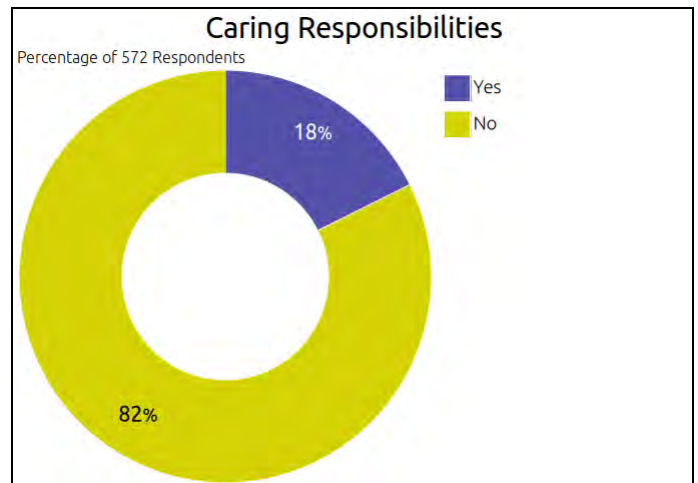


Figure 8.5

Ethnicity Of Respondents

58% of respondents are White, 15% are Black and 8% are Asian. 17% of respondents describe themselves as being from another ethnic group and 1% say they are from a mixed background.

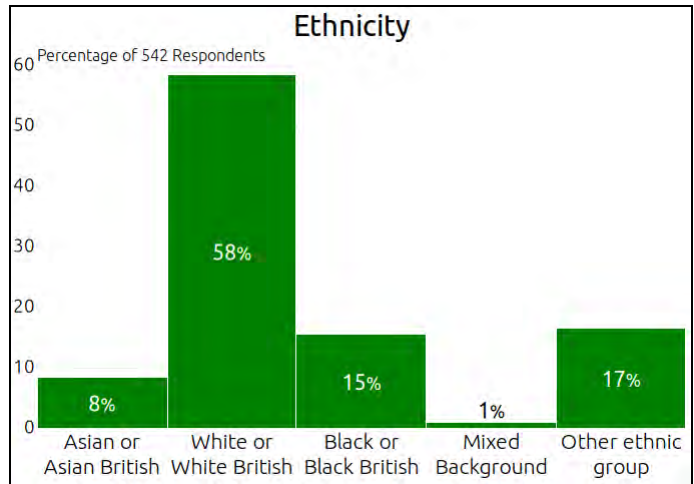


Figure 8.6

Religion Of Respondents

46% of respondents describe themselves as being atheist/having no religious belief.

27% of respondents are Christian and 13% Muslim. Smaller proportions are Jewish (2%), Buddhist (1%), Hindu (1%) or Sikh (1%). 6% describe themselves as having another belief or religion.

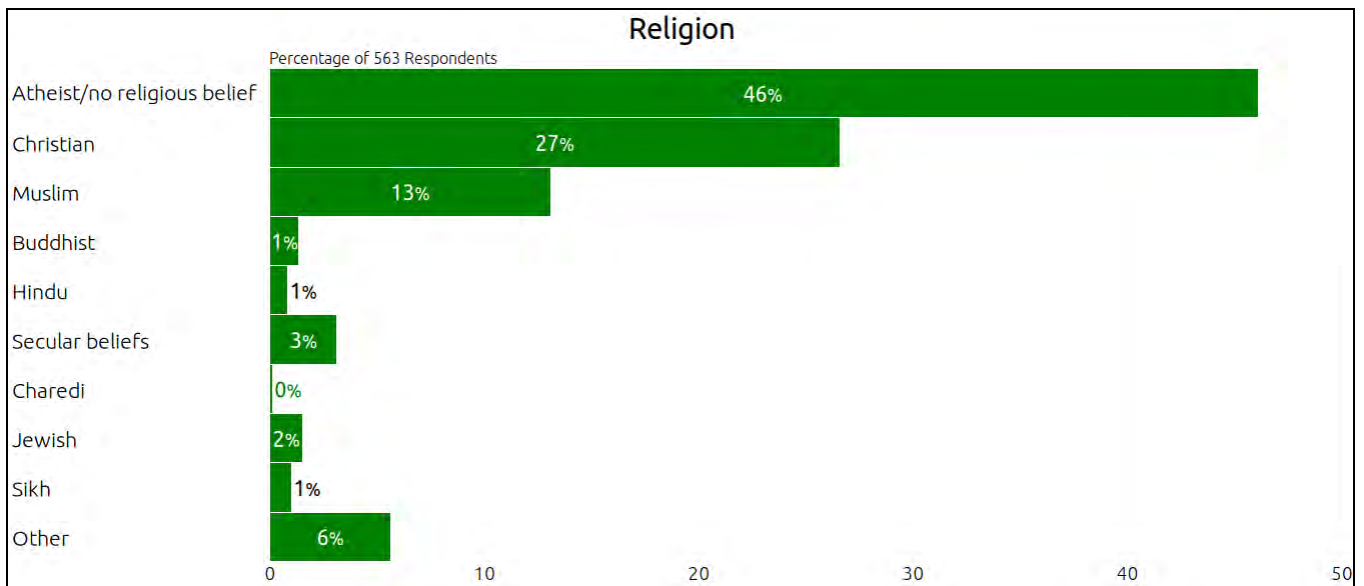


Figure 8.7

Sexual Orientation Of Respondents

19% of respondents reported that they prefer not to answer the question about sexual orientation.

74% say they are heterosexual, whilst 2% are bisexual. 1% in each case describe themselves as a gay man, lesbian or gay woman, pansexual or queer.

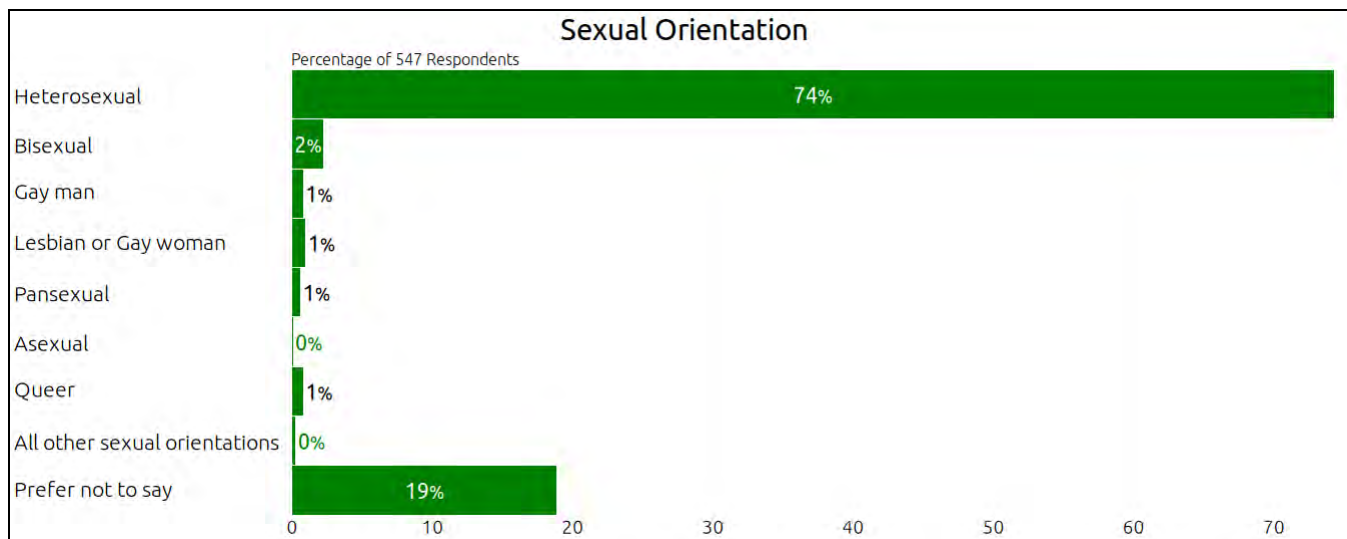


Figure 8.8

Housing Tenure Of Respondents

67% of respondents are in rented accommodation. 24% rent from the council and 16% from a housing association, while a further 27% rent privately.

23% of respondents own their home outright, whilst 3% have a mortgage. 6% are in a shared ownership property.

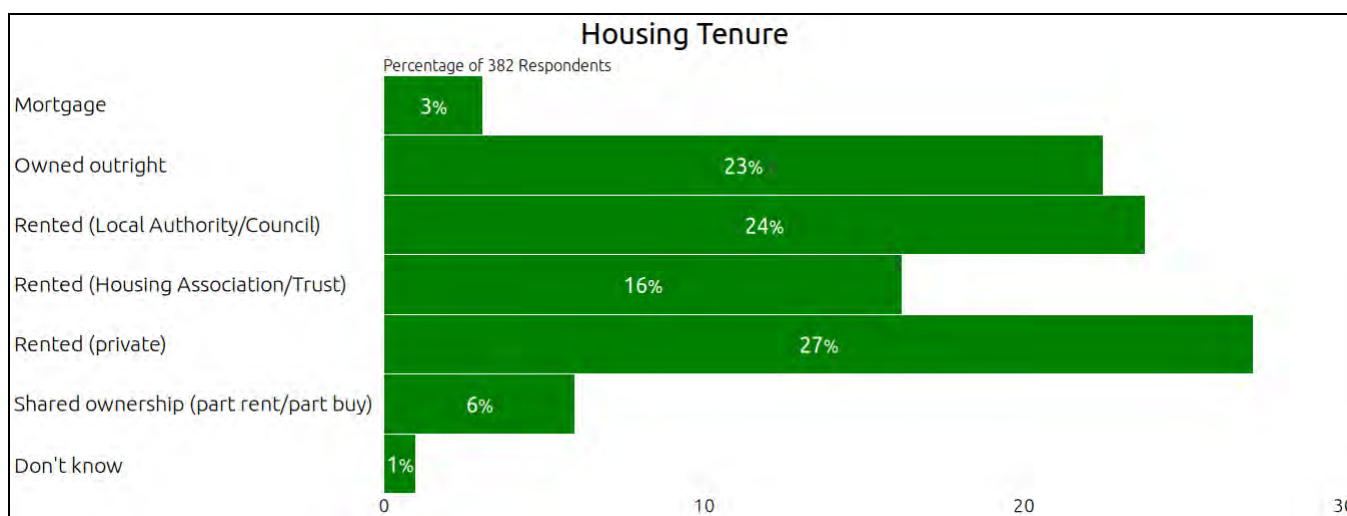


Figure 8.9

Appendix 1

Report from the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

**Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission**

Room 118, 2nd Floor
Hackney Town Hall
Mare Street
London, E8 1EA

15th July 2023

martin.bradford@hackney.gov.uk

Cllr Anntionette Bramble,
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education,
Young People and Children's Social Care
London Borough of Hackney.

Dear Cllr Bramble

School Estates Strategy (Falling School Rolls) - Informal Consultation Response

At its recent meeting on the 27th June 2023, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission scrutinised proposals emerging from the School Estates Strategy to close two primary schools (De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer) and to merge a further four (Baden-Powell with Nightingale and Colvestone with Princess May). At this meeting, members of the Commission agreed to submit a short summary of its conclusions which were to be submitted to the informal consultation on these proposals (ending 16th July 2023).

The Commission is grateful for the support and contributions from local parents representatives (from Colvestone Primary School and Baden Powell Primary School) as well as those officers that attended the meeting and who responded to questions raised by members. All these contributions have helped to shape and inform the Commission's response to the informal consultation which is attached to this letter. A full record of this meeting is provided through the [audio visual recording](#) and the [draft minutes](#).

Schools are anchors within local communities. As well as being a hub for learning, creativity and inclusion schools are also commonly the centre of community and social networks of local children, families. Children over multiple generations have often attended these same local schools which help to create long-standing bonds and ties to the community, therefore changes to the local school establishment undoubtedly raises concerns among local children and families, school staff and among the wider community. With a 20% pupil vacancy rate across local primary schools the Commission acknowledges that the current position is not sustainable

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and there is a need for the Council to act to preserve the integrity and quality of local educational systems.

The Commission understands the difficulties and challenges of falling school rolls and accepts that there are no easy pathways ahead in making such difficult decisions about the future of our local schools. The existing legal framework for education provision by the local authority compounds the difficulty of such decisions, which whilst placing a duty on local authorities to ensure that there is sufficient education does not give them jurisdiction to effect *direct change* equally across *all* educational settings. Furthermore, the Commission is all too aware that any decision to close a locally maintained school now is likely to be final as any future increase in local demand for education provision will need to be met through the academy or free school sector (*the academy and free school presumption* as set out in the Education Act 2011).

Scrutiny can play a positive and constructive role in local decision making, particularly where decisions might be difficult and challenging. Engaging and bringing local stakeholders together helps to bring a shared understanding of the issues and challenges at hand and can help to identify a common way forward. Scrutiny, where proposals are challenged and tested in public can also provide assurance to both local decision makers and the local community that subsequent decisions are taken in the public interest.

Attached is the submission of the Commission to the informal consultation to the School Estates Strategy (Falling Rolls) and the proposal to close two primary schools and merge a further four which we hope will prove helpful. As the focus of scrutiny is strategic it has necessarily avoided commenting on individual proposals for specific schools but has sought to draw together issues which can positively inform current and future decision making in this area.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Sophie Conway

Chair, Children and Young People Scrutiny
Commission

Cllr Margaret Gordon

Vice Chair, Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission

Cc:

- Jacquie Burke, Group Director Children and Education
- Paul Senior, Director of Education and Inclusion
- school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission Submission to the Informal Consultation on the Proposals to Close Two Primary Schools and Merge a Further Four

Consultation

1. The Commission welcomes the ambitions of the informal consultation as an opportunity to engage and involve a wide range of local stakeholders ahead of any statutory consultation and formal decision making process on the future of local schools. Given that the consultation is likely to cause concern and anxiety among children and families likely to be impacted by the proposals to close or merge local schools however, it is important that there are clear and unambiguous expectations of the information which is required from contributors in this consultation.

The [consultation documentation](#) sets out just one question (whether contributors agree or disagree with the proposals) and one open-ended invitation to comment on the proposals more broadly. Alongside some stakeholders, the Commission wish to highlight a number of concerns with this approach:

- a) The agree/ disagree questioning infers that there is some form of ballot on the proposals which may inflate expectations arising from this consultation.
- b) Whilst understanding there is genuine desire to garner wide ranging feedback on the proposals, with little guidance as to what information is being sought through this open-ended questioning, stakeholders may be confused as to what practical, useful or meaningful information might be required which may influence or provide mitigation for the proposals or future subsequent plans.

In relation to above, given the volume and wide ranging nature of contributions likely to be received through the consultation, it was not clear to members of the Commission as to how this information would be analysed and used in developing proposals for the next stage of this process. In this context, further clarification was needed.

2. GLA modelling forecasts that school rolls will continue to decline in Hackney over the medium to long-term with rolls not expected to stabilise until the earliest in 2029/30. Given that the impact of falling rolls is a long term policy issue and likely to impact on a growing number of schools across the borough, the Commission suggests that this might be the basis for broader borough wide public conversation on the *implementation* of the School Estates Strategy. Such a process with broader stakeholder and public engagement may help to further develop overarching principles and guidance which can inform future proposals in relation to school place planning. Equally importantly, this would also be a further opportunity for the Council to clearly again set out its duties and obligations in respect of school place planning and in maintaining high quality education for all young people across Hackney, but to also highlight the limitations and the legal framework in which it can act to reduce provision, which is perhaps less widely understood.

Falling School Rolls - Impact and Evidence

3. The Commission acknowledges the financial impact that falling school rolls is having across the local education system and indeed the wider community. In Hackney Education's own estimate, falling school rolls has meant that local schools are missing out on up to £30m of central government funding due to places going unfilled in local primary schools. In making the case for proposed primary school closures and mergers, the Commission would have welcomed further evidence to illustrate how falling school rolls have begun to impact on the delivery of local education. In particular further evidence would have been welcome in respect of the following:
 - The number of teaching and other support staff (classroom assistants) lost in the local educational system;
 - Impact on extra -curricular activities on local schools (visits and after school clubs etc);
 - Impact on building maintenance and other physical investments.

A more detailed narrative from schools themselves would help stakeholders and the wider community to fully understand how falling school rolls impacts on schools, teachers and of course the educational support and development provided to children themselves. Such data would help stakeholders understand the impact of falling school rolls and assist the case for change.

4. Officers presented evidence to the Commission that local proposals to close or merge schools were delayed to ensure that the impact of those local interventions to help maintain the viability of local schools were fully tested and evaluated. Whilst officers noted that a number of actions that local schools had taken to help improve financial viability and long-term sustainability (e.g. shared leadership, vertical classes, clustering/ Federation) the Commission felt it would have been useful to share further evidence of the impact of these interventions.

Understanding that the issue of falling school rolls is likely to be an ongoing issue for the medium to long-term in Hackney and other central London boroughs, it is important that there is a open and transparent evidence base about what actions are effective, not only to inform future policy and decision making but to also ensure that there is greater community awareness and understanding of the reasonings behind future decision making.

5. Recognising that falling rolls is a London wide issue where a number of other boroughs are having to make similar difficult choices about the future of local schools, the Commission believe that in future decision making, it would be helpful to understand more about the different approaches taken across these authorities (for example, why Lambeth has adopted an approach which is more focused mergers rather than closure of schools under its jurisdiction). This underlines the importance

of the need for London boroughs to work collectively and to develop and share local innovations and solutions to the challenges of falling school rolls which can help develop and extend best practice across London. The work of London Council's on this issue is noted by the Commission as this can provide a conduit for such intelligence and information sharing.

Objectives of the Proposals and Possible Alternatives

6. Whilst the need to remove surplus places in the primary sector has been made clear to the stakeholders, further clarification was perhaps needed as to the *numbers of places* that are needed to be removed to ensure the ongoing sustainability of local education systems. Whilst assessment criteria used to assess and identify which schools fall into scope (based on financial viability, falling school rolls etc) it is not apparent if there is a 'target' figure which the planned closures or mergers aimed to achieve in reducing school places through this process.
7. The Commission would also welcome further clarification as to possible alternative models and options to reduce vacancies in the local school system. In particular, the Commission is keen to understand why it may be preferable to close rather than merge schools and why (for example) [other authorities](#) have opted for a predominantly school merger approach rather than a mixed model of closures and mergers. Given the possible liabilities to the Council, it would also be helpful to have financial assessment of the different options (noting that London wide documentation suggest that school mergers may be preferred by some authorities as the liabilities to the Council could be minimised (particularly in relation to staff redundancy costs)).

Going forward therefore, the Commission felt it would be helpful in further delivery stages of the School Estates Strategy to have a clearer understanding of the number of places that need to be removed (for sustainability) and a more detailed appraisal (with costs) of the different options which may deliver the required reduction in places.

Coordinating a cross-department local response

8. Falling school rolls is a clearly systemic issue in which a range of national and regional issues (e.g. falling birth rates, Brexit and the housing crisis) have interacted to precipitate widespread migration of families from inner city areas. Whilst the Commission accepts that there is no easy solution which will resolve this problem at either national or local level, it does believe that a more coordinated and consistent local approach which seeks to utilise and align those levers over which the local authority does have control, may help to *mitigate* some of the impact of falling school rolls.

The Commission suggests that there are a number of local processes over which the Council does exert some control, which albeit on their own may appear to have

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limited impact, but if aligned to this purpose may have some cumulative impact. Examples noted by the Commission include:

- Further promotion of inclusive schools and education to ensure that more children are supported in mainstream local education settings;
- Minimise the loss of pupils through cross-border flows where neighbouring authorities may have comparatively better borough wide offers (e.g. FSM provision, wraparound school provision or holiday programme activities);¹
- Ensure that there is effective, regular and ongoing engagement with parents whose children are receiving Elective Home Education and that they are aware of the pathways back to mainstream education;²
- Further assurance that Housing and Education services are working closely together so that where possible, families can be supported to stay within the borough (e.g. particularly in relation to placements of Temporary Accommodation)
- Ensuring local development plans and other planning policies reflect the need to develop family accommodation.³

In this same vein, the Commission wishes to emphasise that falling school rolls is not an issue solely for local education and children services as the impact and repercussions of such closures and mergers are likely to be felt much more widely across the community and across the wider family of council services. Falling school rolls is an indicator of the loss of children and families from local communities which will need the local authority to maximise the use of all those levers at its disposal if it is to deliver on broader local ambitions for genuinely diverse and sustainable communities.

Plans to Support Local Secondary Schools Against Falling School Rolls

9. Falling school rolls in the primary sector will inevitably soon impact on secondary education. With demand for primary places peaking in 2019 it is likely that demand for secondary schools will peak this or next academic year. The Commission notes that there have already been recent reports of secondary school closures in other parts of London - 2 of these in Lambeth.

[Local admissions data](#) suggests that, without any reductions in PAN, surplus places in the secondary will begin to accumulate in Hackney from 2022/23. This data estimates that surplus places will increase year on year, so that in 2028 there will be an estimated 367 surplus places in secondary schools across Hackney (which is the equivalent of 12 Form Entry).

¹ 2022 [admissions data](#) suggest that **135** children were offered reception places outside of Hackney.

² Currently over **200** children (excluding those from the Charedi community) are in EHE.

³ Data submitted to the Cabinet report suggests that 70% of planned new homes for the borough comprise 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation.

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The authority's ability to act to address growing numbers of pupil vacancies in the secondary sector will however be more limited, as the majority of schools in the secondary sector in Hackney are academies, free schools or faith schools (16 out of 18 schools) over which the Council has no direct jurisdiction (in terms of reduce PANs or decision to close). In this context, the Commission is concerned that measures to reduce local places may fall disproportionately on the small number of local maintained secondary schools. The Commission would therefore welcome further assurance on how local secondary schools are being engaged in preparation for prospective falling school rolls and how the authority intends to protect the local diversity of provision in secondary settings.

Managing school deficits

10. Financial viability is clearly a key determinant in the future of local schools facing challenges from falling school rolls. Data submitted as part of the Cabinet report suggests that this is a complex and varied picture however, where some schools in the scope for closure or merger have managed to maintain a significant budget surplus whilst others have accumulated substantial deficits. Whilst wishing to avoid comment on any singular schools financial situation it was not clear to the Commission how the authority had allowed a school to have an ongoing budget deficit of around £500k for the past three financial years and what support had been provided to turn around this position. This clearly presents a financial risk / exposure to the wider DSG budget if proposals are confirmed.
11. The scale of the financial challenges facing schools is clear. The most recent data published at Schools Forum suggest a deteriorating financial position across local community schools which indicate that the number of schools carrying forward a deficit revenue balance at end 2022/23 has risen from 11 to 13 local schools and where the total budget deficit across these schools has risen from £2,254,228 in 2021/22 to £3,463,813 in 2022/23 (a 53% increase). Nine of these schools will carry forward a revenue budget deficit in excess of £200k.

In the context of the above, the Commission welcomes the establishment of a dedicated schools strategy team to support schools in face of ongoing falling rolls and make sure schools are making appropriate plans to mitigate against falling rolls, and working together to minimise disruption and for the continuation of education. In addition however, the Commission is seeking further assurance as to what specific business planning and financial support will be made available to local schools to help contain and manage budgets, and there are effective plans in place to reduce budget deficits. The Commission is also keen to understand if there will be any additional capacity within the existing business support/financial planning function in Hackney Education, given that demands upon this service are likely to increase.

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Budget impact for Hackney Education and Council (General Fund)

12. Should the proposals to close two schools and merge a further four be confirmed by Cabinet later this year, it is estimated that this will result in an estimated £3.4m cost of which £1m will be recurring (for security of vacant sites). There are a number of uncertainties about the projections and accountabilities within this budget for which the Commission would like further reassurance:
- a) How confident are officers that the projected costs and financial liabilities in administering the proposed closures and mergers are realistic given the i) expected deteriorating financial positions of schools in scope as roll numbers may decline ii) the unknown contracted liabilities of the schools in scope?
 - b) Further clarity is also needed as to the financial responsibility of these costs and which local budgets will be accountable for any occurring losses/liabilities (e.g. which will be met by Direct Schools Grant and those by the Hackney Council General Fund).
 - c) The Commission is particularly concerned about those liabilities from the proposed closure and mergers which may fall within the Council General Fund, not only in the context of the broader pressures this budget is under, but also if this may impact on the Hackney Education budget (where discretionary spending is limited and budget savings adversely impact a small number of services).

Mitigations - SEND

13. Accepting that what has been presented thus far are just proposals for school closures and mergers, along with other stakeholders, the Commission would welcome further details in respect of the possible mitigations which *may* be put in place to support affected children, families and schools should these be approved.

The impact of prospective school closures and amalgamations on children with SEND has been a key feature in many of the consultation responses, with many parents anxious about the upheaval that a school move would have on their child. In particular, parents were concerned that they would be required to move their child with SEND from a one form entry school (which had been their preferred choice) to a larger two form entry school which may be a more challenging experience.

At present, documentation proposing the closure and merger of schools notes that 'additional provision' will be provided to support children with SEND, with no illustrative examples of what that might look like. In the context of the above, further details of the mitigations which might be put in place to support transition of children with SEND to new schools may provide some reassurance to parents impacted by this change.

Impact on the diversity of schools

14. A long-standing area of interest to the Commission has been diversity of children within local schools. The Commission believes that a key aim of local education provision is not only to ensure that there is diversity of schools in terms of range and type of settings available for parents to choose from, but also to ensure that there is diversity of children within local schools which reflect the rich and vibrant social, economic and cultural mix of local communities in Hackney. [For example the Commission notes that with the exception of one school in scope for proposals for closure or amalgamation, all have significantly higher rates of Free School Meal entitlement than the Hackney average (36%) for primary schools.]

Accepting the supremacy of parental choice in this matter, the Commission is keen to understand what assurance can be provided that current and future school place planning (or admissions processes) can protect and promote ambitions for diversity *within* and across local schools.

Appendix 2

Questionnaire Used in the Consultation

Consultation on the amalgamation/closure of 6 Hackney primary schools

Introduction

1. (Optional) Your name:

2. Which of the following best describes your interest in this consultation?

(Required)

- I am a parent, carer or guardian of a child at a school included in the proposals
- I am a member of staff or governor at a school included in the proposals
- I am a parent at another school in Hackney
- I am a member of staff or governor at another school in Hackney
- I am an interested member of the public
- Other

If other, please specify:

3. Which of the proposals do you wish to comment on?

Select all that apply

(Required)

- Proposal to close De Beauvoir Primary School
- Proposal to close Randal Cremer Primary School
- Proposed amalgamation of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School
- Proposed amalgamation of Baden Powell Primary School with Nightingale Primary School

Response to the proposals

4. Do you agree or disagree with the proposals?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. Please comment on the proposal(s) in the space below:

About you

This information will help us to understand our service users and residents, allowing us to establish if the response to the questionnaire is representative of the borough. All information is used under the strict controls of the 1998 Data Protection Act and the 2016 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

This information is optional and will not be used in a way that identifies you.

6. Postcode: Please provide the first half of your postcode followed by the first number of the second half

For example, if your postcode was E8 1DY, you would write E8 1. If your postcode was N16 5HB, you would write N16 5.

Postcode:

7. Gender: Are you...

- Male
- Female
- Non Binary
- Another term

If you prefer to use your own term please provide this here:

8. Age: what is your age group?

- Under 16
- 16-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+

9. Disability: Under the Equality Act you are disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

- Yes
- No

10. Caring responsibilities: A carer is someone who spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a family member, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone?

- Yes
- No

11. Ethnicity: Are you...

- Asian or Asian British
- White or White British
- Black or Black British
- Mixed background
- Other ethnic group

Other (please state if you wish):

12. Religion or belief: Are you or do you have...

- Atheist/no religious belief
- Christian
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Secular beliefs
- Charedi
- Jewish
- Sikh

Other (please state if you wish):

13. Sexual orientation: Are you...

- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Gay man
- Lesbian or Gay woman
- Pansexual
- Asexual
- Queer
- All other sexual orientations
- Prefer not to say

Other (please state if you wish):

14. Housing Tenure: Which of the following best describes the ownership of your home?

- Being bought on a mortgage
- Owned outright
- Rented (Local Authority/Council)
- Rented (Housing Association/Trust)

- Rented (private)
- Shared ownership (part rent/part buy)
- Don't know



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Baden Powell - Nearby Schools and Vacancies at November 2023

School	LA	Postcode	Distance to Baden Powell (miles, as crow flies)	Distance to Baden Powell walking (miles)	Walking Time	Direction	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Ofsted
Nightingale	Hackney	E5 8NA	0.1	0.1	2 minutes	SW	0	2	0	1	0	1	3	Good
St Scholastica's	Hackney	E5 8BS	0.22	0.3	6 minutes	NW	1	10	2	0	4	11	1	Good
Millfields	Hackney	E5 0SH	0.31	0.4	8 minutes	SE	3	0	7	9	3	8	0	Good
Benthal	Hackney	N16 7AU	0.33	0.6	10 minutes	NW	24	26	30	23	18	35	20	Good
Northwold	Hackney	E5 8RN	0.43	0.8	15 minutes	NW	24	32	32	25	20	35	20	Good
Southwold	Hackney	E5 9NL	0.43	0.7	14 minutes	NE	14	4	11	8	9	17	16	Outstanding
Rushmore	Hackney	E5 0LE	0.49	0.7	13 minutes	E	0	0	2	6	3	4	4	Good
The Olive	Hackney	E9 6EJ	0.59	0.7	15 minutes	SE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Outstanding
Mossbourne Parkside	Hackney	E8 1AS	0.66	0.7	15 minutes	SW	0	12	0	0	0	0	4	Good
Harrington Hill	Hackney	E5 9JG	0.67	0.9	18 minutes	N	11	14	36	36	32	62	60	Good
Jubilee	Hackney	N16 6NR	0.68	1.1	22 minutes	NW	0	1	1	5	3	0	5	Good
Shacklewell	Hackney	E8 2EA	0.72	0.8	16 minutes	SW	0	1	1	5	3	0	5	Outstanding
Simon Marks	Hackney	N16 6PD	0.72	1	21 minutes	NW	14	17	21	12	7	6	22	Good
St John and St James	Hackney	E9 6DX	0.75	0.8	16 minutes	S	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	Outstanding
Halley House	Hackney	E8 2DJ	0.76	0.9	17 minutes	SW	4	8	3	2	3	15	39	Good
Mandeville	Hackney	E5 0BT	0.78	1	19 minutes	E	8	16	24	32	32	24	26	Good
William Patten	Hackney	N16 0NX	0.8	1.1	22 minutes	NW	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	Outstanding
Morning Side	Hackney	E9 6LL	0.84	1	19 minutes	S	1	9	2	8	0	8	2	Outstanding
Oldhill	Hackney	N16 6LR	0.88	1.2	24 minutes	NW	39	32	19	19	19	21	21	Good
Daubney	Hackney	E5 0EG	0.91	1.2	24 minutes	E	31	37	52	32	33	35	17	Requires Improvement
Princess May	Hackney	N16 8DF	0.93	1	21 minutes	W	30	39	41	28	38	32	30	Good
Berger	Hackney	E9 6HB	0.98	1.3	25 minutes	SE	0	14	0	0	0	7	3	Good
Kingsmead	Hackney	E9 5PP	1	1.3	26 minutes	E	0	3	0	2	0	2	1	Outstanding
St Matthias	Hackney	N16 8DD	1	1.2	25 minutes	W	11	14	6	3	11	11	8	Good
St Mary's	Hackney	N16 0JT	1.07	1.4	28 minutes	NW	17	20	21	11	16	15	13	Good
Gayhurst	Hackney	E8 3EN	1.09	1.3	26 minutes	S	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	Outstanding
Grasmere	Hackney	N16 9PD	1.13	1.5	29 minutes	W	0	0	3	0	2	8	3	Good
						Total	232	313	314	268	261	360	326	

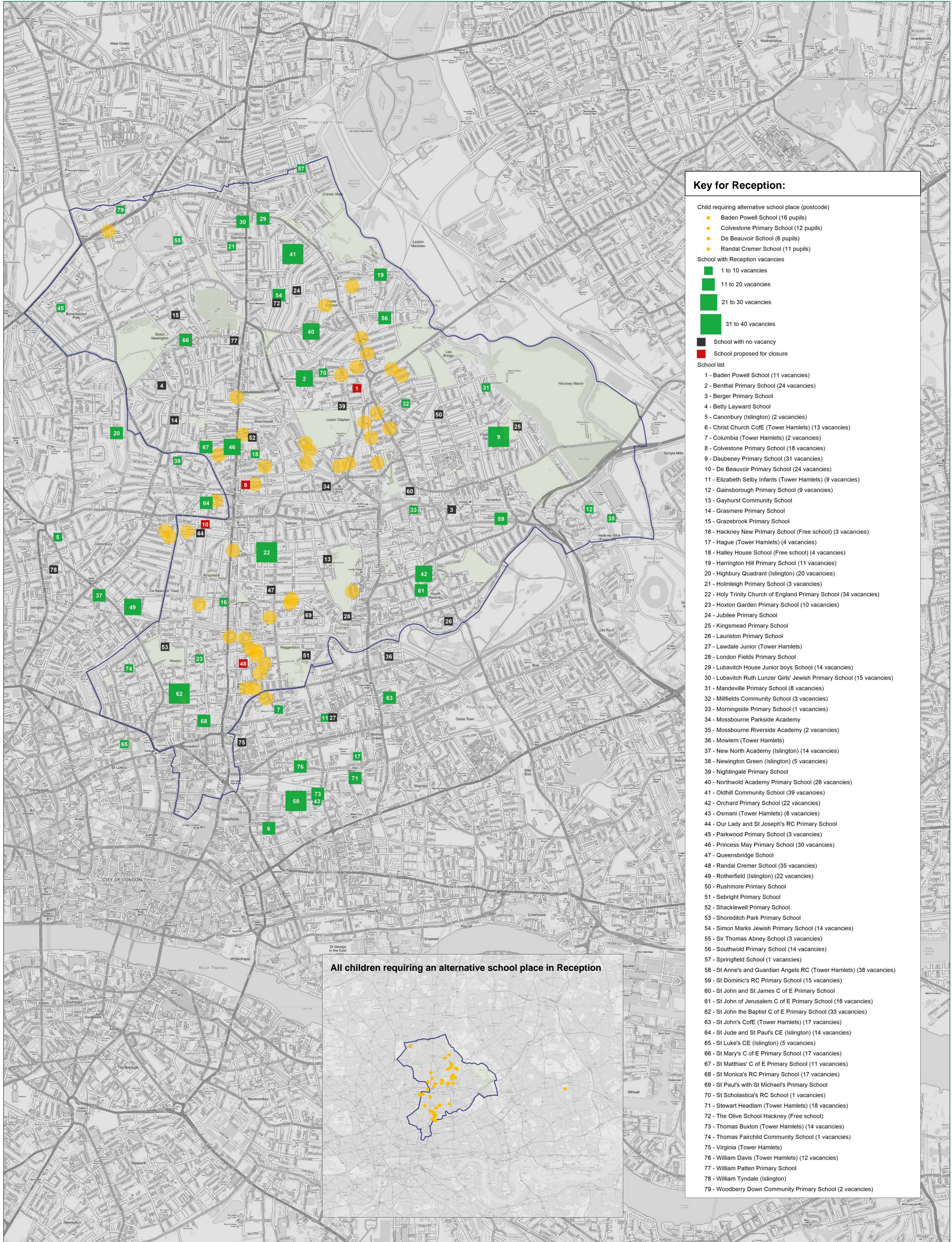
Colvestone - Nearby schools and vacancies at November 2023

School	LA	Postcode	Distance to Colvestone (miles, as crow flies)	Distance to Colvestone walking (miles)	Walking Time	Direction	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Ofsted
Halley House	Hackney	E8 2DJ	0.19	0.3	7 minutes	N	4	8	3	2	3	15	39	Good
Shacklewell	Hackney	E8 2EA	0.29	0.4	9 minutes	N	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	Outstanding
St Jude and St Paul's	Islington	N1 4AZ	0.3	0.5	10 minutes	W	14	10	11	8	28	6	11	Good
Holy Trinity	Hackney	E8 3DY	0.32	0.4	8 minutes	S	34	33	28	30	30	27	32	Good
Princess May	Hackney	N16 8DF	0.32	0.4	8 minutes	N	30	39	41	28	38	32	30	Good
St Matthias	Hackney	N16 8DD	0.38	0.5	11 minutes	N	11	14	6	3	11	11	8	Good
Our Lady and St Joseph's	Hackney	N1 4JB	0.43	0.5	10 minutes	S	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	Outstanding
Mossbourne Parkside	Hackney	E8 1AS	0.46	0.6	12 minutes	E	0	12	0	0	0	0	4	Good
Newington Green	Islington	N16 8NP	0.47	0.6	13 minutes	N	5	6	7	12	2	15	15	Good
Grasmere	Hackney	N16 9PD	0.61	0.9	20 minutes	N	0	0	3	0	2	8	3	Good
Gayhurst	Hackney	E8 3EN	0.65	0.9	20 minutes	SE	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	Outstanding
Queensbridge	Hackney	E8 4ET	0.68	0.8	19 minutes	S	0	3	1	2	1	4	2	Outstanding
Benthal	Hackney	N16 7AU	0.72	1	22 minutes	NE	24	32	32	25	20	35	20	Good
Nightingale	Hackney	E5 8NA	0.74	1	22 minutes	N	0	2	0	1	0	1	3	Good
Betty Hayward	Hackney	N16 9EX	0.79	1.2	26 minutes	NW	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	Good
St Saviour's	Hackney	E5 8BX	0.81	1.1	24 minutes	N	1	10	2	0	4	11	1	Good
Hackney New	Hackney	N1 5TR	0.82	0.8	17 minutes	S	3	1	0	0	0	8	6	Outstanding
St Paul's with St Michael's	Hackney	E8 4PB	0.86	1.2	27 minutes	S	0	7	1	3	3	8	10	Outstanding
Highbury Quadrant	Islington	N5 2DP	0.88	1.2	27 minutes	W	20	33	34	33	31	28	18	Good
The Olive	Hackney	E9 6EJ	0.88	1.1	24 minutes	E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Outstanding
William Patten	Hackney	N16 0NX	0.88	1.1	25 minutes	N	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	Outstanding
St Mary's	Hackney	N16 0JT	0.98	1.4	31 minutes	N	17	20	21	11	16	15	13	Good
London Fields	Hackney	E8 3RL	0.99	0.8	19 minutes	SE	0	2	1	1	1	8	6	Outstanding
Morningside	Hackney	E9 6LL	1	1.2	26 minutes	E	1	9	2	8	0	8	2	Outstanding
Northwold	Hackney	E5 8RN	1	1.4	31 minutes	N	26	23	28	16	15	12	15	Outstanding
St John and St James	Hackney	E9 6DX	1	1.2	27 minutes	W	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	Outstanding
Rotherfield	Islington	N1 3EE	1.04	1.2	27 minutes	SW	22	15	12	11	18	16	18	Good
Millfields	Hackney	E5 0SH	1.06	1.3	28 minutes	NE	3	0	7	9	3	8	0	Good
Sebright	Hackney	E2 8QH	1.09	1.5	33 minutes	S	0	5	0	0	2	3	6	Outstanding
						Total	215	290	245	204	236	285	269	

De Beauvoir - Nearest schools and vacancies at November 2023

School	LA	Postcode	Distance to De Beauvoir (miles, as crow flies)	Distance to De Beauvoir walking (miles)	Walking Time	Direction	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Ofsted
Our Lady and St Joseph's	Hackney	N1 4JB	0.04	0.1	2 minutes	W	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	Outstanding
St Jude and St Paul's	Islington	N1 4AZ	0.15	0.3	6 minutes	N	14	10	11	8	28	6	11	Good
Holy Trinity	Hackney	E8 3DY	0.31	0.4	8 minutes	E	34	33	28	30	30	27	32	Good
Newington Green	Islington	N16 8NP	0.44	0.6	12 minutes	N	5	6	7	12	2	15	15	Good
Hackney New	Hackney	N1 5TR	0.46	0.6	12 minutes	S	4	8	3	2	3	15	39	Outstanding
St Matthias	Hackney	N16 8DD	0.51	0.7	15 minutes	N	11	14	6	3	11	11	8	Good
Princess May	Hackney	N16 8DF	0.52	0.7	16 minutes	N	30	39	41	28	38	32	30	Good
Halley House	Hackney	E8 2DJ	0.54	0.7	16 minutes	NE	4	8	3	2	3	15	39	Good
Queensbridge	Hackney	E8 4ET	0.55	0.8	17 minutes	SE	0	3	1	2	1	4	2	Outstanding
Shacklewell	Hackney	E8 2EA	0.62	0.8	18 minutes	S	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	Outstanding
Rotherfield	Islington	N1 3EE	0.65	0.8	17 minutes	SW	22	15	12	11	18	16	18	Good
Grasmere	Hackney	N16 9PD	0.68	0.8	18 minutes	N	0	0	3	0	2	8	3	Good
New North Academy	Islington	N1 8SJ	0.76	1	21 minutes	SW	14	37	22	36	16	26	27	Good
Gayhurst	Hackney	E8 3EN	0.77	0.9	19 minutes	E	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	Outstanding
Shoreditch Park	Hackney	N1 5JN	0.77	0.9	19 minutes	S	0	0	0	0	0	5	9	Outstanding
Highbury Quadrant	Islington	N5 2DP	0.78	1	23 minutes	NW	20	33	34	33	31	28	18	Good
Mossbourne Parkside	Hackney	E8 1AS	0.78	1	20 minutes	E	0	12	0	0	0	0	4	Good
Hoxton Garden	Hackney	N1 5JD	0.8	0.9	20 minutes	S	10	8	1	0	4	11	18	Good
St Paul's with St Michael's	Hackney	E8 4PB	0.83	1.1	22 minutes	SE	0	7	1	3	3	8	10	Outstanding
Betty Layward	Hackney	N16 9EX	0.88	1.1	23 minutes	NW	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	Good
Canonbury	Islington	N1 2UT	0.89	1.1	22 minutes	W	2	2	0	1	2	4	8	Good
William Tyndale	Islington	N1 2GG	0.95	1.2	24 minutes	W	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	Outstanding
St Mary's	Hackney	N16 0JT	0.97	1.4	28 minutes	N	17	20	21	11	16	15	13	Good
Thomas Fairchild	Hackney	N1 7HA	0.98	1.2	24 minutes	S	1	0	36	35	28	32	30	Requires Improvement
Sebright	Hackney	E2 8QH	1	1.3	27 minutes	S	0	5	0	0	2	3	6	Outstanding
St John the Baptist	Hackney	N1 6JG	1.02	1.1	22 minutes		33	22	23	34	23	27	14	Outstanding
						Total	221	286	258	252	264	311	369	

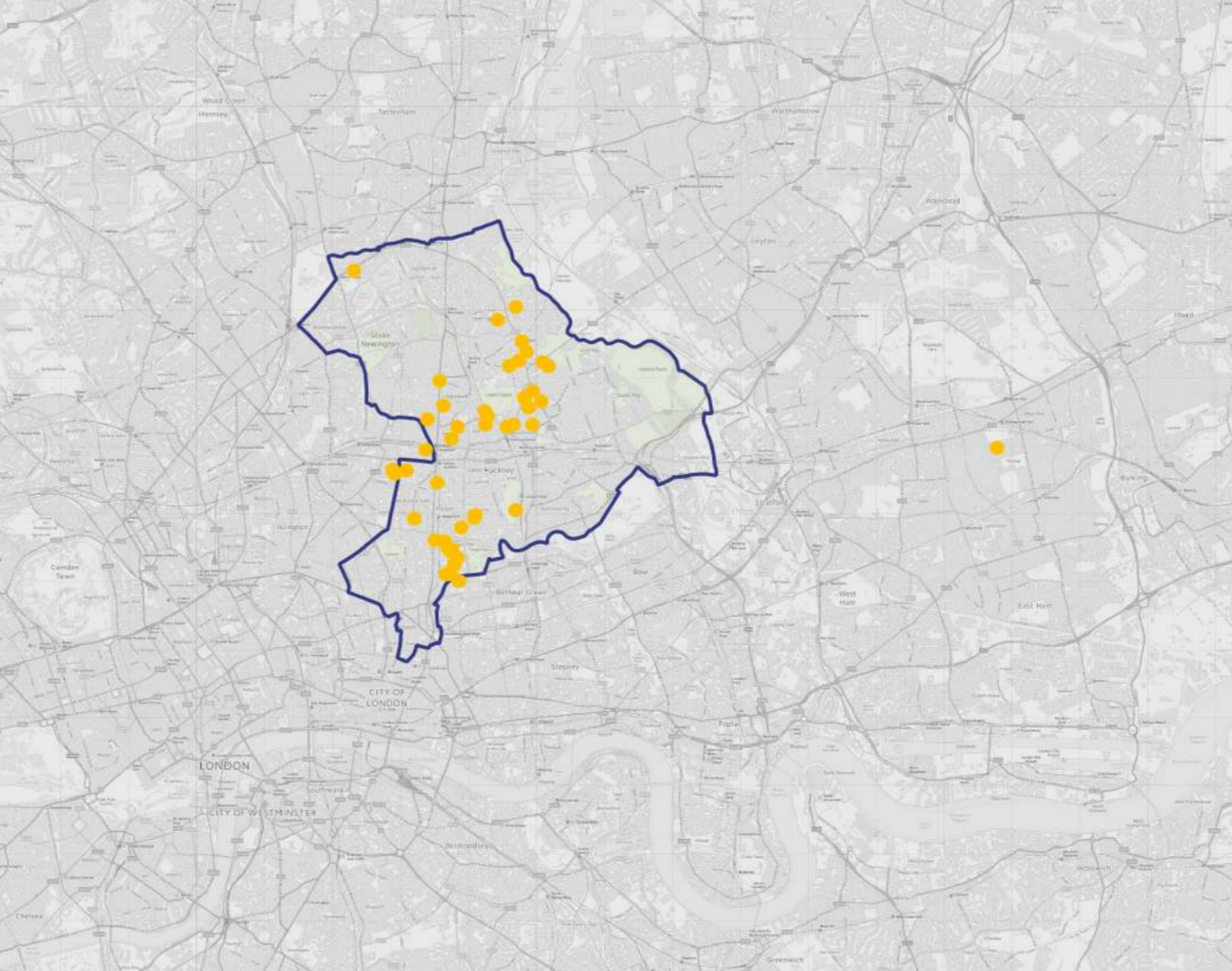
Randal Cremer - Nearby school and vacancies at November 2023														
School	LA	Postcode	Distance to Randal Cremer (miles, as crow flies)	Distance to Randal Cremer (miles, walking)	Walking time	Direction	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Ofsted
Hoxton Garden	Hackney	N1 5JD	0.26	0.4	8 minutes	W	10	8	1	0	4	11	18	Good
Columbia	Tower Hamlets	E2 7RG	0.34	0.5	12 minutes	S	2	2	0	3	7	4	0	Good
St Monica's	Hackney	N1 6QN	0.39	0.6	13 minutes	S	17	8	2	5	2	6	2	Good
Sebright	Hackney	E2 8QH	0.4	0.5	11 minutes	E	0	5	0	0	2	3	6	Outstanding
St John the Baptist	Hackney	N1 6JG	0.41	0.6	13 minutes	W	33	22	23	34	23	27	14	Outstanding
Virginia	Tower Hamlets	E2 7NQ	0.45	0.6	13 minutes	S	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	Outstanding
Queensbridge	Hackney	E8 4ET	0.46	0.6	14 minutes	N	0	3	1	2	1	4	2	Outstanding
Shoreditch Park	Hackney	N1 5JN	0.48	0.7	16 minutes	W	0	0	0	0	0	5	9	Outstanding
St Paul's with St Michael's	Hackney	E8 4PB	0.52	0.6	14 minutes	NE	0	7	1	3	3	8	10	Outstanding
Hackney New	Hackney	N1 5TR	0.56	0.6	13 minutes	S	3	1	0	0	0	8	6	Outstanding
Elizabeth Selby Infants	Tower Hamlets	E2 6PP	0.59	0.8	18 minutes	SE	9	4	4	0	0	0	0	Good
Lawdale Junior	Tower Hamlets	E2 6LS	0.63	0.9	20 minutes	SE	0	0	0	0	13	4	7	Good
St Matthias	Hackney	E2 6DY	0.65	1.5	34 minutes	N	11	14	6	3	11	11	8	Good
Thomas Fairchild	Hackney	N1 7HA	0.69	0.9	20 minutes	W	1	0	36	35	28	32	30	Requires Improvement
William Davis	Tower Hamlets	E2 6ET	0.7	0.9	20 minutes	S	12	12	0	1	14	3	1	Good
London Fields	Hackney	E8 3RL	0.72	1.1	23 minutes	NE	0	2	1	1	1	8	6	Outstanding
Rotherfield	Islington	N1 3EE	0.76	1	23 minutes	NW	22	15	12	11	18	16	18	Good
Holy Trinity	Hackney	E8 3DY	0.8	1.1	23 minutes	N	34	33	28	30	30	27	32	Good
St Luke's	Islington	EC1V 3SJ	0.84	1.2	28 minutes	SW	5	1	0	0	0	2	0	Good
Gayhurst	Hackney	E8 3EN	0.85	1.1	24 minutes	NE	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	Outstanding
Our Lady and St Joseph	Hackney	N1 4JB	0.86	1.1	23 minutes	N	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	Outstanding
St Anne's and Guardian Angles	Tower Hamlets	E1 5AW	0.87	1.2	26 minutes	S	38	36	37	30	19	33	24	Good
Hague	Tower Hamlets	E2 0BP	0.89	1.2	27 minutes	SE	4	9	3	1	2	2	4	Good
Thomas Buxton	Tower Hamlets	E1 5AR	0.89	1.2	26 minutes	S	14	7	7	3	5	4	2	Outstanding
Mowlem	Tower Hamlets	E2 9HE	0.9	1.1	25 minutes	E	0	1	0	0	3	1	3	Outstanding
St Johns	Tower Hamlets	E2 9LR	0.92	1.3	28 minutes	E	17	12	10	12	16	8	5	Good
Osmani	Tower Hamlets	E1 5AD	0.93	1.3	29 minutes	S	8	1	2	3	9	8	8	Good
Stewart Headlam	Tower Hamlets	E1 5RE	0.96	1.3	29 minutes	SE	18	9	1	1	6	2	21	Good
New North Academy	Islington	N1 8SJ	0.97	1.2	27 minutes	NW	14	37	22	36	16	26	27	Good
Christ Church CE	Tower Hamlets	E1 6PU	0.99	1.2	26 minutes	S	13	14	4	0	1	12	8	Good
						Total	285	267	205	215	235	276	273	



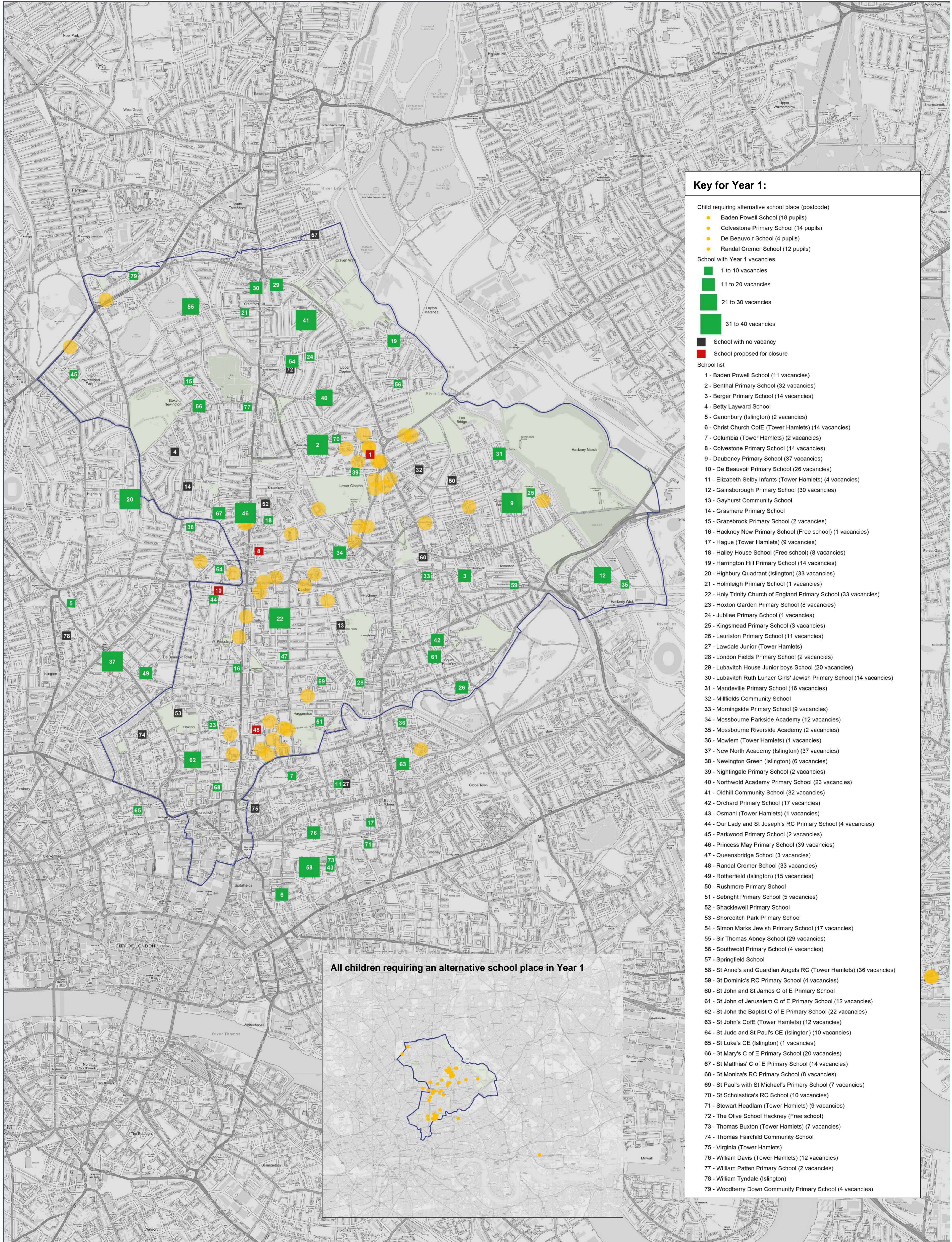
Key for Reception:

- Child requiring alternative school place (postcode)
 - Baden Powell School (16 pupils)
 - Colvestone Primary School (12 pupils)
 - De Beauvoir School (6 pupils)
 - Randal Cremer School (11 pupils)
- School with Reception vacancies
 - 1 to 10 vacancies
 - 11 to 20 vacancies
 - 21 to 30 vacancies
 - 31 to 40 vacancies
- School with no vacancy
 -
- School proposed for closure
 -
- School list
 - 1 - Baden Powell School (11 vacancies)
 - 2 - Benthal Primary School (24 vacancies)
 - 3 - Berger Primary School
 - 4 - Betty Layward School
 - 5 - Canonbury (Islington) (2 vacancies)
 - 6 - Christ Church CoE (Tower Hamlets) (13 vacancies)
 - 7 - Columbia (Tower Hamlets) (2 vacancies)
 - 8 - Colvestone Primary School (18 vacancies)
 - 9 - Daubeney Primary School (31 vacancies)
 - 10 - De Beauvoir Primary School (24 vacancies)
 - 11 - Elizabeth Selby Infants (Tower Hamlets) (9 vacancies)
 - 12 - Gainsborough Primary School (9 vacancies)
 - 13 - Gayhurst Community School
 - 14 - Grasmere Primary School
 - 15 - Grazebrook Primary School
 - 16 - Hackney New Primary School (Free school) (3 vacancies)
 - 17 - Hague (Tower Hamlets) (4 vacancies)
 - 18 - Halley House School (Free school) (4 vacancies)
 - 19 - Harrington Hill Primary School (11 vacancies)
 - 20 - Highbury Quadrant (Islington) (20 vacancies)
 - 21 - Holmleigh Primary School (3 vacancies)
 - 22 - Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (34 vacancies)
 - 23 - Hoxton Garden Primary School (10 vacancies)
 - 24 - Jubilee Primary School
 - 25 - Kingsmead Primary School
 - 26 - Lauriston Primary School
 - 27 - Lawdale Junior (Tower Hamlets)
 - 28 - London Fields Primary School
 - 29 - Lubavitch House Junior boys School (14 vacancies)
 - 30 - Lubavitch Ruth Lunzer Girls' Jewish Primary School (15 vacancies)
 - 31 - Mandeville Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 32 - Millfields Community School (3 vacancies)
 - 33 - Morningside Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 34 - Mossbourne Parkside Academy
 - 35 - Mossbourne Riverside Academy (2 vacancies)
 - 36 - Mowlem (Tower Hamlets)
 - 37 - New North Academy (Islington) (14 vacancies)
 - 38 - Newington Green (Islington) (5 vacancies)
 - 39 - Nightingale Primary School
 - 40 - Northwold Academy Primary School (26 vacancies)
 - 41 - Oldhill Community School (39 vacancies)
 - 42 - Orchard Primary School (22 vacancies)
 - 43 - Osmani (Tower Hamlets) (8 vacancies)
 - 44 - Our Lady and St Joseph's RC Primary School
 - 45 - Parkwood Primary School (3 vacancies)
 - 46 - Princess May Primary School (30 vacancies)
 - 47 - Queensbridge School
 - 48 - Randal Cremer School (35 vacancies)
 - 49 - Rotherfield (Islington) (22 vacancies)
 - 50 - Rushmore Primary School
 - 51 - Sebright Primary School
 - 52 - Shacklwell Primary School
 - 53 - Shoreditch Park Primary School
 - 54 - Simon Marks Jewish Primary School (14 vacancies)
 - 55 - Sir Thomas Abney School (3 vacancies)
 - 56 - Southwold Primary School (14 vacancies)
 - 57 - Springfield School (1 vacancies)
 - 58 - St Anne's and Guardian Angels RC (Tower Hamlets) (38 vacancies)
 - 59 - St Dominic's RC Primary School (15 vacancies)
 - 60 - St John and St James C of E Primary School
 - 61 - St John of Jerusalem C of E Primary School (16 vacancies)
 - 62 - St John the Baptist C of E Primary School (33 vacancies)
 - 63 - St John's CoE (Tower Hamlets) (17 vacancies)
 - 64 - St Jude and St Paul's CE (Islington) (14 vacancies)
 - 65 - St Luke's CE (Islington) (5 vacancies)
 - 66 - St Mary's C of E Primary School (17 vacancies)
 - 67 - St Matthias' C of E Primary School (11 vacancies)
 - 68 - St Monica's RC Primary School (17 vacancies)
 - 69 - St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School
 - 70 - St Scholastica's RC School (1 vacancies)
 - 71 - Stewart Headlam (Tower Hamlets) (18 vacancies)
 - 72 - The Olive School Hackney (Free school)
 - 73 - Thomas Buxton (Tower Hamlets) (14 vacancies)
 - 74 - Thomas Fairchild Community School (1 vacancies)
 - 75 - Virginia (Tower Hamlets)
 - 76 - William Davis (Tower Hamlets) (12 vacancies)
 - 77 - William Patten Primary School
 - 78 - William Tyndale (Islington)
 - 79 - Woodberry Down Community Primary School (2 vacancies)

All children requiring an alternative school place in Reception



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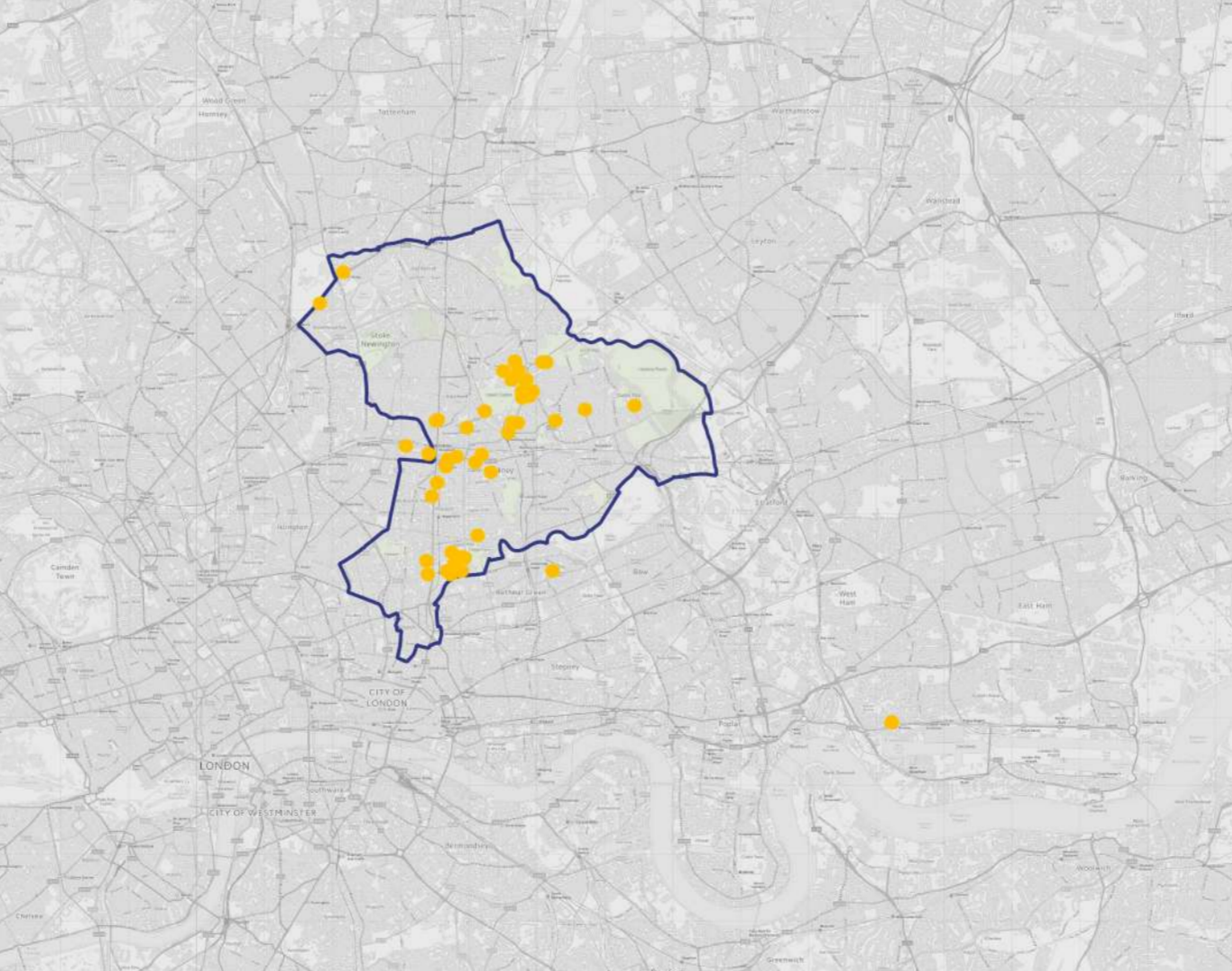
Key for Year 1:

- Child requiring alternative school place (postcode)
 - Baden Powell School (18 pupils)
 - Colvestone Primary School (14 pupils)
 - De Beauvoir School (4 pupils)
 - Randal Cremer School (12 pupils)
- School with Year 1 vacancies
 - 1 to 10 vacancies
 - 11 to 20 vacancies
 - 21 to 30 vacancies
 - 31 to 40 vacancies
- School with no vacancy
- School proposed for closure

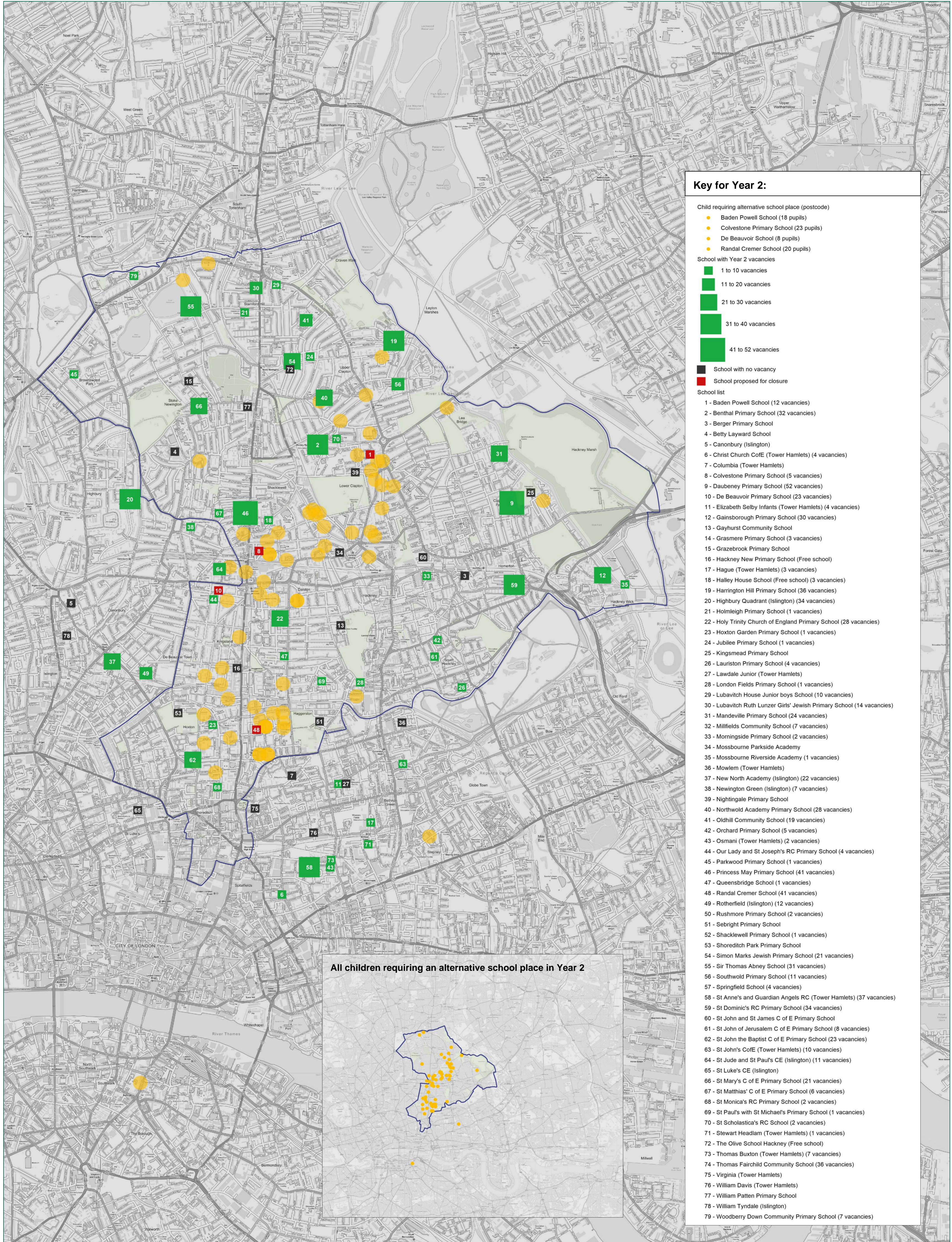
School list

- 1 - Baden Powell School (11 vacancies)
- 2 - Benthall Primary School (32 vacancies)
- 3 - Berger Primary School (14 vacancies)
- 4 - Betty Layward School
- 5 - Canonbury (Islington) (2 vacancies)
- 6 - Christ Church CoE (Tower Hamlets) (14 vacancies)
- 7 - Columbia (Tower Hamlets) (2 vacancies)
- 8 - Colvestone Primary School (14 vacancies)
- 9 - Daubeney Primary School (37 vacancies)
- 10 - De Beauvoir Primary School (26 vacancies)
- 11 - Elizabeth Selby Infants (Tower Hamlets) (4 vacancies)
- 12 - Gainsborough Primary School (30 vacancies)
- 13 - Gayhurst Community School
- 14 - Grasmere Primary School
- 15 - Grazebrook Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 16 - Hackney New Primary School (Free school) (1 vacancies)
- 17 - Hague (Tower Hamlets) (9 vacancies)
- 18 - Halley House School (Free school) (8 vacancies)
- 19 - Harrington Hill Primary School (14 vacancies)
- 20 - Highbury Quadrant (Islington) (33 vacancies)
- 21 - Holmleigh Primary School (1 vacancies)
- 22 - Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (33 vacancies)
- 23 - Hoxton Garden Primary School (8 vacancies)
- 24 - Jubilee Primary School (1 vacancies)
- 25 - Kingsmead Primary School (3 vacancies)
- 26 - Lauriston Primary School (11 vacancies)
- 27 - Lawdale Junior (Tower Hamlets)
- 28 - London Fields Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 29 - Lubavitch House Junior boys School (20 vacancies)
- 30 - Lubavitch Ruth Lunzer Girls' Jewish Primary School (14 vacancies)
- 31 - Mandeville Primary School (16 vacancies)
- 32 - Millfields Community School
- 33 - Morningside Primary School (9 vacancies)
- 34 - Mossbourne Parkside Academy (12 vacancies)
- 35 - Mossbourne Riverside Academy (2 vacancies)
- 36 - Mowlem (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
- 37 - New North Academy (Islington) (37 vacancies)
- 38 - Newington Green (Islington) (6 vacancies)
- 39 - Nightingale Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 40 - Northwold Academy Primary School (23 vacancies)
- 41 - Oldhill Community School (32 vacancies)
- 42 - Orchard Primary School (17 vacancies)
- 43 - Osmani (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
- 44 - Our Lady and St Joseph's RC Primary School (4 vacancies)
- 45 - Parkwood Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 46 - Princess May Primary School (39 vacancies)
- 47 - Queensbridge School (3 vacancies)
- 48 - Randal Cremer School (33 vacancies)
- 49 - Rotherfield (Islington) (15 vacancies)
- 50 - Rushmore Primary School
- 51 - Sebright Primary School (5 vacancies)
- 52 - Shackwell Primary School
- 53 - Shoreditch Park Primary School
- 54 - Simon Marks Jewish Primary School (17 vacancies)
- 55 - Sir Thomas Abney School (29 vacancies)
- 56 - Southwold Primary School (4 vacancies)
- 57 - Springfield School
- 58 - St Anne's and Guardian Angels RC (Tower Hamlets) (36 vacancies)
- 59 - St Dominic's RC Primary School (4 vacancies)
- 60 - St John and St James C of E Primary School
- 61 - St John of Jerusalem C of E Primary School (12 vacancies)
- 62 - St John the Baptist C of E Primary School (22 vacancies)
- 63 - St John's CoE (Tower Hamlets) (12 vacancies)
- 64 - St Jude and St Paul's CE (Islington) (10 vacancies)
- 65 - St Luke's CE (Islington) (1 vacancies)
- 66 - St Mary's C of E Primary School (20 vacancies)
- 67 - St Matthias' C of E Primary School (14 vacancies)
- 68 - St Monica's RC Primary School (8 vacancies)
- 69 - St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School (7 vacancies)
- 70 - St Scholastica's RC School (10 vacancies)
- 71 - Stewart Headlam (Tower Hamlets) (9 vacancies)
- 72 - The Olive School Hackney (Free school)
- 73 - Thomas Buxton (Tower Hamlets) (7 vacancies)
- 74 - Thomas Fairchild Community School
- 75 - Virginia (Tower Hamlets)
- 76 - William Davis (Tower Hamlets) (12 vacancies)
- 77 - William Patten Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 78 - William Tyndale (Islington)
- 79 - Woodberry Down Community Primary School (4 vacancies)

All children requiring an alternative school place in Year 1



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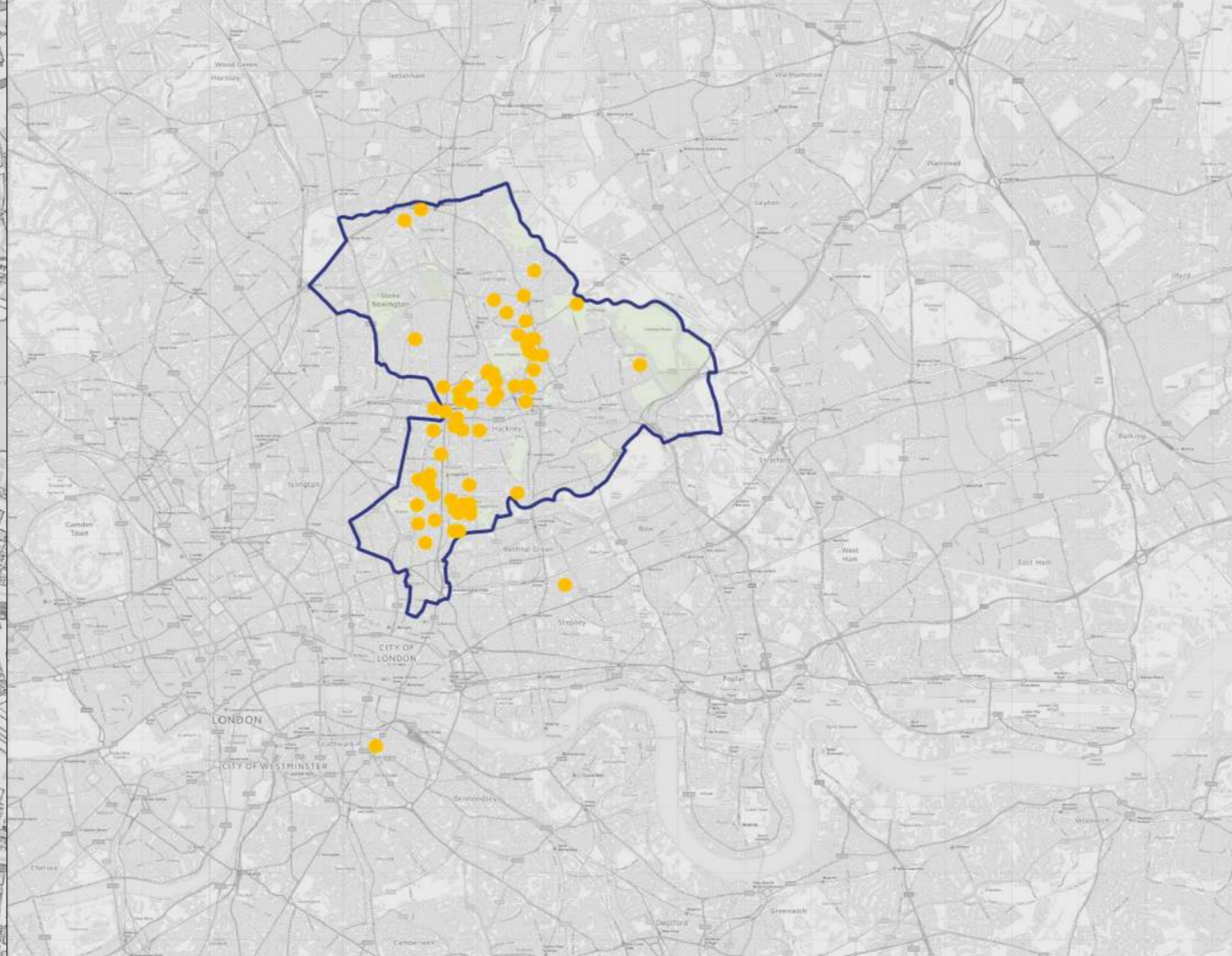


Key for Year 2:

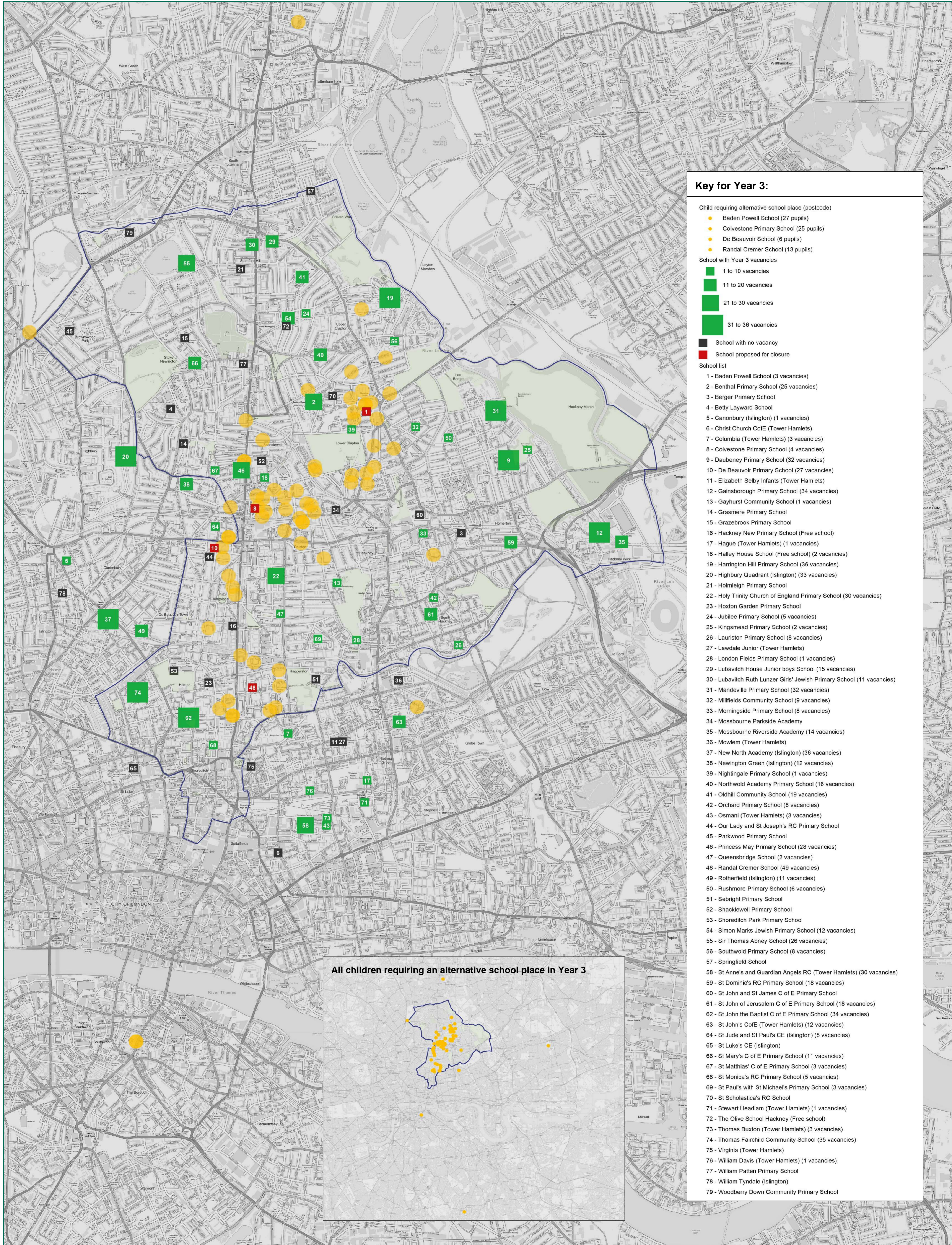
- Child requiring alternative school place (postcode)
 - Baden Powell School (18 pupils)
 - Colvestone Primary School (23 pupils)
 - De Beauvoir School (8 pupils)
 - Randal Cremer School (20 pupils)
- School with Year 2 vacancies
 - 1 to 10 vacancies
 - 11 to 20 vacancies
 - 21 to 30 vacancies
 - 31 to 40 vacancies
 - 41 to 52 vacancies
- School with no vacancy ■
- School proposed for closure ■

- School list
- 1 - Baden Powell School (12 vacancies)
 - 2 - Benthall Primary School (32 vacancies)
 - 3 - Berger Primary School
 - 4 - Betty Layward School
 - 5 - Canonbury (Islington)
 - 6 - Christ Church CofE (Tower Hamlets) (4 vacancies)
 - 7 - Columbia (Tower Hamlets)
 - 8 - Colvestone Primary School (5 vacancies)
 - 9 - Daubney Primary School (52 vacancies)
 - 10 - De Beauvoir Primary School (23 vacancies)
 - 11 - Elizabeth Selby Infants (Tower Hamlets) (4 vacancies)
 - 12 - Gainsborough Primary School (30 vacancies)
 - 13 - Gayhurst Community School
 - 14 - Grasmere Primary School (3 vacancies)
 - 15 - Grazebrook Primary School
 - 16 - Hackney New Primary School (Free school)
 - 17 - Hague (Tower Hamlets) (3 vacancies)
 - 18 - Halley House School (Free school) (3 vacancies)
 - 19 - Harrington Hill Primary School (36 vacancies)
 - 20 - Highbury Quadrant (Islington) (34 vacancies)
 - 21 - Holmleigh Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 22 - Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (28 vacancies)
 - 23 - Hoxton Garden Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 24 - Jubilee Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 25 - Kingsmead Primary School
 - 26 - Lauriston Primary School (4 vacancies)
 - 27 - Lawdale Junior (Tower Hamlets)
 - 28 - London Fields Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 29 - Lubavitch House Junior boys School (10 vacancies)
 - 30 - Lubavitch Ruth Lunzer Girls' Jewish Primary School (14 vacancies)
 - 31 - Mandeville Primary School (24 vacancies)
 - 32 - Millfields Community School (7 vacancies)
 - 33 - Morningside Primary School (2 vacancies)
 - 34 - Mossbourne Parkside Academy
 - 35 - Mossbourne Riverside Academy (1 vacancies)
 - 36 - Mowlem (Tower Hamlets)
 - 37 - New North Academy (Islington) (22 vacancies)
 - 38 - Newington Green (Islington) (7 vacancies)
 - 39 - Nightingale Primary School
 - 40 - Northwold Academy Primary School (28 vacancies)
 - 41 - Oldhill Community School (19 vacancies)
 - 42 - Orchard Primary School (5 vacancies)
 - 43 - Osmani (Tower Hamlets) (2 vacancies)
 - 44 - Our Lady and St Joseph's RC Primary School (4 vacancies)
 - 45 - Parkwood Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 46 - Princess May Primary School (41 vacancies)
 - 47 - Queensbridge School (1 vacancies)
 - 48 - Randal Cremer School (41 vacancies)
 - 49 - Rotherfield (Islington) (12 vacancies)
 - 50 - Rushmore Primary School (2 vacancies)
 - 51 - Sebright Primary School
 - 52 - Shacklewell Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 53 - Shoreditch Park Primary School
 - 54 - Simon Marks Jewish Primary School (21 vacancies)
 - 55 - Sir Thomas Abney School (31 vacancies)
 - 56 - Southwold Primary School (11 vacancies)
 - 57 - Springfield School (4 vacancies)
 - 58 - St Anne's and Guardian Angels RC (Tower Hamlets) (37 vacancies)
 - 59 - St Dominic's RC Primary School (34 vacancies)
 - 60 - St John and St James C of E Primary School
 - 61 - St John of Jerusalem C of E Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 62 - St John the Baptist C of E Primary School (23 vacancies)
 - 63 - St John's CofE (Tower Hamlets) (10 vacancies)
 - 64 - St Jude and St Paul's CE (Islington) (11 vacancies)
 - 65 - St Luke's CE (Islington)
 - 66 - St Mary's C of E Primary School (21 vacancies)
 - 67 - St Matthias' C of E Primary School (6 vacancies)
 - 68 - St Monica's RC Primary School (2 vacancies)
 - 69 - St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 70 - St Scholastica's RC School (2 vacancies)
 - 71 - Stewart Headlam (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
 - 72 - The Olive School Hackney (Free school)
 - 73 - Thomas Buxton (Tower Hamlets) (7 vacancies)
 - 74 - Thomas Fairchild Community School (36 vacancies)
 - 75 - Virginia (Tower Hamlets)
 - 76 - William Davis (Tower Hamlets)
 - 77 - William Patten Primary School
 - 78 - William Tyndale (Islington)
 - 79 - Woodberry Down Community Primary School (7 vacancies)

All children requiring an alternative school place in Year 2



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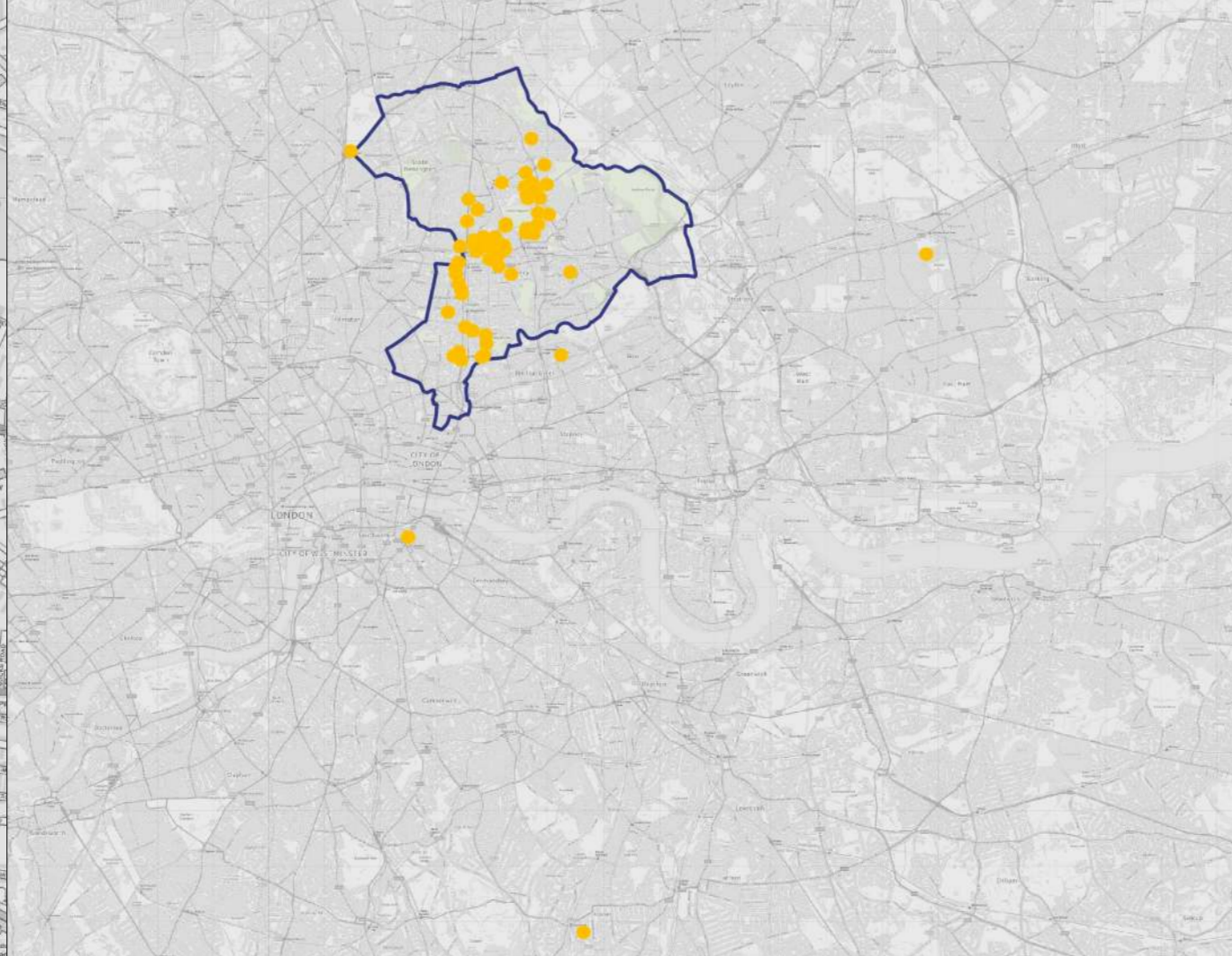


Key for Year 3:

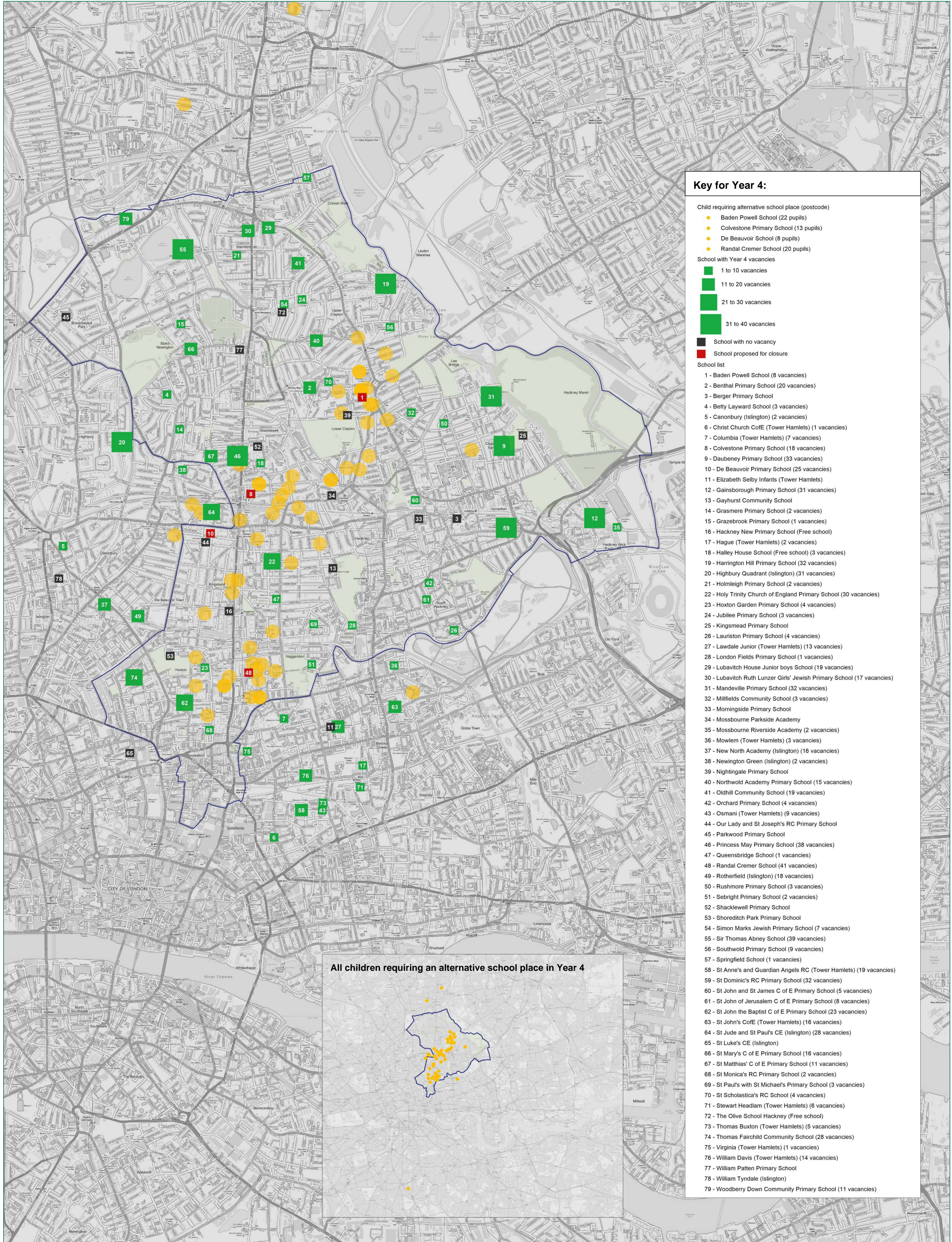
- Child requiring alternative school place (postcode)
 - Baden Powell School (27 pupils)
 - Colvestone Primary School (25 pupils)
 - De Beauvoir School (6 pupils)
 - Randal Cremer School (13 pupils)
- School with Year 3 vacancies
 - 1 to 10 vacancies
 - 11 to 20 vacancies
 - 21 to 30 vacancies
 - 31 to 36 vacancies
- School with no vacancy
- School proposed for closure

- School list
- 1 - Baden Powell School (3 vacancies)
 - 2 - Benthall Primary School (25 vacancies)
 - 3 - Berger Primary School
 - 4 - Betty Layward School
 - 5 - Canonbury (Islington) (1 vacancies)
 - 6 - Christ Church CofE (Tower Hamlets)
 - 7 - Columbia (Tower Hamlets) (3 vacancies)
 - 8 - Colvestone Primary School (4 vacancies)
 - 9 - Daubeney Primary School (32 vacancies)
 - 10 - De Beauvoir Primary School (27 vacancies)
 - 11 - Elizabeth Selby Infants (Tower Hamlets)
 - 12 - Gainsborough Primary School (34 vacancies)
 - 13 - Gayhurst Community School (1 vacancies)
 - 14 - Grasmere Primary School
 - 15 - Grazebrook Primary School
 - 16 - Hackney New Primary School (Free school)
 - 17 - Hague (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
 - 18 - Halley House School (Free school) (2 vacancies)
 - 19 - Harrington Hill Primary School (36 vacancies)
 - 20 - Highbury Quadrant (Islington) (33 vacancies)
 - 21 - Holmleigh Primary School
 - 22 - Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (30 vacancies)
 - 23 - Hoxton Garden Primary School
 - 24 - Jubilee Primary School (5 vacancies)
 - 25 - Kingsmead Primary School (2 vacancies)
 - 26 - Lauriston Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 27 - Lawdale Junior (Tower Hamlets)
 - 28 - London Fields Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 29 - Lubavitch House Junior boys School (15 vacancies)
 - 30 - Lubavitch Ruth Lunzer Girls' Jewish Primary School (11 vacancies)
 - 31 - Mandeville Primary School (32 vacancies)
 - 32 - Millfields Community School (9 vacancies)
 - 33 - Morningside Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 34 - Mossbourne Parkside Academy
 - 35 - Mossbourne Riverside Academy (14 vacancies)
 - 36 - Mowlem (Tower Hamlets)
 - 37 - New North Academy (Islington) (36 vacancies)
 - 38 - Newington Green (Islington) (12 vacancies)
 - 39 - Nightingale Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 40 - Northwold Academy Primary School (16 vacancies)
 - 41 - Oldhill Community School (19 vacancies)
 - 42 - Orchard Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 43 - Osmani (Tower Hamlets) (3 vacancies)
 - 44 - Our Lady and St Joseph's RC Primary School
 - 45 - Parkwood Primary School
 - 46 - Princess May Primary School (28 vacancies)
 - 47 - Queensbridge School (2 vacancies)
 - 48 - Randal Cremer School (49 vacancies)
 - 49 - Rotherfield (Islington) (11 vacancies)
 - 50 - Rushmore Primary School (6 vacancies)
 - 51 - Sebright Primary School
 - 52 - Shacklwell Primary School
 - 53 - Shoreditch Park Primary School
 - 54 - Simon Marks Jewish Primary School (12 vacancies)
 - 55 - Sir Thomas Abney School (26 vacancies)
 - 56 - Southwold Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 57 - Springfield School
 - 58 - St Anne's and Guardian Angels RC (Tower Hamlets) (30 vacancies)
 - 59 - St Dominic's RC Primary School (18 vacancies)
 - 60 - St John and St James C of E Primary School
 - 61 - St John of Jerusalem C of E Primary School (18 vacancies)
 - 62 - St John the Baptist C of E Primary School (34 vacancies)
 - 63 - St John's CoE (Tower Hamlets) (12 vacancies)
 - 64 - St Jude and St Paul's CE (Islington) (8 vacancies)
 - 65 - St Luke's CE (Islington)
 - 66 - St Mary's C of E Primary School (11 vacancies)
 - 67 - St Matthias' C of E Primary School (3 vacancies)
 - 68 - St Monica's RC Primary School (5 vacancies)
 - 69 - St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School (3 vacancies)
 - 70 - St Scholastica's RC School
 - 71 - Stewart Headlam (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
 - 72 - The Olive School Hackney (Free school)
 - 73 - Thomas Buxton (Tower Hamlets) (3 vacancies)
 - 74 - Thomas Fairchild Community School (35 vacancies)
 - 75 - Virginia (Tower Hamlets)
 - 76 - William Davis (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
 - 77 - William Patten Primary School
 - 78 - William Tyndale (Islington)
 - 79 - Woodberry Down Community Primary School

All children requiring an alternative school place in Year 3



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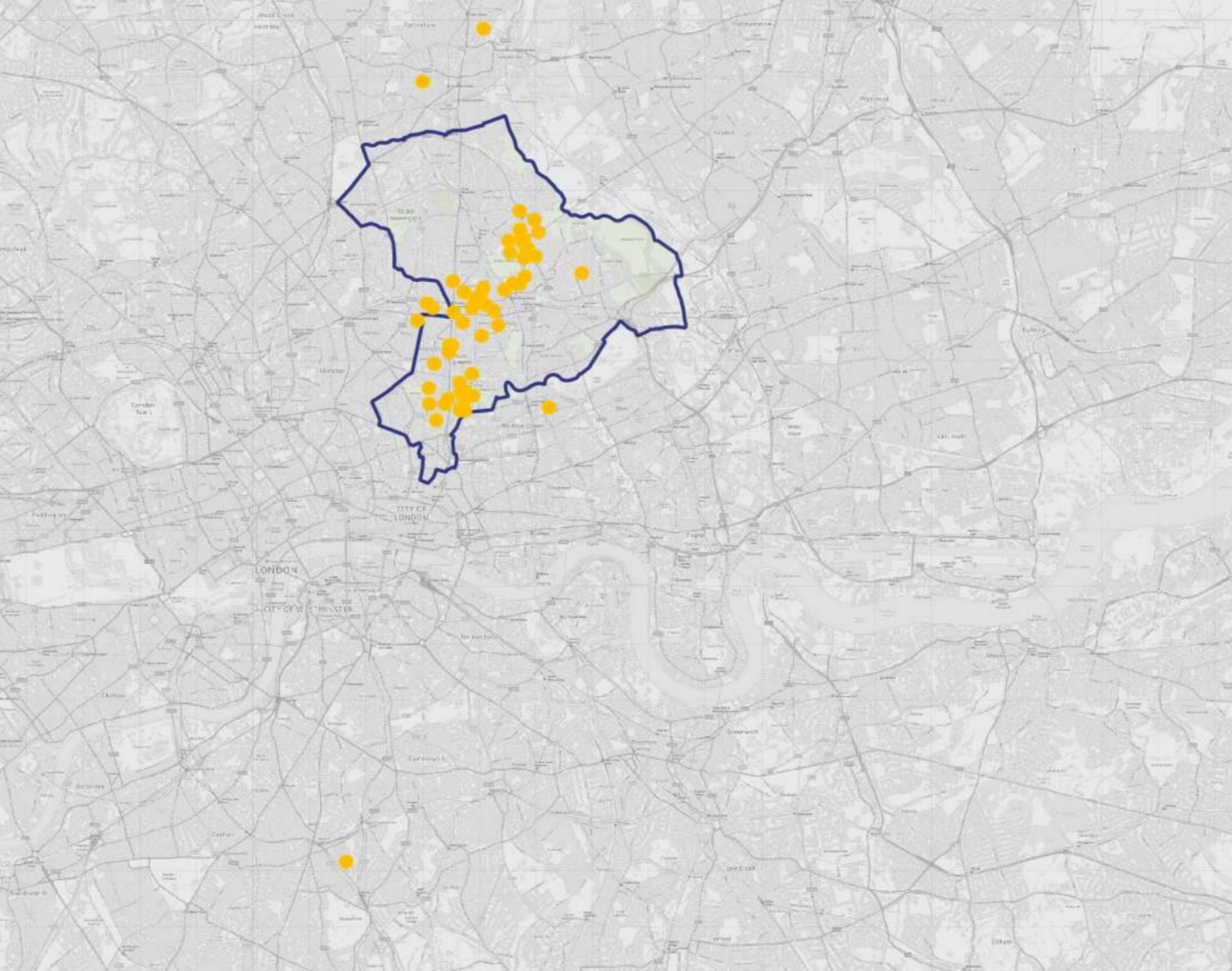
Key for Year 4:

- Child requiring alternative school place (postcode)
 - Baden Powell School (22 pupils)
 - Colvestone Primary School (13 pupils)
 - De Beauvoir School (8 pupils)
 - Randal Cremer School (20 pupils)
- School with Year 4 vacancies
 - 1 to 10 vacancies
 - 11 to 20 vacancies
 - 21 to 30 vacancies
 - 31 to 40 vacancies
- School with no vacancy
- School proposed for closure

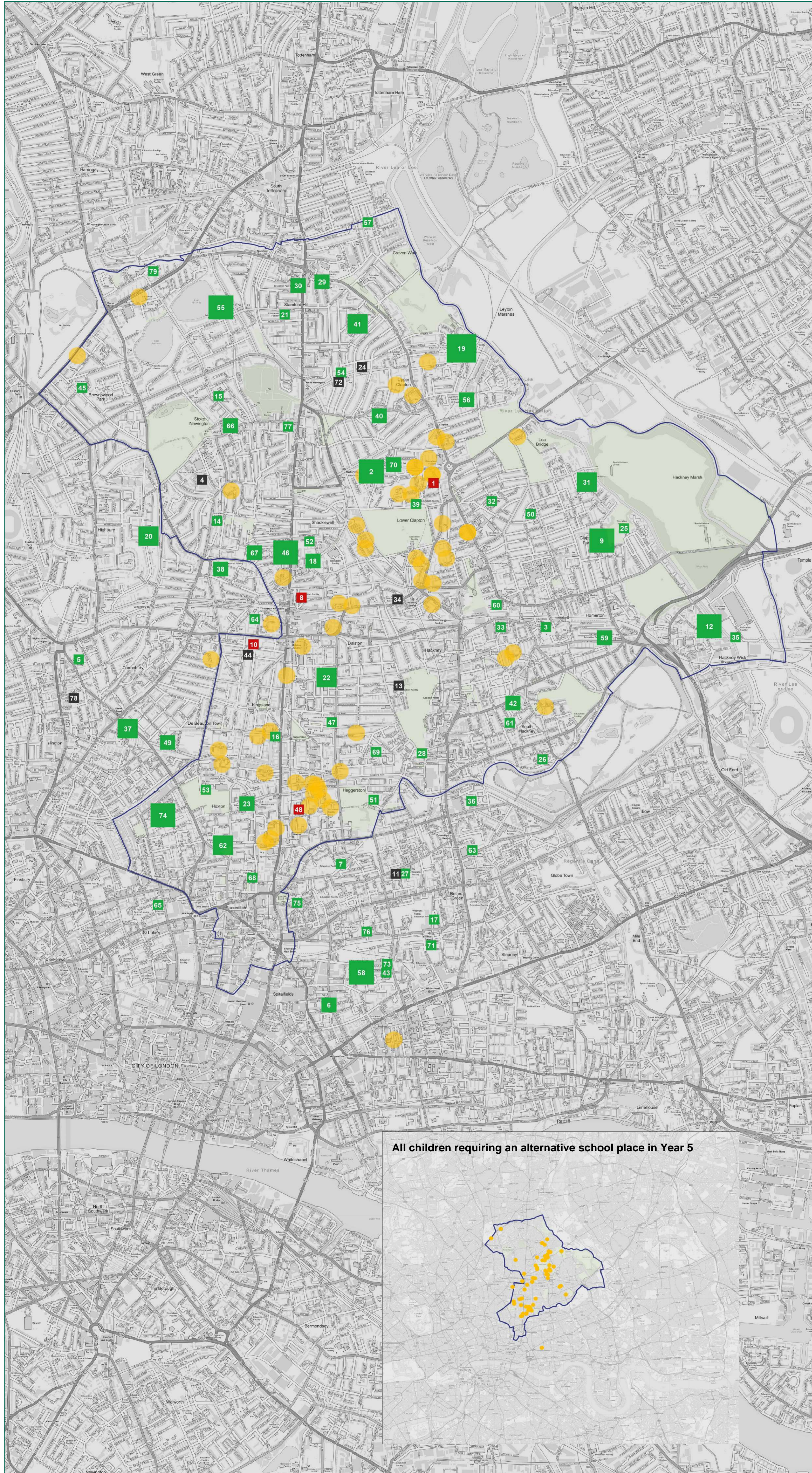
School list

- 1 - Baden Powell School (8 vacancies)
- 2 - Benthall Primary School (20 vacancies)
- 3 - Berger Primary School
- 4 - Betty Layward School (3 vacancies)
- 5 - Canonbury (Islington) (2 vacancies)
- 6 - Christ Church CoE (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
- 7 - Columbia (Tower Hamlets) (7 vacancies)
- 8 - Colvestone Primary School (18 vacancies)
- 9 - Daubeney Primary School (33 vacancies)
- 10 - De Beauvoir Primary School (25 vacancies)
- 11 - Elizabeth Selby Infants (Tower Hamlets)
- 12 - Gainsborough Primary School (31 vacancies)
- 13 - Gayhurst Community School
- 14 - Grasmere Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 15 - Grazebrook Primary School (1 vacancies)
- 16 - Hackney New Primary School (Free school)
- 17 - Hague (Tower Hamlets) (2 vacancies)
- 18 - Halley House School (Free school) (3 vacancies)
- 19 - Harrington Hill Primary School (32 vacancies)
- 20 - Highbury Quadrant (Islington) (31 vacancies)
- 21 - Holmleigh Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 22 - Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (30 vacancies)
- 23 - Hoxton Garden Primary School (4 vacancies)
- 24 - Jubilee Primary School (3 vacancies)
- 25 - Kingsmead Primary School
- 26 - Lauriston Primary School (4 vacancies)
- 27 - Lawdale Junior (Tower Hamlets) (13 vacancies)
- 28 - London Fields Primary School (1 vacancies)
- 29 - Lubavitch House Junior boys School (19 vacancies)
- 30 - Lubavitch Ruth Lunzer Girls' Jewish Primary School (17 vacancies)
- 31 - Mandeville Primary School (32 vacancies)
- 32 - Millfields Community School (3 vacancies)
- 33 - Morningside Primary School
- 34 - Mossbourne Parkside Academy
- 35 - Mossbourne Riverside Academy (2 vacancies)
- 36 - Mowlem (Tower Hamlets) (3 vacancies)
- 37 - New North Academy (Islington) (16 vacancies)
- 38 - Newington Green (Islington) (2 vacancies)
- 39 - Nightingale Primary School
- 40 - Northwold Academy Primary School (15 vacancies)
- 41 - Oldhill Community School (19 vacancies)
- 42 - Orchard Primary School (4 vacancies)
- 43 - Osmani (Tower Hamlets) (9 vacancies)
- 44 - Our Lady and St Joseph's RC Primary School
- 45 - Parkwood Primary School
- 46 - Princess May Primary School (38 vacancies)
- 47 - Queensbridge School (1 vacancies)
- 48 - Randal Cremer School (41 vacancies)
- 49 - Rotherfield (Islington) (18 vacancies)
- 50 - Rushmore Primary School (3 vacancies)
- 51 - Sebright Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 52 - Shacklewell Primary School
- 53 - Shoreditch Park Primary School
- 54 - Simon Marks Jewish Primary School (7 vacancies)
- 55 - Sir Thomas Abney School (39 vacancies)
- 56 - Southwold Primary School (9 vacancies)
- 57 - Springfield School (1 vacancies)
- 58 - St Anne's and Guardian Angels RC (Tower Hamlets) (19 vacancies)
- 59 - St Dominic's RC Primary School (32 vacancies)
- 60 - St John and St James C of E Primary School (5 vacancies)
- 61 - St John of Jerusalem C of E Primary School (8 vacancies)
- 62 - St John the Baptist C of E Primary School (23 vacancies)
- 63 - St John's CoE (Tower Hamlets) (16 vacancies)
- 64 - St Jude and St Paul's CE (Islington) (28 vacancies)
- 65 - St Luke's CE (Islington)
- 66 - St Mary's C of E Primary School (16 vacancies)
- 67 - St Matthias' C of E Primary School (11 vacancies)
- 68 - St Monica's RC Primary School (2 vacancies)
- 69 - St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School (3 vacancies)
- 70 - St Scholastica's RC School (4 vacancies)
- 71 - Stewart Headlam (Tower Hamlets) (6 vacancies)
- 72 - The Olive School Hackney (Free school)
- 73 - Thomas Buxton (Tower Hamlets) (5 vacancies)
- 74 - Thomas Fairchild Community School (28 vacancies)
- 75 - Virginia (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
- 76 - William Davis (Tower Hamlets) (14 vacancies)
- 77 - William Patten Primary School
- 78 - William Tyndale (Islington)
- 79 - Woodberry Down Community Primary School (11 vacancies)

All children requiring an alternative school place in Year 4



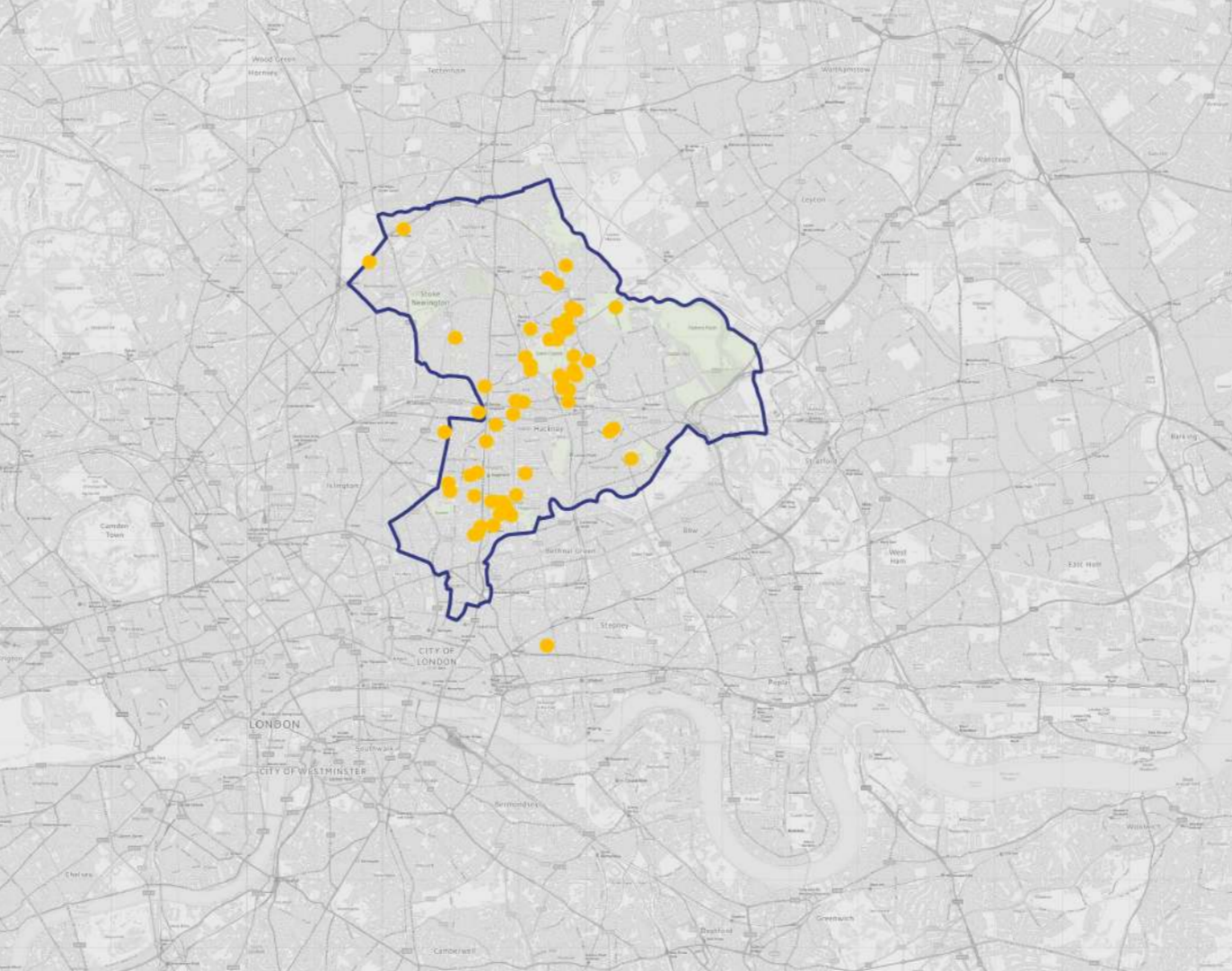
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Key for Year 5:

- Child requiring alternative school place (postcode)
 - Baden Powell School (24 pupils)
 - Colvestone Primary School (13 pupils)
 - De Beauvoir School (8 pupils)
 - Randal Cremer School (17 pupils)
- School with Year 5 vacancies
 - 1 to 10 vacancies
 - 11 to 20 vacancies
 - 21 to 30 vacancies
 - 31 to 40 vacancies
 - 41 to 62 vacancies
- School with no vacancy
- School proposed for closure
- School list
 - 1 - Baden Powell School (4 vacancies)
 - 2 - Benthal Primary School (35 vacancies)
 - 3 - Berger Primary School (7 vacancies)
 - 4 - Betty Layward School
 - 5 - Canonbury (Islington) (4 vacancies)
 - 6 - Christ Church CofE (Tower Hamlets) (12 vacancies)
 - 7 - Columbia (Tower Hamlets) (4 vacancies)
 - 8 - Colvestone Primary School (17 vacancies)
 - 9 - Daubney Primary School (35 vacancies)
 - 10 - De Beauvoir Primary School (24 vacancies)
 - 11 - Elizabeth Selby Infants (Tower Hamlets)
 - 12 - Gainsborough Primary School (35 vacancies)
 - 13 - Gayhurst Community School
 - 14 - Grasmere Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 15 - Grazebrook Primary School (2 vacancies)
 - 16 - Hackney New Primary School (Free school) (8 vacancies)
 - 17 - Hague (Tower Hamlets) (2 vacancies)
 - 18 - Halley House School (Free school) (15 vacancies)
 - 19 - Harrington Hill Primary School (62 vacancies)
 - 20 - Highbury Quadrant (Islington) (28 vacancies)
 - 21 - Holmleigh Primary School (3 vacancies)
 - 22 - Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (27 vacancies)
 - 23 - Hoxton Garden Primary School (11 vacancies)
 - 24 - Jubilee Primary School
 - 25 - Kingsmead Primary School (2 vacancies)
 - 26 - Lauriston Primary School (7 vacancies)
 - 27 - Lawdale Junior (Tower Hamlets) (4 vacancies)
 - 28 - London Fields Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 29 - Lubavitch House Junior boys School (18 vacancies)
 - 30 - Lubavitch Ruth Lunzer Girls' Jewish Primary School (15 vacancies)
 - 31 - Mandeville Primary School (24 vacancies)
 - 32 - Millfields Community School (8 vacancies)
 - 33 - Morningside Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 34 - Mossbourne Parkside Academy
 - 35 - Mossbourne Riverside Academy (9 vacancies)
 - 36 - Mowlem (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
 - 37 - New North Academy (Islington) (26 vacancies)
 - 38 - Newington Green (Islington) (15 vacancies)
 - 39 - Nightingale Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 40 - Northold Academy Primary School (12 vacancies)
 - 41 - Oldhill Community School (21 vacancies)
 - 42 - Orchard Primary School (14 vacancies)
 - 43 - Osmani (Tower Hamlets) (8 vacancies)
 - 44 - Our Lady and St Joseph's RC Primary School
 - 45 - Parkwood Primary School (5 vacancies)
 - 46 - Princess May Primary School (32 vacancies)
 - 47 - Queensbridge School (4 vacancies)
 - 48 - Randal Cremer School (46 vacancies)
 - 49 - Rotherfield (Islington) (16 vacancies)
 - 50 - Rushmore Primary School (4 vacancies)
 - 51 - Sebright Primary School (3 vacancies)
 - 52 - Shacklewell Primary School (3 vacancies)
 - 53 - Shoreditch Park Primary School (5 vacancies)
 - 54 - Simon Marks Jewish Primary School (6 vacancies)
 - 55 - Sir Thomas Abney School (36 vacancies)
 - 56 - Southwold Primary School (17 vacancies)
 - 57 - Springfield School (9 vacancies)
 - 58 - St Anne's and Guardian Angels RC (Tower Hamlets) (33 vacancies)
 - 59 - St Dominic's RC Primary School (13 vacancies)
 - 60 - St John and St James C of E Primary School (1 vacancies)
 - 61 - St John of Jerusalem C of E Primary School (2 vacancies)
 - 62 - St John the Baptist C of E Primary School (27 vacancies)
 - 63 - St John's CoE (Tower Hamlets) (8 vacancies)
 - 64 - St Jude and St Paul's CE (Islington) (6 vacancies)
 - 65 - St Luke's CE (Islington) (2 vacancies)
 - 66 - St Mary's C of E Primary School (15 vacancies)
 - 67 - St Matthias' C of E Primary School (11 vacancies)
 - 68 - St Monica's RC Primary School (6 vacancies)
 - 69 - St Paul's with St Michael's Primary School (8 vacancies)
 - 70 - St Scholastica's RC School (11 vacancies)
 - 71 - Stewart Headlam (Tower Hamlets) (2 vacancies)
 - 72 - The Olive School Hackney (Free school)
 - 73 - Thomas Buxton (Tower Hamlets) (4 vacancies)
 - 74 - Thomas Fairchild Community School (32 vacancies)
 - 75 - Virginia (Tower Hamlets) (1 vacancies)
 - 76 - William Davis (Tower Hamlets) (3 vacancies)
 - 77 - William Patten Primary School (2 vacancies)
 - 78 - William Tyndale (Islington)
 - 79 - Woodberry Down Community Primary School (5 vacancies)

All children requiring an alternative school place in Year 5



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Appendix U - Financial Considerations

The quantification of the financial impact of costs related to closure/amalgamation of a school/schools are complex to model and will be influenced by the timing of the closure, HR/redundancy costs and the future plans for any sites vacated (including site security and reuse options). In addition, the financial treatment of any deficit balances will also have an impact along with other incidental costs or potential liabilities.

1. Pre-closure costs which would fall on the Council

1.1. Redundancy

High-level modelling has been carried out in relation to redundancy costs for the six schools proposed in this report as of February 2023. The modelling is based on a number of assumptions and is indicative of potential redundancy and severance costs only. As a guide the estimated cost of redundancy and severance for the six schools outlined for amalgamation/closure is circa £1.6m.

It is to be noted that this is a broad estimate. The modelling assumes all staff in a school to be closed in August 2024 would receive redundancy and severance payments. In reality this process and the resulting cost will be subject to HR change management procedures and could be higher or lower than the estimate. The estimate is a snapshot based on the current staffing establishment only.

We will work closely with Hackney Human Resources, to implement a package of support for all the affected school based staff. Where possible, redeployment will be offered as well as the opportunity to upskill through working with agencies such as Hackney Works. As a last resort, redundancy or early retirement will be offered.

1.2. Write-off of school balances

When a maintained school closes, any outstanding deficit falls to the council to be written off. As of 31st March 2023 Colvestone has a deficit balance of £562k. The other schools have a surplus balance, however this could change up to the point of closure. The revenue balances brought forward into financial year 2021/22 and the closing 2022/23 year end position are listed for each of the schools in the table below:

Table 1

School	2021/22 Closing revenue balance brought forward surplus/(deficit) (£)	2022/23 Closing revenue balance carried forward surplus/(deficit) (£)
Baden Powell	111,747	31,768
De Beauvoir	82,566	140,418
Colvestone	(589,966) Deficit	(561,646) Deficit
Princess May	24,947	29,630
Nightingale	257,507	138,116
Randal Cremer	179,035	310,032

The trend suggests that, by the date of a potential closure/amalgamation, further schools could also reach a deficit position. There is a significant risk that school deficit balances could increase at a greater rate once **Page 845** are known as some parents may elect to

move their children sooner, this could have an impact on school funding and cause greater pressure on in-year budgets up to the point of closure/merger. We will support schools during this period.

2. Post closure costs / risks

2.1. Site Security and maintenance

There may be a need to secure and maintain the school sites on an interim basis following closure pending future use. These costs are estimated and will be refined if the proposals in this report are implemented. We want to avoid this situation if at all possible as we work through options for the sites.

2.2. Cost of contracts or other liabilities

Contracts entered into by the governing bodies for each of the schools could represent a significant cost if they are not concluded by the school before closure. It is advised that full contract registers and liabilities relating to termination of contracts are settled by working with the schools concerned. Any liabilities that remain post closure would fall to the Council, working with the school would mitigate this risk and limit future potential costs.

2.3. Other incidental costs and programme management costs

There may be additional incidental costs which materialise and may need to be contributed to by the Council as a result of closure, an example of this could be uniform costs for pupils transferring to another school. The full costs of closure will need to be refined, including incidental costs which may materialise during the course of the closure/amalgamation programme.

Additional staff resources required from both, within the Council and externally, will also need to be factored into current estimates, costs are estimated at circa £300k including on-costs for the length of the programme, however this value needs to be refined.

3. Summary of financial implications

Table 6 - A summary of the costs including those which need to be confirmed/refined are contained in the table below:

Description	Potential cost (£'000)	One-off / recurring
Redundancy	1,600	One-off
Potential write-off costs	562	One-off
Contracts / transferred liabilities	TBC	One-off
Incidental costs	TBC	One-off
Programme management	Approx 300	One-off
Site Security and maintenance	Approx 1,000	Recurring per annum if sites remain vacant
Total	3,462	

These are only potential costs, which carry significant risks of being higher than the current calculations, particularly for redundancy (where early retirement decisions are more

expensive) and also for the write-off of school balances, which will be subject to further movement between now and a potential future closure date.

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Cornerstone Barristers
2-3 Gray's Inn Square
London
WC1R 5JH

London Borough of Hackney
Town Hall
Mare Street
London
E8 1EA

Attention: Cllr Bramble (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care); Dawn Carter-McDonald (Interim Chief Executive); Philip Glanville (Mayor of Hackney); Mark Agnew (Governance Officer); Louise Humphreys (Head of Legal and Governance); Paul Senior (Interim Head of Education); Jacquie Burke (Group Director Children and Education).

By e-mail only to: legalservices@hackney.gov.uk; governance@hackney.gov.uk; anntoinette.bramble@hackney.gov.uk; paul.senior@hackney.gov.uk.

Our ref: 166988/SaveColvestone

E-mail: edehon@cornerstonebarristers.com;
fsacolvestone@gmail.com; colvestonesos@gmail.com

11 September 2023

**PRE-ACTION PROTOCOL LETTER FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW
LETTER BEFORE CLAIM
THIS LETTER REQUIRES YOUR URGENT ATTENTION**

Dear Madams and Sirs

Potential legal challenge to the decision to put forward Colvestone Primary School for a statutory process for closure and “amalgamation” with Princess May School

1. This is a letter before action sent in accordance with the pre-action protocol for judicial review.

Claimant

2. Colvestone Family and Staff Association, a legally registered charity, acting on behalf of Save Colvestone Primary School (“**Save Colvestone**”), a group of Colvestone parents and carers (“**the Proposed Claimant**”).



Proposed Defendant

3. Hackney Council (“**the Potential Defendant**”).

Decision(s) to be Challenged

4. The ongoing decisions to put forward Colvestone Primary School for the statutory process for closure and “amalgamation” with Princess May School, including but not limited to informal consultation carried out from 5 June – 16 July 2023 and the decisions made subsequent to the informal consultation to progress the statutory process.

Interested Parties

5. (1) Colvestone Primary School; (2) The Governing Body of Colvestone Primary School (3) the Blossom Federation.

6. Should you consider that there are other third parties with a distinct interest who should be served as an Interested Party in the proposed proceedings, please provide us with their details and an explanation of their interest.

Factual background

7. There is a **long and complex factual background**, but the salient points are these. Colvestone Primary School experienced a period of instability in 2021-2022, but from the Summer term of 2022, the School was working intensively with the Council to stabilise matters. There were a number of meetings from June 2022 – January 2023. Steps taken included the School deciding to partner with the Blossom Foundation (note that partnership with Princess May was rejected as an option) and a school resource management advisers (“**SRMA**”) audit of the School’s financial position. At no point during this period did the Council mention the potential for Colvestone Primary School to be closed or amalgamated.

8. On 30 January 2023, the Council’s School Estates met with the senior leadership of the School, unminuted, to have an initial conversation about possible steps being taken by the Council in relation to school closures, with an indication that Colvestone Primary met some of the criteria for consideration. A further meeting was held on 22 February, where “amalgamation” with Princess May School was proposed.



9. It should be clear that what was, and is, being proposed is the closure of Colvestone. The terms “merger” or “amalgamation” with Princess May only mean that parents/families are offered a place at that school. There is no actual merger, nor any amalgamation of staff or quality of education or ethos etc.

10. The selection criteria¹ identified by the Council for schools to be considered for closure were:

- (1) Schools most financially at-risk;
- (2) Number of vacant places
- (3) Physical size of schools and suitability of sites to host a merger (4) Geographic partnership options (such as the existence of other schools within walking distance)
- (5) Whether new neighbourhoods and new-build estates will create significantly more need for school places in the future
- (6) Current Ofsted grading and projected outcomes for pupils
- (7) Community impact

11. In March 2023, the governors and leadership team of Colvestone Primary School opposed the school being considered for amalgamation or closure even at the initial stages of an informal proposal, on the basis that the school was in a unique position, different from the other schools under consideration. In particular they drew attention to the **financial stability of the School and stabilising roll, and that the partnership with the Blossom Federation, which had contributed to that stability, was in its early stages. It also drew attention to the high proportion of children at Colvestone on the SEND register.**

12. Despite this the Council moved to a pre-informal consultation. Save Colvestone prepared a detailed submission, in particular setting out how Colvestone Primary had delivered a surplus school budget for the year ending 2022/23 and projected an in-year surplus for the years ending 2023/24 and 2024/25; and that a survey of **73 households with children at the School indicated that 87% would not agree to their children going to Princess May School.** The Council (through Paul Senior) agreed that any representations made by 1 May would be considered in the preparation of the Briefing Report for the Cabinet meeting on 22 May on whether to go to the next stage. Save Colvestone’s detailed 63-page dossier was submitted

¹<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/primary-schools-potential-changes>



on Monday 1 May. The Council then erroneously suggested the material was submitted too late for inclusion. The Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy – falling rolls Open Report (CE S190) (“**the Report to Cabinet**”), published on 12 May for consideration by the Council’s Cabinet, appended Save Colvestone’s representations. Initially the representations withheld from publication, but they were published on 19 May after challenge by Save Colvestone. However, the substance of the Report failed to address the majority of Save Colvestone’s points, failing either to challenge them, to adjust the proposals in light of them, or even to acknowledge them in any substantive form.

13. On 22 May, the Council’s Cabinet agreed to move on to the informal consultation stage. **The parts of the Report to Cabinet concerning Colvestone Primary School proceeded on the basis of a projection that 120 children from the School would move to Princess May, but without having carried out any survey of parents at the School. It contained a table purporting to set out the financial position at Colvestone, showing it to be in deficit, but did not provide any information from the three-year projected budget produced by the new Senior Leadership Team (provided to the Council in November 2022) or the independent school resource management advisers (“SMRA”) report, which affirmed the projections and identified further highly achievable savings on operating costs. These two reports confirmed both the financial viability of the school and its capacity to pay down the deficit.**
14. The Report to Cabinet considered expected demand for school places, **but focused on the short to medium term, including when considering whether planned new housing or regeneration would impact the demand.**
15. The Report to Cabinet **provided information about an air quality review which, when it went before the Cabinet, showed the 2021 NO₂ annual concentration at Colvestone Primary School as 23µg/m³, and at Princess May 1 as 23µg/m³, and Princess May 2 as 32µg/m³.** However, this second figure was recorded in the Cabinet’s Decision Document as 20µg/m³, causing concern that the Cabinet had not appreciated the true air quality impact on children moving to Princess May School. When Save Colvestone pointed out the error, the Cabinet Decision Document was amended.



16. The informal consultation ran from 2 June to 16 July 2023. The consultation document described the consultation as considering “a proposal to amalgamate (‘merge’) Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School. If agreed, the amalgamation will result in a single primary school **being established** on one site for 60 pupils in each year group.” (emphasis added). It should be noted that this suggests the establishment of a new school, which is not possible as any new school is automatically a free school under 'free school presumption', as warned in the Strategic Plan; Princess May School is already “established”.

17. The document did explain that “amalgamation” meant closing Colvestone on 31 August 2024 and Princess May school “providing spaces for displaced children”, “if that is what the parents prefer for their children”. **It did not explain that, if fewer than the 120 projected children moved from Colvestone to Princess May, then Princess May is also at risk of closure, or that, even if 120 children did transfer, there would still be approximately a 23% vacancy at Princess May.**

18. The consultation document provided general information about the financing of schools, stating that “[s]chools with unfilled places lose £6,484 per place every year”, but did not provide, even in high-level form, any of the financial information verified by the SMRA report showing Colvestone School to be financially viable. **It did not address SEND at all.**

19. Save Colvestone provided a detailed submission on 16 July 2023. This referred again to two surveys of parents at Colvestone, **which showed that 95.7% of parents surveyed did not include Princess May in any of their six preferences when selecting a school, and that 87% would not send their children to Princess May, with a further 6% undecided.**

20. Save Colvestone’s consultation response identified both the key benefits and the key risks of closing Colvestone and included information on:
 - (1) the financial position of Colvestone Primary School;
 - (2) future demand, including in light of the adopted Local Plan, the draft Dalston Plan and the fully-funded 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent;
 - (3) the air quality impact of closing the school and offering provision at Princess May School; and



(4)the high number of children with SEND at Colvestone and the risk of significant cost if children have to be sent out of the borough to private schools.

21. It should be noted that the process of pre-informal consultation and informal consultation **has already harmed Colvestone Primary School**. The threat of closure is enough to cause pupils to move or to change parental school preferences. Save Colvestone is aware of **at least one parent who applied for a place at Colvestone, only to be advised by Council officials that the school was closing**. The extent of **artificial suppression of pupil numbers is difficult to gauge**. Save Colvestone considers that moving Colvestone School forward in the process and issuing a formal statutory notice would be even more damaging to the School.

Proposed Grounds of Challenge

22. Save Colvestone considers that the Council's decision-making regarding the proposed "amalgamation" of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May School is unlawful for the following reasons:

- (1) Failure to take into account the relevant statutory guidance;
- (2) Failure to comply with the **public sector equality duty**;
- (3) Failure to take **material considerations into account**;
- (4) Failure to conduct a lawful informal consultation.

Proposed Ground 1 – Statutory Guidance

23. When making decisions about closing Colvestone Primary School, the Council is required to have regard to the relevant statutory guidance – "Opening and closing maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers" (January 2023) ("**the Statutory Guidance**"). Where there is such a duty, the decision-maker must proceed on a proper understanding of what the guidance requires. The decision-maker is also obliged to take the guidance into account and to act in accordance with the guidance, unless clear and cogent reasons are given for departing from the guidance: see, eg, *R(Britwell Parish Council) v Slough Borough Council* [2019] EWHC 988 (Admn) at §§ 27 and 33; *R(TG) v Lambeth LBC* [2011] EWCA Civ 526; [2012] PTSR 364 at §17 per Wilson LJ.

24. The Council proposes to close the School because of the fall in predicted demand and there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate the displaced pupils. This reason is addressed explicitly in the Statutory Guidance,



which requires the Council to consider whether there is predicted demand “**in the medium to long term**”. It is understood that is the reason on which the Council is relying.²

25. The Council has consistently considered predicted demand on the basis of short to medium term, rather than medium to long term. This is particularly apparent when the Council considered the demand from planned new housing in the borough (addressed further below). The Report to Cabinet explicitly considers this in relation to “demand in the short to medium term”.
26. While there is no definition in the Guidance of what “medium term” and “long term” mean, the Council’s other relevant documents³ define medium term as 5-10 years and long term as 10-15 years.
27. The Council has either failed to understand the Statutory Guidance, or is departing from the Guidance but without giving clear and cogent reasons for that departure.

Proposed Ground 2 – Public Sector Equality Duty

28. The public sector equality duty (“**PSED**”) is laid down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty is to have “**due regard**” to the relevant matters, and although this does not require the achievement of particular outcomes, it is not “a question of “ticking boxes: Aikens LJ, giving the judgment of the Divisional Court, in *R(Brown) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* [2008] EWHC 3158 (Admin). The duty must be “exercised in substance, with **rigour, and with an open mind**. There is no duty to make express reference to the regard paid to the relevant duty, but reference to it and to the relevant criteria reduces the scope for argument. The duty **must be fulfilled before and at the time when a particular policy is being considered. It must also be fulfilled by the actual decision-maker; knowledge of the duty by another officer is not sufficient: see *R(Danning) v Sedgemore DC* [2021] EWHC 1649 (Admin) at §55.**
29. An important evidential element in the demonstration of the discharge of the duty is the recording of the steps taken by the decision maker in seeking to meet the

² See section 3.5.2 of the Report to Cabinet. The Council has not identified any other reason, for example, that the School is not considered viable. If the Council is not relying on the reason stated in the Guidance, but on some other reason, that should be made clear when responding to this letter. ³



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statutory requirements: *R (BAPIO Action Ltd) v Secretary of State for the Home Department*[2007] EWHC 199 (QB) (Stanley Burnton J (as he then was), confirmed by McCombe LJ in *Bracking v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions*[2013] EWCA Civ 1345, [2014] EqLR 60 at §25.

30. The importance of the PSED was emphasised by the Court of Appeal in *R(Bridges) v Chief Constable of South Wales* [2020] EWCA Civ 1058 at §176ff. The Court held that the duty includes a public body taking reasonable steps to obtain information about whether the decision-making would result in direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics.
31. The duty to comply with the PSED is a continuing one.
32. The Council carried out an undated Equalities Impact Assessment (“EIA”), which was provided as Appendix L to the Report to Cabinet. This demonstrates that the Council failed to comply with the PSED in at least two regards relating to Colvestone School.
33. First, although the EIA addressed children with special educational needs and disabilities (“SEND”) in general, it failed to consider the specific position at Colvestone School, which has a high percentage of children with SEND: 17.31% of pupils have special educational needs (the national average is 13.2%) and 8% of pupils have an education, health and care plan (“EHCP”), meaning that 25% of children have SEND. The 25% figure was confirmed to the Council by the School in March 2023. The EIA only lists the pupils with an EHCP, indicating that the Council failed to consider the true extent of the impact.
34. Furthermore, the EIA suggested that the outcome for pupils with EHCPs “may be improved”, because “the educational quality of any school they move to is graded either ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted”, which ignores the fact that Colvestone is already graded ‘Good’.
35. Second, **the Council has wholly failed to factor air quality impact into the PSED analysis.** Negative air quality impacts are known to harm those who are more vulnerable, in particular, children. **Hackney’s own Air Quality Action Plan 2021- 2025** identifies school communities as amongst the most susceptible groups to the



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serious health impacts of air pollution within its strategy to improve air quality throughout the borough.

36. Air pollution levels are significantly higher at Princess May than at Colvestone. Princess May is on a main road (the A10); Colvestone is on a quiet back street, part of a fully-funded re-greening project which will further improve air quality, meaning that closing Colvestone will inevitably expose children to poorer air quality.

Proposed Ground 3 – Material Considerations

37. There are a **number of considerations which are obviously material to the Council’s decisions which do not appear to have been taken into account.**
38. First, the relevant financial information does not support Colvestone’s inclusion, even at pre-consultation stage. The only financial information that the Council has in relation to the financial position at Colvestone is the three-year projected budget produced by the new Senior Leadership Team (provided to the Council in November 2022) and the SMRA report, which affirmed the projections and identified further highly achievable savings on operating costs. Given that these two reports confirm both the financial viability of the School and its capacity to pay down the deficit, it is unclear on what basis the Council has concluded that Colvestone is one of the schools most financially at risk, or has “a budget deficit in top 10 schools raising the most financial concern” (per pg 42 of the Report to Cabinet).
39. Second, planning-related considerations. As the Report to Cabinet tacitly acknowledges, planned future housing and regeneration is obviously material to the predicted demand for the School. The Council has dismissed any short to medium term planning matters that weigh against the proposed school closures, but in so doing has failed to take into account the Colvestone 21st Century Street, which is a fully-funded, short-term (ie 1-2 year) initiative focused on Colvestone Crescent. The adoption of the street on which Colvestone Primary School sits as the Borough’s first permanent play street plainly has the potential to increase the number of families drawn to the area, requiring a proper medium to long term analysis of the expected child yield from the development. The Council has not undertaken any such analysis. **Page 857**



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40. As set out above, the Council has only considered the impact of proposed new housing in the short to medium term (and has not even done that lawfully). The Council does not appear to have taken any account of the fact that the Local Plan LP33 focusses growth in Hackey predominantly in the two designated town centres of Dalston and Hackney Central. The Council plans to deliver a minimum of 1,330 homes a year up to 2033 across the Borough, maximising the supply of genuinely affordable housing with up to 2,000 homes for Dalston. In Dalston, the majority of the allocated sites are clustered around Colvestone Crescent, some in very close proximity to Colvestone Primary School.
41. **The draft Dalston Supplementary Planning Document (May 2021), to which weight must be given as an emerging plan in late stages of preparation, makes clear that there is a particularly high need for 3 bedroom (family) housing and that key to the vision for Dalston is child-friendly planning.** Approximately 200 affordable family homes (plus others at market rates) are planned in close proximity to the School. All of this is plainly relevant to the medium and long term predicted demand for Colvestone Primary School; none of it appears to have been taken into account. Instead, the Council has undertaken a generic consideration of planning matters, which ignores the specific considerations relevant to Colvestone.
42. Furthermore, the Council does not appear to have taken into account the potential **negative impact of the closure of Colvestone on proposed future housing provision and regeneration in Dalston.** The School is key infrastructure, the ramifications of the removal of which are not addressed by generic reference to the need for developer contributions when infrastructure is not present. **The whole point of concentrating development in Dalston is that some of the requisite the infrastructure is already there.**
43. Third, SEND-related considerations. As set out above in relation to the failure to comply with the PSED, the Council has **failed to take into consideration in relation to Colvestone specifically, the high proportion of children with SEND. The school has implemented a SEND strategy which has excellent feedback from parents/carers and staff. Parents chose a 1 form entry school for their children with SEND needs as this is shown to support children's emotional and wellbeing needs.** This is relevant both to the medium to long

term demand for places at Colvestone and to the likelihood that Colvestone parents will not choose to take up places at Princess May.



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44. Colvestone's integrated provision and current surplus capacity also has the potential to save the council money otherwise spent sending children with SEND to independent / private schools outside of the borough at a cost of between £35-70,000 per pupil per year. Given that potential financial losses appear to be driving the Council's decision-making, this is further material consideration weighing against the closure: keeping Colvestone open has clear financial benefits; closing Colvestone risks the Council having to find yet more expensive out-of-borough SEND provision.
45. Fourth, community impact. Colvestone is the last surviving Birkbeck school - a historical and socially important part of London and Hackney's past. It is also by Ridley Road market, one of the most historic markets in London. It is also a key part of the Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street. The Council does not appear to have researched or obtained any information about the potential negative community impact of the closure of Colvestone School, nor does it appear to have taken these matters properly into account.

Proposed Ground 4 - Consultation

46. If a public body chooses to consult, it must do so lawfully. The basic requirements for a lawful consultation process were established in the case of *R v Brent London Borough Council, Ex p Gunning* (1985) 84 LGR 168 and are known as either the *Gunning Principles*, or the *Sedley Principles*, as Hodgson J set out and accepted the submissions of Mr Sedley (as he was then):
1. Consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage.
 2. The proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response.
 3. Adequate time must be given for consideration and response.
 4. The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals.
47. The Supreme Court in *Moseley* stated at §25 that it is "hard to see how any of [Sedley's] four suggested requirements could be rejected or indeed improved".



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48. The *Gunning* Principles are reflected in the Cabinet Office's 'Consultation Principles 2018',⁴ to which the Court referred in *R(British Blind and Shutter Association) v SSHCLG* [2019] EWHC 3162 (Admin) at §31.

49. There is considerable case law on each of the four requirements. The focus of this proposed challenge is on the first and second requirements

(1) formative stage: it is not a formative stage where an option of central significance has already been excluded⁵ or where a definite solution has evolved;⁶

(2) sufficient reasons: a consultation document must present the issues in a way that facilitates an effective response;⁷ the scope of the consultation must be clear⁸ and non-disclosure of information can, depending on the circumstances, make the consultation unlawful.⁹

50. **The informal consultation failed to comply with these requirements in a number of ways. First, the consultation did not take place at a formative stage, but at a time when a "definite solution" had evolved. This is evidenced by the following:**

(1) The Report to Cabinet set out efficiencies and innovations which could be implemented to manage and balance budgets (pg 37), then claimed a far more limited set of options has been tried (pg 38), stating that further details would be in the school specific section. These measures are not addressed in the school specific section (pgs 46-51), nor are they addressed in the 'Details of Alternative Options Considered and Rejected' section (pgs 57-58), where 'doing nothing' or 'alternate mergers' are the only other options on the table;

(2) The fact that the consultation only concerned school closures and did not invite consideration of alternative models and options to reduce vacancies in the local school system; and

(3) Officials on the Hackney Council Admissions and Pupil Benefits Team Helpline told a parent explicitly that Colvestone School was closing.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>. ⁵ *R(Montpeliers & Trevors Association) v City of Westminster* [2005] EWHC 16 (Admin) at §§25-29. ⁶ *R v North East Devon Health Authority; ex p Pow* (1998) 1 CCLR 280.

⁷ *R(Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust) v Joint Committee of Primary Care Trusts* [2012] EWCA Civ 472 §9. See also *Holborn Studios Ltd v Hackney LBC* [2020] EWHC 1509 (Admin) at §71. ⁸ *R(Jones) v Denbeighshire CC* [2016] EWHC 2074 (Admin) at §§70-74.

⁹ See the considerations set out in *R(Law Society) v Lord Chancellor* [2019] 1 WLR 1649 at §73.



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51. Second, the consultation was in breach of the second *Gunning* principle, for the following reasons:

- (1) **The consultation documentation and surrounding information did not present the issues in a way that facilitated an effective response**, as they caused confusion about the “amalgamation” of the schools and failed to make clear (a) that both Colvestone and Princess May schools could close, depending on parental choice, and (b) Colvestone staff would not be “merged” into Princess May; they would have to re-apply, only if there are vacancies. This confusion arguably meant the scope of the consultation was unclear;
- (2) The consultation document also **did not facilitate an effective response** simply providing an open-ended invitation to comment on the proposals, rather than giving guidance as to the information that would be helpful or needed to develop proposals for the next stage of the process. This failure has recently been highlighted by the Council’s own Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission;¹⁰
- (3) **The scope of the consultation was also unclear as regards the timeframe that consultees should be considering**. As set out above, in light of the Statutory Guidance, that is a medium to long term timeframe (ie 5-10 yrs to 10-15 yrs). No indication was given of this at all;
- (4) **Crucial information about the true financial position of Colvestone was withheld**, meaning that consultees could not properly engage with the question whether Colvestone was financially viable. Instead, the consultation focused on alleged revenue lost to the Council. These failures prejudiced consultees. They were criticised by the Council’s Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission. Both the provision of proper financial information and giving consultees a proper understanding of the financial questions on which they were being asked to provide views were crucial to the Council being able to take a decision in line with the criteria it

identified for determining which schools to close;

- (5) The consultation documentation was not provided in languages other than English, despite the Council being aware that support was needed in multiple languages and platforms; and

¹⁰ <https://hackney.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s84677/Final%20Cllr%20Bramble%20-%20School%20Estates%20Strategy%20-%20Google%20Docs.pdf>.



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- (6) The Report to Cabinet identified that a wide range of stakeholders would be included in the consultation, including “all residents”, but that group was excluded from the stakeholders to whom the consultation document was sent.

52. Accordingly, the consultation was legally flawed and does not provide a lawful basis for the Council to move to the next stage as regards Colvestone School.

Details of Information Sought

53. The Council is required to make full and frank disclosure in judicial review proceedings. Save Colvestone has already made a freedom of information request to the Council which has not been answered satisfactorily. The Council is asked to disclose the information sought, namely the original, amended 1906 and subsequent Deeds of the Colvestone Primary School building, receipt of which was taken by the Council in 1990.

54. On 27 July 2023, Save Colvestone made a request to Councillor Garbett for information about reception intake and allocations. The Council is asked to provide the information sought, details of which are annexed to this letter.

Details of the Action the Council is Expected to Take

55. In light of the above apparent errors of law, Save Colvestone asks that the Council removes Colvestone Primary School from the proposal to close schools.

56. The Council is asked to respond to this letter in writing within 14 days (ie by 25 September 2023) so that Save Colvestone may consider whether further legal action is necessary.

57. We would welcome any proposals to engage on the substantive issues raised by the draft legislation so as to resolve or narrow the dispute.

Other applications

58. If the claim proceeds the Proposed Claimant will apply for a protective costs order (PCO) pursuant to CPR 45.43 on the basis that the claim is an environmental matter in light of the air quality and human health impacts raised: *Venn v Sec State*



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CLG [2015] 1 WLR 2328. If you disagree that this is an Aarhus matter or with the making of a PCO please give your reasons.

59. If it is not accepted that the Proposed Claimant is entitled to Aarhus costs protection, then the Proposed Claimant will invite the Court to make an order capping the parties' costs liability in accordance with its power at section 88(6) of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015.

Details of Legal Advisors Dealing with this Claim

60. Counsel

Estelle Dehon KC
edehon@cornerstonebarristers.com

Cornerstone Barristers
2-3 Gray's Inn Square
London
WC1R 5JH
DX: LDE 316 (Chancery Lane)

Address for Reply and Service of Court Documents

61. You are requested to respond by email to ensure we have your response in a timely manner. Please send your response to all the following e-mail addresses: •

edehon@cornerstonebarristers.com

- colvestonesos@gmail.com
- fsacolvestone@gmail.com

Yours sincerely

Estelle Dehon KC

Cc: Colvestone Primary School (office@colvestone.hackney.sch.uk); Rosie Condon, Colvestone Chair of Governors (rosiecondon.gov@gmail.com); Jatin Shamji, Blossom Federation (jshamji@blossom.hackney.sch.uk).



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Annex: Reception Intake and Allocations Information Sought

1. For the 2023 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant: a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
2. For the 2022 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant: a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
3. For the 2021 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant:: a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
4. Also, please provide the full postcodes of each of the allocations made to the following schools for Reception intake in the years 2021 and 2022 (and 2023 if available):

Halley House
Mossbourne Parkside
Princess May
St Matthias
De Beauvoir
Holy Trinity CofE
Our Lady and St Josephs



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Legal and Governance Services

Louise Humphreys
Interim Director of Legal, Democratic and
Electoral Services

London Borough of Hackney
3rd Floor, 1 Reading Lane
London
E8 1GQ

Tel: 020 8356 4527

Email: lucinda.bell@hackney.gov.uk

Our Ref: TLT3D/010/LB1

Your Ref: 166988/SaveColvestone

Date: 25 September 2023

Ms Estelle Dehon KC
Cornerstone Barristers
By email only: edehon@cornerstonebarristers.com; fsacolvestone@gmail.com;
colvestones@gmail.com

25 September 2023

**RESPONSE TO JUDICIAL REVIEW PRE-ACTION
PROTOCOL LETTER DATED 11 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Dear Sirs,

We refer to your letter before claim dated 11 September 2022. This letter is a formal response to that letter and is set out in accordance with the Pre-Action Protocol for Judicial Review under the Civil Procedure Rules.

The proposed claim is denied in its entirety.

THE CLAIMANT

We note the details you have provided.

FROM

The Council's legal representative for this proposed claim is the Interim Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services, Chief Executive's Directorate, London Borough of Hackney, 1 Reading Lane, London E8 1GQ.

The people to contact in relation to this proposed claim are –

- Lucinda Bell - lucinda.bell@hackney.gov.uk
- Josephine Sterakides - Josephine.sterakides@hackney.gov.uk

REFERENCE DETAILS

Our reference details are at the top of this letter.

THE DETAILS OF THE MATTER BEING CHALLENGED

We note the manner in which you seek to characterise the decision. As you will know, no decision has yet been made as to whether or not the proposals will proceed to the stage of publication of statutory proposals. If a decision is made to so proceed, there would then be a period of representations of four weeks, in which your clients and others can make all representations they wish to make. Only after that representations period is complete would a decision be made on the proposals.

No doubt your clients would wish to use their full energies to make detailed representations during the important period of representations; if there is one.

We repeat that no final decision on the proposals has been made, and none would be made prior to consideration of all representations.

RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSED CLAIM

As your clients know, the possible proposals include a proposal to close Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, while at the same time guaranteeing all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it. This occurs across a background in which the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26.

We are aware that there is significant local opposition to the proposals as a whole, and in particular to the proposal to close Colvestone. However, on the best information available to us, there are not enough children in the borough and neighbouring areas seeking places at Hackney primary schools. All the reception places at all 58 primary schools in Hackney were required just 9 years ago to meet our statutory obligations and offer all residents a place. Rapid and sustained decline in the number of children joining our primary schools mean that they are no longer filling up. Hackney's schools currently have

over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (21% surplus). The Council aims to have between 5 and 10% surplus. The number of children projected to need places in Reception over the coming years shows that, on the projected figures we have, without reducing the number of schools in the borough, we will continue to have over 550 vacant spaces (20%+ surplus) until at least 2030.

High vacancy rates mean that schools become financially unviable over time. A school's funding is based on the number of children on roll, so schools with lots of vacancies have a smaller budget than schools that are full, but they carry the same financial, educational and wellbeing responsibilities to their children, families and staff. As an example, in 2022/23, for every surplus place that a maintained primary school carries, it lost on average £6,484 per surplus place. For a one form entry school carrying 33% surplus places in every year group (10 empty seats in a class of 30), the school would be losing out on a potential £453,880 additional income, with no change to the number of class teachers, who represent the primary expense in school budgets. In this situation schools are forced to use their surplus funds or go into deficit to ensure the quality of education for Hackney children is maintained. Over two thirds of Hackney's maintained schools, or the federations they form part of, are predicting they will over-spend by the end of the 2023/24 financial year.

To avoid going into deficit, or to bring a school's deficit back under control, school governors are forced to make difficult decisions about whether to reduce the number of teachers or teaching assistants, support staff, school leaders, put off investment or maintenance in school building and equipment or find other savings, all of which impacts negatively on the quality of education and school experience for Hackney children and staff.

The Council is financially liable for any maintained school deficits, and must decide each year whether to continue to fund a school in deficit. When a maintained school closes the Council is responsible for the debt carried by the school at the point of closure. This also applies when schools faced with financial challenges convert to academies. If the Council does not take action to reduce the number of primary schools to align with the current and projected demand we knowingly take on increased financial burden and responsibility at a time when we are required to find £57m in savings over the next 3 years. The longer the Council delays taking action, the greater the financial burden it will inherit.

Further measures to address falling rolls are likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand. If taken forward, the proposals outlined in this report would begin to address the issue of falling rolls by removing 90 reception places; however, in isolation, this is unlikely to resolve the problem and, based on current projections, further action to bring surplus reception places under 10% is likely.

On this basis the Council will continue to work together with our schools to review and adjust future plans in line with the priorities outlined in the Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy to bring surplus reception places to within a sustainable range (ie. 5-10%).

It is believed that a merger of Colvestone with Princess May Schools would create a stronger educational establishment. It is anticipated that Princess May would benefit from increased income and financial stability through higher numbers of pupils on roll. Managed effectively the school could benefit from more robust resourcing and could positively impact academic opportunities, access to specialised teachers and wider range of extracurricular activities and clubs. A larger student body can provide pupils with a more extensive and diverse peer group, promoting social skills and cultural awareness. It is believed the proposed merger could, with the engagement of parents and school leaders, foster a sense of community among parents and pupils from both schools.

As to the specific grounds of challenge you have indicated, these lack merit.

First, we question the utility of bringing a claim at this stage. As we have noted, no final decision on the proposals has been made, and none would be made prior to consideration of all representations. Your clients still have considerable opportunities to input into this process further, and to raise the points you have raised in your letter, on issues for which your clients feel the Council may have got things wrong. It would be surprising if your clients did not take up that opportunity, should the proposals go to a period of representations.

Our client does not accept that it has misunderstood statutory guidance as you claim. The particular passage you quote does not have the effect claimed by your clients. In any event demand and other matters were considered on the medium to long term, and for such periods as reliable information is available to the Council.

We do not understand the claim to breach of the public sector equality duty. Consideration has been given to equalities matters throughout the process, including through a detailed equalities impact assessment. The specific fine-grained points of detail you raise on the equalities impact assessment go nowhere near demonstrating a breach of the public sector equality duty. In any event, section 149 is not a duty to compile equalities impact assessments, as you will know.

The points made under the heading “Material Considerations” raise no more than disputes as to the merits. That is particularly inappropriate in circumstances where no decision has yet been made as to the proposals. The right course is to raise these issues as part of the period of representations; if there is one.

The complaints regarding “consultation” are similarly inappropriate. If your clients have concerns they wish to raise, then the appropriate avenue to raise them is through the period of representations; if there is one.

DETAILS OF ANY OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

We are not aware of any interested parties.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROPOSALS

The appropriate course is for your clients to participate fully in any forthcoming period of representations, if there is one.

RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS

You have requested the original, amended 1906 and subsequent deeds of the Colvestone Primary School building, as well as very detailed information on reception and intake allocations. We currently do not understand the relevance of such deeds and intake numbers to any of the grounds you have raised, or indeed to any potential judicial review claim. We would be grateful if you could assist with that. On the latter, the Council has already provided a great deal of detailed information regarding numbers. We have difficulty seeing what is missing from the information that has been provided. Please kindly assist with our understanding of this, so we can review the matter further.

OTHER APPLICATIONS

It is not accepted that the Proposed Claimant is entitled to Aarhus costs protection. Further details will be provided should the matter proceed.

ADDRESS FOR FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE AND SERVICE OF COURT DOCUMENTS

Please correspond using the details on page 1 of this letter.

Yours faithfully,



Hackney Legal Services

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School Organisation Plan

2020-2025

July 2023

1. Introduction

This document sets out the London Borough of Hackney's School Organisation Plan from 2020 to 2025.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure there is a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. In Hackney, this is managed by Hackney Education (HE), the Council's education service.

In recent years, local authorities have been grappling with the challenges of a rapid surge in demand for primary places followed by a period of sustained steep decline. The reason why rolls are now falling is unclear, however factors such as birth rates, welfare benefits, rising rents, Brexit and the recent pandemic have been put forward. Falling rolls have resulted in a significant number of surplus reception places which negatively impact on the efficient running and financial stability of schools. Hackney's Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy has been developed in response to the decline in demand for school places and the growing need to provide additional SEND places in Hackney (<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/managing-pupil-rolls-and-send-provision>).

The School Organisation Plan provides schools, governing bodies and the public with:

- an overview of the educational provision on offer in Hackney;
- a summary of current pupil numbers and projected demand across the primary and secondary phases;
- the factors considered by Hackney Education when determining the need to increase or reduce school places;
- a summary of historic and planned primary school place reductions from 2019 to up until September 2023.

This document is reviewed and updated annually with the latest school roll and projections data, as well as any further proposed changes to school organisation.

Please note:

The Hackney Childcare Sufficiency Audit is outlined fully in a separate document and can be downloaded from:

<https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/extranet/hackney-childcare-sufficiency-assessment>

A summary of the main issues in planning Early Years places is outlined in Appendix 2.

The Hackney Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) strategy can be found at:

<https://www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk/kb5/hackney/localoffer/advice.page?id=WaZA5W4YiPQ>

2. Education provision in Hackney

The range and number of schools in Hackney are shown in Table 1 below. In addition to the provision shown, there are a significant number of independent schools (mainly Orthodox Jewish) in Hackney. Place planning for independent schools is not undertaken by Hackney Education. These schools sit outside the maintained sector.

Table 1. Education provision

Nursery schools (2)	
Community school	2
Primary schools (58 schools)	
Community school	38
Voluntary aided	12
Free school	3
Academy	5
Secondary schools (16 schools)	
Academy	8
Voluntary aided	4
Community school	2
Free school	2
Special schools (3)	
ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder and SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty - 4-19 yrs	1
SpLD - Specific Learning Difficulty, VI - Visual Impairment, OTH - Other Difficulty/Disability, HI - Hearing Impairment, SLCN - Speech, Language and Communication, ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, SEMH - Social, Emotional and Mental Health, MSI - Multi-Sensory Impairment, PD - Physical Disability, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty, SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty and PMLD - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty - 3-19 yrs	1
Complex and inter-related special needs - 11-17 yrs	1
Resourced maintained provision (6)	
Autism	4
Language	2
SEMH	1
PRU/Alternative Provision (2)	
PRU (New Regents College)	1
AP Academy	1
Sixth Forms (13)	
Sixth Forms (operational)	13
Colleges (2)	
BSix Sixth Form College	
New City College Hackney	

Tables 2 and 3 provide a list of primary and secondary schools respectively, and their published admission numbers (PANs) for the academic years 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Table 2. Primary schools – Published admission numbers 2022/23 and 2023/4

School	Published admission number (PAN)	
	22/23	23/24
Baden Powell Primary School	30	30
Benthal Primary School	60	60
Berger Primary School	60	60
Betty Layward Primary School	60	60
Colvestone Primary School	30	30
Daubeney Primary School	90	60
De Beauvoir Primary School	30	30
Gainsborough Community Primary School	60	30
Gayhurst Community School	60	60
Grasmere Primary School	30	30
Grazebrook Primary School	60	60
Hackney New Primary School	50	50
Halley House School	30	30
Harrington Hill Primary School	30	30
Holmleigh Primary School	30	30
Holy Trinity CE Primary School	60	60
Hoxton Garden School	60	60
Jubilee School	60	60
Kingsmead Primary School	30	30
Lauriston Primary School	60	60
London Fields Primary School	60	60
Lubavitch Junior Boys School	30	30
Lubavitch Ruth Lunzer Girls' Primary School	30	30
Mandeville Primary School	45	45
Millfields Community School	90	90
Morningside Primary School	60	60
Mossbourne Parkside Academy	60	30
Mossbourne Riverside Academy	90	90

Nightingale Primary School	30	30
Northwold Primary School	60	60
Oldhill Community School	60	60
Orchard Primary School	90	90
Our Lady & St. Joseph RC Primary School	30	30
Parkwood Primary School	30	30
Princess May Primary School	60	60
Queensbridge Primary School	60	60
Randal Cremer Primary School	45	45
Rushmore Primary School	60	60
Sebright School	60	60
Shacklewell Primary School	60	60
Shoreditch Park Primary School	60	60
Simon Marks Jewish Primary School	30	30
Sir Thomas Abney School	60	30
Southwold School	60	60
Springfield Community Primary School	30	30
St. Dominic's Catholic Primary School	30	30
St. John & St. James CE Primary School	30	30
St. John of Jerusalem CE Primary School	30	30
St. John the Baptist CE Primary School	60	60
St. Mary's CE Primary School	30	30
St. Matthias CE Primary School	30	30
St. Monica's RC Primary School	30	30
St. Paul's with St. Michael's CE Primary School	30	30
St. Scholastica's RC Primary School	30	30
The Olive School	90	90
Thomas Fairchild Community School	30	30
William Patten Primary School	60	60
Woodberry Down Community Primary School	90	90
Total Places	2900	2780

Table 3. Secondary schools – Published admission numbers 2022/23 and 2023/24

School	Published admission number (PAN)	
	22/23	23/24
Cardinal Pole Catholic School	180	180
City of London Academy Shoreditch Park	180	180
Clapton Girls' Academy	180	180
Haggerston School	180	180
Lubavitch Senior Girls' School	30	30
Mossbourne Community Academy	216	216
Mossbourne Victoria Park Academy	168	168
Our Lady's High School	120	120
Skinner's Academy	180	180
Stoke Newington School	255	255
The Bridge Academy	180	180
The City Academy, Hackney	190	190
The Petchey Academy	180	180
The Urswick School	150	150
Waterside Academy	100	100
Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls' School	80	80
Total Places	2569	2569

3. Primary school place planning

Local authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty to ensure there is a sufficient supply of school places for pupils resident in their area. This document addresses the sufficiency of mainstream places in Hackney. As noted in the introduction above, provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is addressed in a separate plan and in the Education Sufficiency & Estate Strategy.

Children reach 'compulsory school age' on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday. For example, children becoming 5 years old between 1st January and 31st March are of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term after 1st April. Children are required to be in full-time education when they reach compulsory school age.

3.1 Primary school rolls - historic development

In 2007, Hackney, like most other London boroughs, experienced a sudden and dramatic increase in the demand for reception places. In response to this unprecedented surge, Hackney Education rolled out a primary expansion plan to ensure that it continued to meet its statutory duty to secure a sufficient number of school places for Hackney resident children.

The expansion programme saw the creation of 330 permanent primary places as well as a raft of bulge classes between 2009 and 2014. These additional places were created at the same time as the Department for Education (DfE) approved four new free schools/academies to open between 2013 and 2016, creating a further 290 unplanned reception places. Table 4 shows the number of pupils on roll in mainstream primary schools in Hackney between the academic years 2002/03 and 2022/23.

Table 4. Primary rolls 2002/03 – 2022/23

Academic Year (January census)	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Number of pupils dropping off between Reception and Year 6	% drop off within cohort between Reception and Year 6
2002/03	2356	2403	2357	2315	2208	2131	2154		
2003/04	2372	2345	2365	2300	2253	2118	2115		
2004/05	2275	2379	2329	2318	2265	2235	2120		
2005/06	2345	2293	2307	2280	2275	2235	2183		
2006/07	2228	2305	2232	2259	2222	2209	2184		
2007/08	2379	2212	2257	2205	2232	2161	2158		
2008/09	2412	2397	2155	2228	2165	2186	2131	225	10.0
2009/10	2487	2409	2371	2114	2198	2133	2157	215	9.0
2010/11	2603	2483	2389	2347	2094	2185	2130	145	6.4
2011/12	2572	2618	2462	2366	2350	2090	2190	155	6.6
2012/13	2738	2633	2620	2476	2370	2351	2095	133	6.0
2013/14	2745	2818	2625	2608	2471	2368	2347	32	1.3
2014/15	2846	2724	2790	2605	2558	2468	2369	43	1.8
2015/16	2805	2803	2702	2745	2577	2544	2451	36	1.4
2016/17	2757	2778	2757	2643	2691	2548	2510	93	3.6
2017/18	2635	2738	2725	2714	2600	2650	2522	50	1.9
2018/19	2565	2612	2675	2678	2667	2569	2613	125	4.6
2019/20	2599	2512	2588	2624	2648	2636	2538	207	7.5
2020/21	2530	2539	2428	2492	2568	2599	2584	262	9.2
2021/22	2398	2498	2450	2397	2432	2522	2583	222	7.9
2022/23	2284	2373	2434	2428	2350	2428	2500	257	9.3

Table 4 above shows that the number of reception children on roll (the second column) increased from 2007 to 2012 with some fluctuation, and saw a steady increase in 2013 and 2014. Since 2015 reception demand has decreased year on year, with the exception of 2019/20, which saw a slight increase. The rate of attrition (the number of children who leave) as a cohort moves through to the end of the primary phase can be seen from the diagonal coloured cells and the last two columns.

The significant fall in reception numbers (a decrease of 562 pupils, or 20% between 2014/15 and 2022/23, as shown in Table 4), has also been partly reflected in data on the number of three and four-year-old children accessing 15 hours of free provision in all schools and settings which has fallen

by 290 children or 4.2% between 2018 and 2022. Further data on the early years phase can be found in Appendix 2.

3.2 Reception place surplus development

Table 5 shows for the current academic year (2022/23) 2284 reception pupils on roll against a total number of 2900 places available. This equates to 616 surplus reception places (21%). Surplus reception places are usually maintained at a 5 to 10% level. The current surplus is the highest level recorded, despite reductions to the published admission number (PAN) made in the academic years 2019/20 and 2022/23 (see Appendix 1).

Table 5. Number of surplus reception places compared to number of available places (January census)

Academic year (January census)	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No. of children on roll	2805	2757	2635	2565	2599	2530	2398	2284
No. of reception places available	3080	3170	3155	3155	3035	3035	3035	2900
No. of surplus reception places	275	413	520	590	436	505	637	616
% surplus reception places	9%	13%	17%	19%	14%	17%	21%	21%

Data from the PAN London admissions coordination scheme shows that Hackney received 6% fewer on-time reception applications for September 2023 entry, when compared to 2022. Falling reception rolls continue to be reported across a majority of local authorities in London.

Hackney uses 10 planning areas to group schools across the borough in order to assess the number of surplus and deficit primary places. Local authorities are required to obtain Department for Education (DfE) agreement on the number and configuration of planning areas to allocate basic need funding to all schools annually. Table 6 below lists the 10 planning areas and the primary schools located within them.

Table 6. Primary planning areas and primary schools*

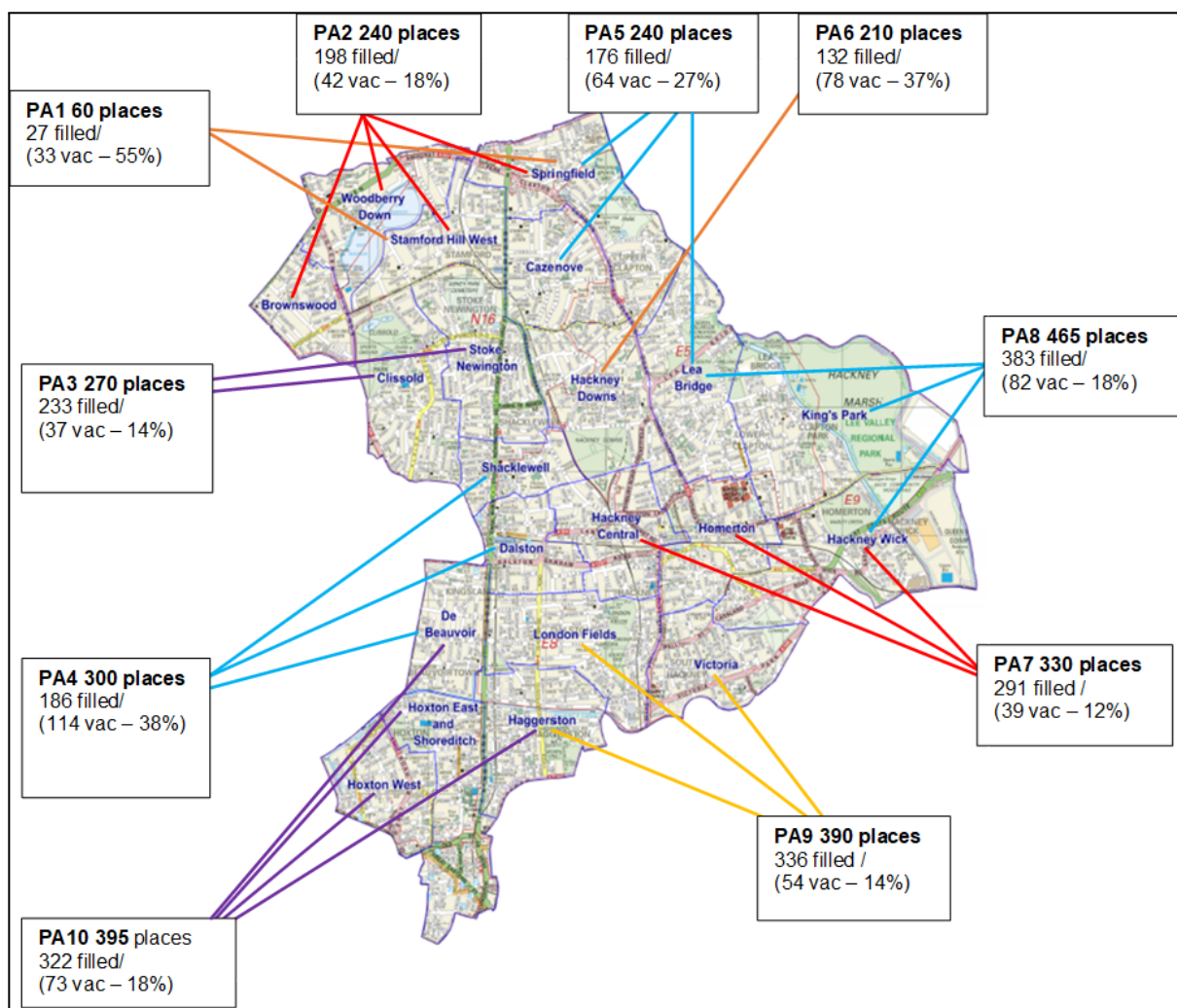
Planning area number	Schools	Number of schools
PA1	Lubavitch Junior Girls', Lubavitch Junior Boys'	2
PA2	Holmleigh, Parkwood, Sir Thomas Abney, Springfield, Woodberry Down	5
PA3	Betty Layward, Grasmere, Grazebrook, St. Mary's, St. Matthias, William Patten	6
PA4	De Beauvoir, Colvestone, Halley House, Holy Trinity, Our Lady and St. Joseph, Princess May, Shacklewell	7
PA5	Harrington Hill, Jubilee, Oldhill, Simon Marks, Southwold	5
PA6	Baden Powell, Benthal, Nightingale, Northwold, St. Scholastica's	5
PA7	Berger, Morningside, Mossbourne Parkside, The Olive School, St.	6

	Dominic's, St. John and St. James	
PA8	Daubeney, Gainsborough, Kingsmead, Mandeville, Millfields, Mossbourne Riverside, Rushmore	7
PA9	Gayhurst, Lauriston, London Fields, Orchard, Queensbridge, St. John of Jerusalem, St. Paul's with St. Michaels	7
PA10	Hackney New Primary, Hoxton Garden, Randal Cremer, Sebright, Shoreditch Park, St. John the Baptist, St. Monica's, Thomas Fairchild	8
Total		58

**Note: Planning areas were reduced from 14 to 10 for the School Capacity Survey 2023 as per guidance and approval from the DfE.*

Figure 1 below shows the current level of reception place surplus by planning area at the January 2023 census (2022/23 academic year). Seven of the ten planning areas (PAs) had a reception place surplus of 15% or more. The remaining three planning areas had a reception place surplus between 12 and 14%. Hackney Education strives to maintain a reception place surplus rate of between 5 and 10%. This ensures that reception places are available for pupils who apply outside of the normal admission round. However, in recent years, the number of surplus reception places has significantly exceeded this level and, as stated earlier, currently stands at 21%.

Figure 1. Reception vacancies by planning area (January 2023 census)



3.3 Making changes to school organisation to manage surplus places

Low school rolls can cause logistical, staffing and financial pressures for schools, affecting schools' ability to plan effectively. For small schools (defined as primary schools with fewer than 210 pupils on roll and/or a building capacity of not more than 210 places, and secondary schools with relatively undersized rolls, sixth forms or both), the financial challenges are more acute as small schools do not benefit from economies of scale.

Finding the right balance between providing an adequate number of surplus places and reducing the current high levels of surplus is challenging. However, Hackney Education has taken steps to address this by reducing published admission numbers (PANs), either temporarily or permanently.

Temporary PAN reductions are an informal reduction in PAN arranged with schools in the short term, which allows the school to reduce staffing costs and manage budgets more effectively. Schools that temporarily reduce PANs are aware that should parents apply for a place at the school, the school has a statutory duty to admit the child in line with the permanent PAN. Temporary PAN reductions have been implemented across twelve schools over four years (2019/20-2022/23; see Appendix 1).

Permanent or formal PAN reductions are carried out in consultation with a school and its governing body and published every year as part of the local authority's determined admission arrangements. It should be noted that PAN reductions do not reduce the physical space available in schools. Instead, they allow schools to limit the number of children that they are legally obliged to admit. The school building will therefore operate under capacity. PAN reductions do not change the physical capacity of schools and as such, should future demand for reception places suddenly increase, there is existing capacity within schools to cater for additional children.

3.4 Permanent PAN reductions 2023/24

The following schools will permanently reduce their PANs from September 2023. This will reduce the overall number of reception places to 2780.

Table 7. Permanent PAN reductions from 2023/24

School	PAN prior to 2023/24	New PAN from 2023/24	No. of reception places permanently removed
Daubeney	90	60	30
Gainsborough	60	30	30
Mossbourne Parkside*	60	30	30
Sir Thomas Abney	60	30	30
Total number of places permanently removed			120

* = Note: The decision to reduce the PAN at Mossbourne Parkside was taken by the Mossbourne Federation. Previous PAN reductions in primary schools from 2019 can be viewed in Appendix 1.

3.5 Projections - Primary school demand

School roll projections are commissioned from the Greater London Authority (GLA) to ensure that we plan future places effectively. Projection models take into account a range of data such as population, births, migration, fertility rates, GP registrations, housing data and school rolls. The model then predicts the number of children expected to require places at borough, planning area and school level. Figure 2 below shows the last six sets of reception roll projections based on January censuses.

Figure 2 illustrates how projections have changed each year. There is a stark decrease in the number of projected children based on both the January 2022 and January 2023 census, compared to the projected number based on the January 2017 census. In the latest projections based on 2023 data, there are 277 (11%) fewer children forecast to require reception places in 2024 when compared with the January 2021 projections. This downward trend in pupil numbers continues to be borne out year on year in school censuses. The effect of fewer reception children on the number of reception places remaining vacant in the near future, is shown in the table below.

Table 8 (below Figure 2) shows the projected number of children, available places and projected surplus places. Despite a reduction of 375 reception places between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in reception place surplus from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease to reach 20% in 2029/30 and is forecast to stagnate at this level until the end of the projection period in 2031/32. The table assumes no further school organisation changes are made post 2023. At the time of writing, no decisions have been taken regarding further permanent PAN reductions from September 2024.

Figure 2. Comparison of reception roll projections (number of children) received between January 2017- January 2023

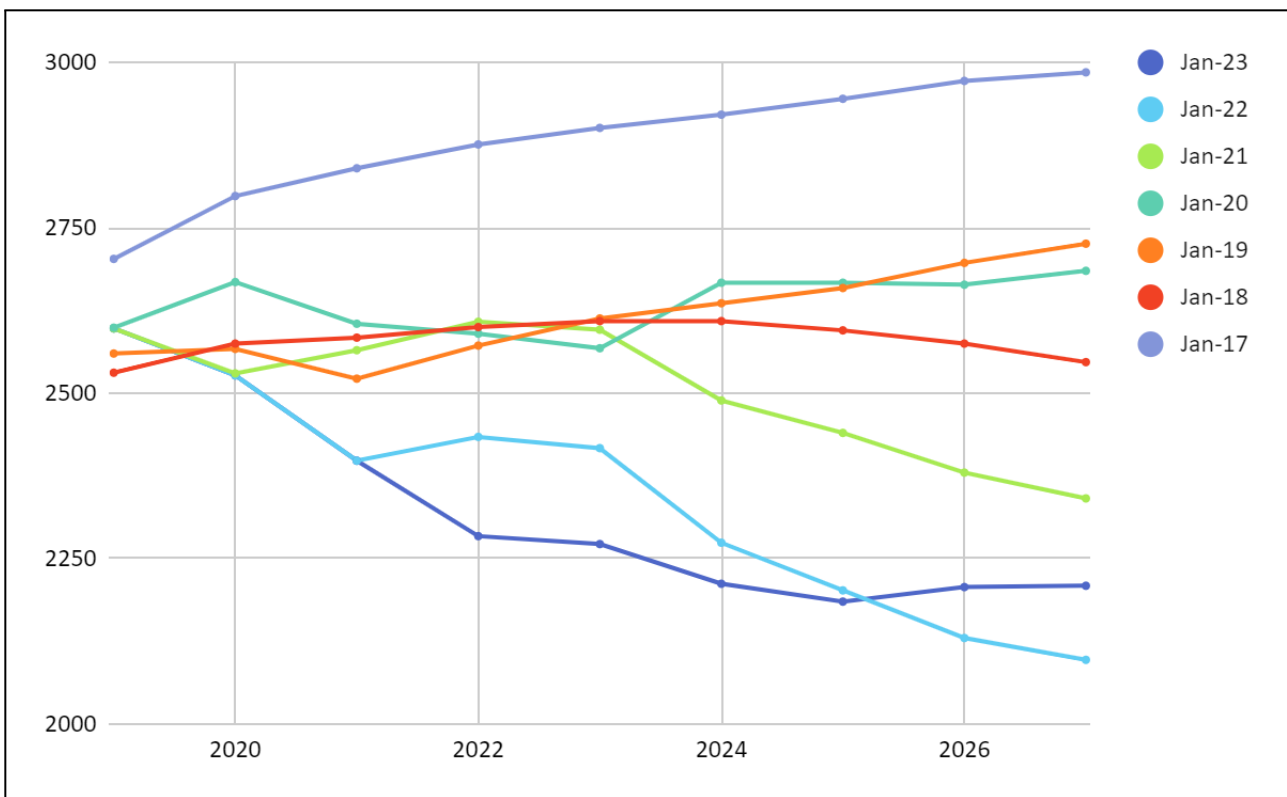


Table 8. GLA Reception place projections compared to the number of available places

Academic Year	Reception projections based on January 2023 census	Number of places available based on PANs	Projected surplus places based on PANs	% surplus places based on PANs
2023/24	2256	2780	524	19%
2024/25	2185	2780	595	21%
2025/26	2146	2780	634	23%
2026/27	2168	2780	612	22%
2027/28	2162	2780	618	22%
2028/29	2207	2780	573	21%
2029/30	2225	2780	555	20%
2030/31	2222	2780	558	20%
2031/32	2221	2780	559	20%

Note: Table 8 does not account for the proposed reductions to close 2 schools and amalgamate 4 schools, to become two, by September 2024.

4. Secondary planning

4.1 Year 7 projections

Planning secondary places is undertaken by comparing all available data about the number of Year 6 children on roll in Hackney schools and Hackney resident Year 6 children attending out-borough schools. An assessment is also made about the number of children likely to obtain a place at a Hackney secondary school due to their home address (these children typically live close to the Hackney border).

Secondary projections are based on providing places for 86% of the Hackney secondary transfer cohort, which is broadly in line with the number of parents that express a first preference for Hackney schools. There is no division of secondary schools by planning area when planning secondary places, as secondary aged pupils are expected to travel further than primary aged pupils to attend school.

Table 9 shows the latest secondary projections based on January 2023 primary census data. A steady increase of surplus places from 4 forms to 9 forms (1 form is the equivalent of 30 places) is forecast between 2023 and 2025. For 2026 a 6 form surplus is forecast. This surplus is expected to then increase to 8, 10 and 13 forms in 2027, 2028 and 2029. The projections indicate that there will be at least 128 surplus year 7 places each year between 2023 and 2029, with the highest number (392) occurring in September 2029. Hackney Education continues to analyse each release of primary rolls as well as Greater London Authority projections to determine the likely effect on future secondary places.

Table 9. Secondary projections based on January 2023 census

Cohort and academic year	Year of secondary transfer	No. of pupils on roll Jan 23	86% of cohort plus 330 pupils from out-borough schools that gain places at Hackney schools	Total Yr 7 places	No of projected surplus Yr7 places	Projected Yr7 surplus - no. of FE (forms of entry)
Year 6 cohort 2022/23	Sep 23	2500	2441	2569	128	4
Year 5	Sep 24	2428	2377	2569	192	6
Year 4	Sep 25	2350	2298	2569	271	9
Year 3	Sep 26	2428	2376	2569	193	6
Year 2	Sep 27	2434	2340	2569	229	8
Year 1	Sep 28	2373	2273	2569	296	10
Reception cohort 2022/23	Sep 29	2284	2177	2569	392	13

5. The Education Estates & Sufficiency Strategy

The Council's Education Estates & Sufficiency Strategy seeks to address falling primary school rolls by working closely with the school community generally, and with schools with budget pressures and falling pupil rolls to seek viable long-term solutions. A report was submitted to Cabinet in February 2022 outlining the challenges facing Hackney and the strategies proposed to address these.

Read more information about the ongoing implementation of the strategy online at <https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/managing-pupil-rolls-and-send-provision> .

6. Post-16 provision

There are a range of different options for post-16 study in Hackney: schools with sixth forms, the BSix Sixth Form College and the New City College Hackney campus. Neighbouring boroughs and colleges that are linked with specialist qualifications, such as ADA college and The London Screen Academy, provide high quality courses leading to a range of qualifications which further broaden the opportunities available to our students.

The most recent census data indicates that sixth form numbers are relatively stable in a very competitive environment; with 2509 post-16 students currently on roll within a Hackney school, compared to 2522 in 2021/22 (see table 12; this figure does not include the Hackney colleges). This number is forecast to increase to 2750 for the academic year 2023/24. This forecast is based on a linear model of progression, taking into consideration previous growth and KS4 student numbers, and an increase in places available at the City of London Academy Shoreditch Park. Some schools have seen an increase in post-16 cohort sizes. However there is still an ongoing issue with schools being under capacity with some seeing a reduction in year 12 this year.

Table 10. School sixth form roll and admission numbers (October 2022 census)

School name	2020/21				2021/22				2022/23				TTL
	Y12	Y13	Y14	TTL	Y12	Y13	Y14	TTL	Y12	Y13	Y14	TTL	
Cardinal Pole RC School	101	95		196	125	96		221	112	114		226	643
City of London Academy Shoreditch Pk									19			19	19
Clapton Girls' Academy	158	128		286	163	140		303	144	130		274	863
Haggerston School	59	62		121	67	55		122	57	59		116	359
Lubavitch Senior Girls' School	35	29		64	19	12		31	9	17		26	121
Mossbourne Community Academy	201	183		384	189	192		381	191	181		372	1137
Our Lady's Catholic High School	81	81		162	48	77		125	63	48		111	398
Skinner's Academy	86	57		143	61	80		141	101	60		161	445
Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form	204	207		411	232	196		428	227	219		446	1285
The Bridge Academy	119	105		224	119	103		222	127	111		238	684
The City Academy, Hackney	109	85		194	102	105		207	103	91		194	595
The Petchey Academy	99	113		212	69	92		161	69	66		135	508
The Urswick School	58	46		104	68	54		122	68	58		126	352
Ickburgh School	13	4	2	19	10	14	4	28	5	10	13	28	75
Stormont House School	22			22	22			22	20			20	64
The Garden School					8			8	9	8		17	25
Total	1345	1195	2	2542	1302	1216	4	2522	1324	1172	13	2509	7573

Mossbourne Victoria Park pupils wishing to stay on in the sixth form can attend the Mossbourne Community Academy site. Thirty new sixth form places were offered at the City of London Academy Shoreditch Park in September 2022. Out of the 30 places offered 19 students were recruited into year 12. Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form is expecting admission numbers to increase above sixth form capacity. Stormont House special school operates a one year post-16 programme up to age 17. As of the academic year 2022/23 The Garden school has students on roll in both year 12 and 13.

Schools have very different admissions targets depending on the context, the size of the year 11 cohort and the percentage of the year 11 cohort eligible for the sixth form. Up to now only two schools with the largest sixth forms attract a significant sixth form enrolment from out-borough schools. All schools except for one now offer a vocational Level 3 programme. Several schools offer GCSE retake programmes in English and Maths. One school offers a Level 2 bridging course for their vulnerable year 11 students.

Secondary cohort sizes have started to decline nationally. This downward trajectory will begin to have an effect at KS5 within the next 4 years, as there is a smaller pool of students available to progress into Hackney sixth forms. Schools are being made aware that it may be advantageous to diversify their sixth form offer and review admission criteria to support KS5 transition.

6.1 Where are our students going – How do we track them?

The data in Table 11 is derived from 16-18 year old young people, confirmed in this academic year as studying at an FE College, 6th form college, school sixth form, an ISP, or repeating year 11. It does not include expired records. It shows for each London borough the size of the post-16 student cohort, along with the number of young people in this cohort either staying in the borough or leaving it for post-16 education. It also shows the number of post-16 students travelling to the borough for their education. Table 12 shows the percentage of 16 to 18 year olds of each London borough who remain in their borough for their education. In 2021 55% of Hackney's 16-18 year olds were studying in a Hackney institution.

Table 11. Travel into and out of each borough in the region - 16-18 year olds
(June 2022 LCCIS data)

Borough	Import	Export	Remain in borough	Resident cohort
Barking & Dagenham	1216	2856	3179	6035
Barnet	3204	3061	4625	7686
Bexley	2130	2095	3028	5123
Brent	1282	4167	3209	7376
Bromley	2044	1569	4758	6327
Camden	3150	1428	1569	2997
City of London	437	68	9	77
Ealing	959	3699	4105	7804
Enfield	1115	4296	3873	8169

Greenwich	1528	2933	2664	597
Hackney	1497	2236	2717	4953
Hammersmith & Fulham	1781	1201	1107	2308
Haringey	2139	2786	2272	5058
Harrow	2352	2362	3034	5396
Havering	1387	1957	3446	5403
Hillingdon	2311	2171	4550	6721
Hounslow	1496	2726	3279	6005
Islington	3999	1690	1318	3008
Kensington & Chelsea	1592	764	499	1263
Kingston-upon-Thames	1971	1274	1957	3231
Lambeth	965	3288	1756	5044
Lewisham	1142	3805	2122	5927
Merton	775	2533	1424	3957
Newham	2443	3443	4886	8329
Redbridge	1786	2710	4749	7459
Richmond-upon-Thames	1784	1424	1536	2960
Southwark	1285	2881	2265	5146
Sutton	1076	1754	2615	4369
Tower Hamlets	916	1681	4137	5818
Waltham Forest	3215	2494	3246	5740
Wandsworth	2482	1606	2192	3798
Westminster	4007	1030	1317	2347

Highlighted in yellow: top ten importer/exporters.

**Table 12. Percentage of resident children educated in their home borough
- 16-17 year olds (June 2022 LCCIS data)**

Borough	% Educated in home borough - individual boroughs
Barking & Dagenham	53%
Barnet	60%
Bexley	59%
Brent	44%
Bromley	75%
Camden	52%
City of London	12%
Ealing	53%
Enfield	47%
Greenwich	48%
Hackney	55%
Hammersmith & Fulham	48%
Haringey	45%
Harrow	56%
Havering	64%
Hillingdon	68%
Hounslow	55%
Islington	44%
Kensington & Chelsea	40%
Kingston-upon-Thames	61%
Lambeth	35%
Lewisham	36%
Merton	36%
Newham	59%
Redbridge	64%
Richmond-upon-Thames	52%

Southwark	44%
Sutton	60%
Tower Hamlets	71%
Waltham Forest	57%
Wandsworth	58%
Westminster	56%

The post-16 destinations of our students are tracked via the September Guarantee process, linked to a statutory reporting timetable. An annual Travel to Study report for young people resident in Hackney is produced along with activity surveys for each school every year in the spring term. Table 15 below shows the amalgamation of this information, at borough level, relating to year 11 leavers from Hackney schools. According to the 2022 activity survey the vast majority of our year 11 students went on to further study with the majority taking A-levels in a wide range of institutions. For those who chose to study out-borough, Table 13 also shows the wide range of post-16 destinations chosen by Hackney young people.

Table 13. Post-16 destinations 2022

Local authority	Sixth Form/FE college
Barking & Dagenham	Elutec (14-19 UTC)
Barnet	Ashmole School
	Barnet & Southgate College (Colindale Campus)
	Barnet & Southgate College (Wood Street Campus)
	Brampton College
	Friern Barnet School
	Woodhouse College (Sixth Form)
Bexley	Harris Academy Falconwood
	London South East Colleges - Bexley College (F.Ed)
Brent	College of North West London (CNWL) - Wembley (United Colleges Group)
Bromley	Harris Academy Beckenham
Camden	Camden School for Girls
	La Swap Consortium
	The UCL Academy
	Westminster Kingsway College - King's Cross (WKCIC) (Capital City Colleges)
Croydon	Croydon College
	Harris Professional Skills Sixth Form
	The BRIT School of Performing Arts
Ealing	William Perkin CofE High School

Enfield	Barnet & Southgate College (Edmonton Green Campus)
	Barnet & Southgate College (Southgate Campus)
	Capel Manor College (FE)
	Enfield Grammar School
	Oasis Academy Enfield
	The Latymer School (Enfield)
Greenwich	Charlton Athletic Study Support Centre
	Harris Academy (Greenwich)
	London South East Colleges - Greenwich Community College
Hackney	Access Creative College (formerly Access to Music)
	Beis Rochel d'Satmar Girls' School
	Beis Yaakov Seminary (Beth Jacob Teachers' Seminary)
	BSix Brooke House Sixth Form College (B6) - Training Provider
	Cardinal Pole Roman Catholic School
	City of London Academy, Shoreditch Park
	Clapton Girls' Academy
	Educated at home - Hackney
	ELATT Sixth Form
	Haggerston School
	Ickburgh School
	Jewish Seminary - Not Listed
	Lubavitch House School (Senior Girls)
	Mossbourne Community Academy
	New City College - Hackney Community College Campus (HCC)
	Our Lady's Convent Roman Catholic High School
	Skinner's Academy
	Stoke Newington School
	Stormont House School
	The Bridge Academy (Hackney)
	The City Academy, Hackney
	The Garden School
	The Petchey Academy
The Urswick School	
Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School	
Hammersmith & Fulham	Ealing Hammersmith & West London College (EHWL-HAMMERSMITH Site)
	London Oratory School

	William Morris Sixth Form
Haringey	Ada National College for Digital Skills
	CONEL College Haringey (Capital City Colleges)
	Haringey Sixth Form Centre
	London Academy of Excellence Tottenham
Harrow	Harrow College (HCUC)
	Stanmore College
Havering	Havering College
Islington	Central Foundation Boys' School
	City and Islington College (CANDI) (WKCIC) (Capital City Colleges)
	City of London Academy (ISL)
	City of London Academy Highbury Grove
	St Mary Magdalene Academy
	The Bridge Integrated Learning Space
	The London Screen Academy
Kensington & Chelsea	The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial RC School (CVMS)
	The Rhythm Studio
Kingston-Upon-Thames	Tiffin Grammar School
Lambeth	King's College London Maths School
	Oasis Academy South Bank
Lewisham	Christ The King 6th Form College (CTK)
	Christ the King: St Mary's Sixth Form College - Bexley (CTK)
	Lewisham College (Newcastle Colleges Group (NCG) - Lewisham Way Campus)
Merton	King's College School (Independent)
Newham	Brampton Manor Academy
	Building Crafts College
	Chobham Academy
	London Academy of Excellence (6th form only)
	London Design & Engineering UTC (LDEUTC)
	Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre (The NCS)
	Newham FE College
	Newham Sixth Form College (NewVIc)
Redbridge	Beal High School
	New City College - Redbridge College Campus
	Woodbridge High School (Woodbridge High School & Language College)
	Woodford County High School

Southwark	City of London Academy (SWK)
	Southwark College -The Cut Waterloo (Newcastle Colleges Group (NCG))
Tower Hamlets	Bishop Challoner Collegiate Post 16 College
	East London Arts & Music (ELAM)
	Langdon Park Community School
	London East Alternative Provision (formally Pupil Referral Unit Tower Hamlets)
	Mulberry Academy Shoreditch (Formally Green Spring Academy Shoreditch)
	Mulberry UTC
	New City College - Tower Hamlets College Campus
	Oaklands School (Tower Hamlets)
Waltham Forest	Big Creative Education Academy (formerly DV8)
	Leyton Sixth Form College
	Noor Ul Islam
	Sir George Monoux College
	Waltham Forest College
	Walthamstow Academy
	Walthamstow School for Girls
Wandsworth	St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College (SFX)
Westminster	City of Westminster College (UCG) - United Colleges Group
	Fashion Retail Academy
	Harris Academy St John's Wood
	Harris Westminster Sixth Form
	London College of Beauty Therapy (LCBT)
	St Marylebone CofE School
	The Grey Coat Hospital
	Westminster City School

7. Conclusion

All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places. The number of children requiring reception places has fallen in recent years in most London boroughs, and the Greater London Authority (GLA) projections predict that this demand will fall further.

Also in Hackney, demand for primary school places has been falling, and as a result, there is currently a high number of surplus reception places which affects the planning of resourcing of some schools. The downward trend in primary children is expected to filter through to secondary schools in the near future. Officers will continue to monitor secondary data at each census release.

The decrease in numbers of children has also been seen in the early years phase - the most recent data (2022) shows that the total number of three and four-year-old children accessing 15 hours of free provision in all Hackney schools and settings has fallen by 290 children or 4.2% between 2018 and 2022.

Sixth form numbers are relatively stable in a very competitive environment. Some schools have seen an increase in post-16 cohort sizes while others are under capacity. Secondary cohort sizes have started to decline nationally, which will begin to have an effect at KS5 within the next 4 years, as there is a smaller pool of students available to progress into Hackney sixth forms.

The Council's Education Estates and Sufficiency Strategy has been agreed at Cabinet and officers will continue to map out options with the school community to ensure that solutions to the issue of falling rolls which is affecting our schools, are found.

This document will be updated annually.

Appendices

1. Primary PAN reductions 2019-2022
2. Early Years

Appendix 1 – Primary PAN reductions 2019-2022

2019/20-2023/24

Permanent PAN (published admission number) reductions of 120 places across four schools in planning areas 3, 8, 11 and 12, were implemented from 2019/20 (see Table 7).

Table 1. Permanent PAN reductions from 2019/20

School	PAN prior to 2019/20	New PAN from 2019/20	No. of reception places permanently removed
De Beauvoir	60	30	30
Gainsborough	90	60	30
Halley House*	60	30	30
Harrington Hill	90	60	30
Total number of places permanently removed			120

*= The decision to reduce the PAN at Halley House was taken by Bellevue Academy Trust.

Permanent PAN (published admission number) reductions of 135 places across six schools in planning areas 3, 11, 12 and 13, were implemented from 2022/23 (Table 8).

Table 2. Permanent PAN reductions from 2022/23

School	PAN prior to 2022/23	New PAN from 2022/23	No. of reception places permanently removed
Gayhurst	75	60	15
Harrington Hill	60	30	30
Mandeville	60	45	15
Randal Cremer	60	45	15
St. Dominic's	60	30	30
Thomas Fairchild	60	30	30
Total number of places permanently removed			135

Permanent PAN (published admission number) reductions of 120 places across four schools in planning areas 1, 9 and 11, were agreed to be implemented from 2023/24 (see Table 9).

Appendix 2 – Early Years

Funded early education

Some children are entitled to free childcare, funded by the government. These entitlements are for 38 weeks per year.

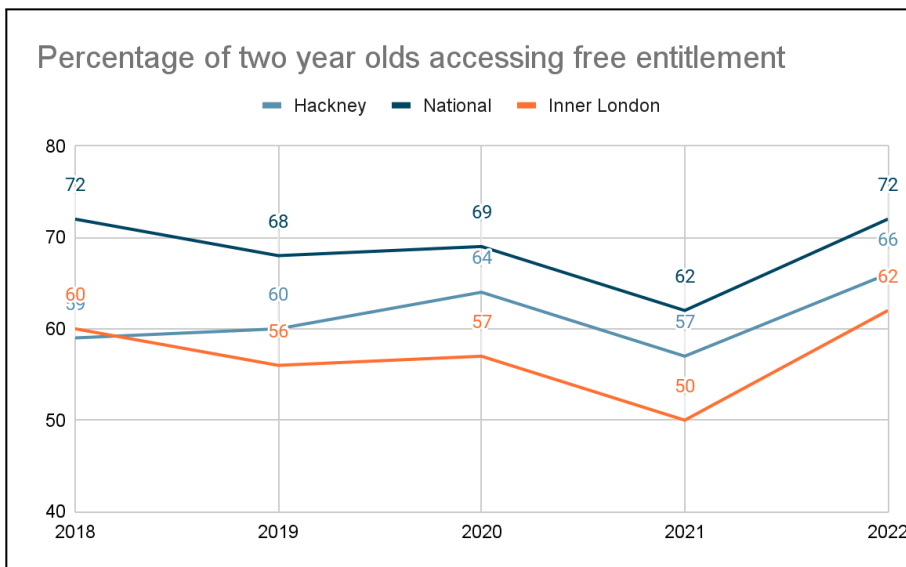
- All children aged three and four are entitled to 15 hours per week until they start reception class in school.
- Children aged three and four where both parents are working, or lone parent families where that parent is working, are entitled to 30 hours per week until they start reception class in school.
- Children aged two whose families receive certain benefits (including low income families in receipt of in-work benefits), or those who meet additional non-economic criteria, are entitled to 15 hours per week. Nationally, about 40% of two-year-olds are entitled to this offer, but the proportion varies by area.

Parents do not have to use all the hours of their funded entitlement. They may choose to split them between providers. With the agreement of their provider, parents may also spread them across the year – for example, rather than taking 15 hours for 38 weeks a year they could take just under 12 hours for 48 weeks a year.

Proportion of two-year-old children entitled to funded early education

There has been a gradual increase in the percentage of two-year-olds benefitting from funded early education since 2018. The most recent increase of 9 percentage points from 57% to 66% mirrors the trend across London and England. In 2022 there were 1160 two-year-old children accessing free early education.

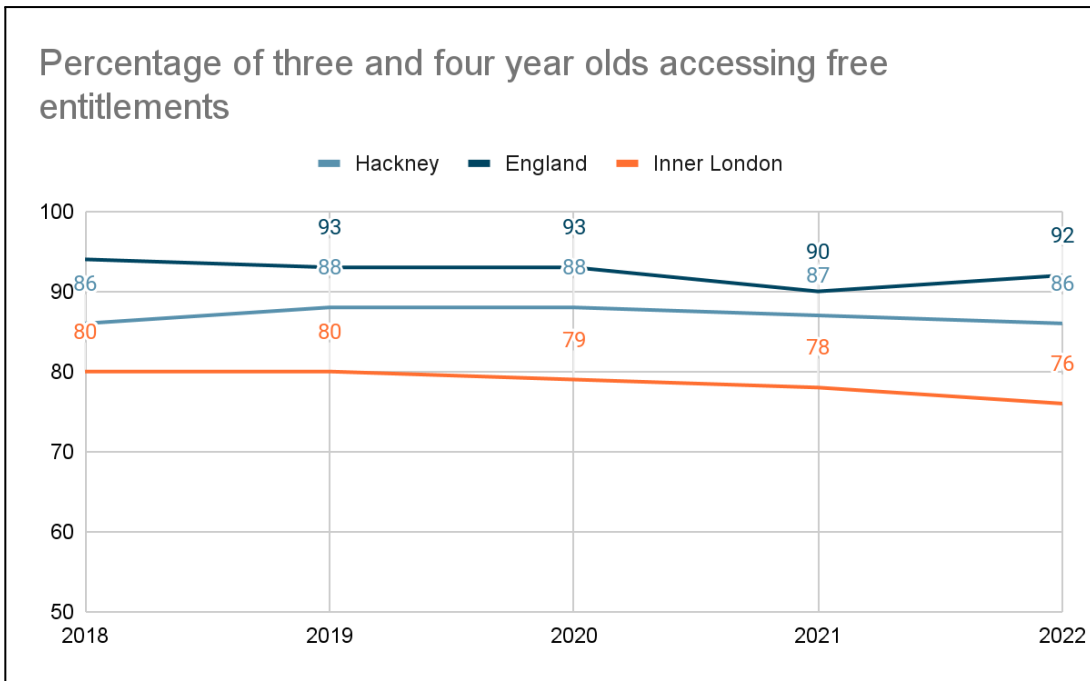
Figure 1. Two-year-old children entitled to funded early education



Take up of three and four-year-old funded early education

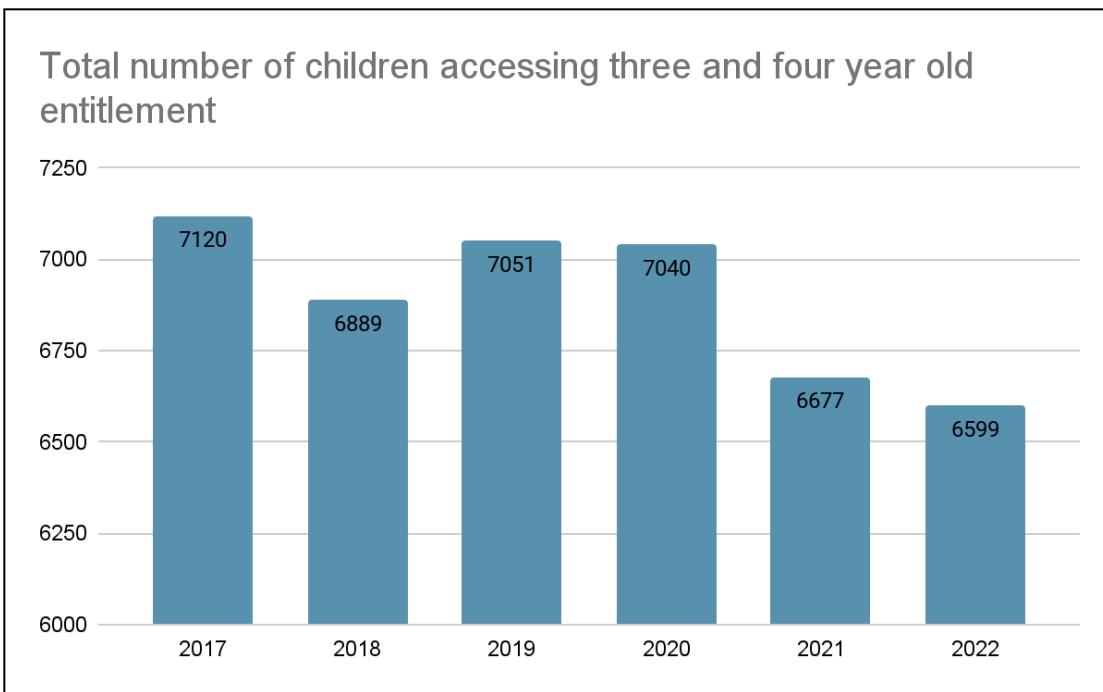
In 2022, 86% of eligible three and four-year-olds accessed a funded place in a Hackney setting. This could be in either a maintained nursery class, an independent school, a private or voluntary setting or with a childminder.

Figure 2. Take up of three and four-year-old funded early education



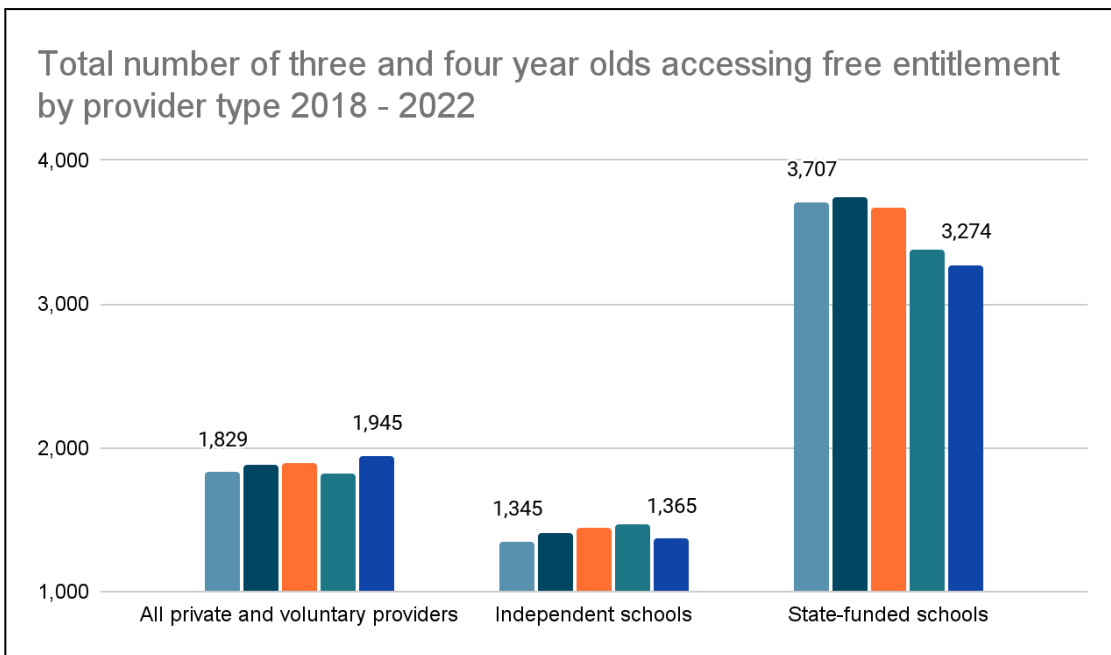
The total number of children accessing the free entitlement has fallen from 7051 in 2019 to 6599 in 2022: a decrease of 452 children or 6.4% over a three-year period (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Children accessing three and four-year-old free entitlement



The number of three and four-year-olds attending both private and voluntary settings has increased between 2018 and 2022, while the number of children attending maintained nursery classes in schools has fallen by 433 children over the same period.


Figure 4. Number of three and four-year-olds by provider



Further considerations for Early Years

The 2022 Childcare Sufficiency Report confirmed that there continues to be a sufficient supply of childcare provision to meet the needs of children requiring funded childcare places. Participation by providers offering two, three and four-year-old funded places has increased since 2018, ensuring that any increase in the percentage of children accessing funded hours can be met. Further work will need to be carried out should universal entitlements be extended to 30 hours for all children.

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Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy

2021 - 2031

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Vision

Hackney has a diverse and vibrant community of educational establishments. The school community has worked together over a number of years to grow and develop in light of changes in population and government agenda. The last year has been an outstanding example of partnership working in the most difficult context during the pandemic.

Hackney has a vision to provide an excellent equitable local educational experience for all Hackney children and young people. For the majority this will be within a mainstream early years setting and school or college environment. But for many who are not as easily able to access mainstream education for various reasons, we want to have a varied and child centred alternative offer through specialist settings and alternative provision. With significant growth in the numbers of children and young people who cannot access mainstream education we need to address this change in the same way that the Hackney community has approached change in the past: together, and with outcomes for children and young people as the cornerstone of our strategic approach.

We want all our children to be able to travel easily to a great inclusive local school which engages with all their neighbourhood parent/carer communities. We want all our children to be in schools which fairly reflect the diversity of the Hackney community.

Paper Summary

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there is a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively.

It also has a statutory duty to keep under review educational provision, training provision and social care provision made both in and outside of its area for children and young people with SEN or a disability and for whom it is responsible.

The paper firstly provides a clear review of our current sufficiency and how our educational estate can support this; the review will assess the efficient running and financial stability of schools.

The paper will then present the gap analysis of provision that we will require over the next five to ten years.

Conclusions will be drawn to form the description of a high level strategy to address the vision proposed to provide sufficient Hackney school places for all children and young people living in our Borough.

Context and perspective - National, London and Hackney

Hackney demographics	
<p>Age: 25% are under 20 years. Proportion of residents between 20-29 years has grown in the last ten years to just under 25%. Life expectancy is below the London average, especially for men</p> <p>Cultural Diversity: Over 1/3 of residents were born outside the UK. Population groups include: 'Other White', Black, Turkish/Kurdish. A large Charedi Jewish community is located in the North of the borough.</p>	<p>Deprivation: Community is becoming less deprived than other LAs in relation to income, employment, housing: in 2010 ranked 2nd most deprived LA, in 2015 moved to 11th rank in London.</p> <p>Financial poverty and employment: In 2016-17, 36% of residents were living in financial poverty – with incomes of less than 60% of the national median after housing costs.</p> <p>Housing: Home ownership is highest amongst the Asian and White populations. Black residents are most likely to live in social housing.</p>

<https://hackneyjsna.org.uk/>

The population of Hackney after showing a rise between 2008-2016 is now falling.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure there is a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. In Hackney, this is managed by Hackney Education (HE), the Council’s education service.

Between 2007 and 2014 Hackney experienced significant and unprecedented growth in demand for primary school reception places with very high rolls between 2012 and 2016. This trend was replicated in London and across the country. In response, local authorities created additional school places to cater for the increased demand. Furthermore, new school places were created through the government’s Academy and Free School programmes.

Since 2015 however, demand for reception places across London has decreased year on year. The reason why rolls are falling is unclear, but it is thought to be a combination of changes to welfare benefits, rising rents and the possible effects of Brexit and the pandemic. Falling reception rolls have led to a significant number of surplus reception places, which has impacted on the efficient running and financial stability of some schools.

There has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people with EHC Plans - 49% over the last 5 years, an average annual year on year growth of 10.3%. This year has seen a 17% increase in requests for assessment. The demand for high quality provision and specialist places in local settings is high, outstripping supply. This is in line with national trends.

There are 15,000 Charedi Jewish Children and Young People aged under 16 in Stamford Hill alone. These children will attend Charedi Schools by parental preference. There are two Othodox Jewish state funded girls secondary schools, one is local authority maintained and voluntary aided; the other is part of a multi-academy trust.

There are over 20 Charedi Schools in Hackney which are independent schools and engagement with Orthodox Jewish schools is both direct and supported by third sector charities. Of the 460 pupils with EHCP at Independent and Non Maintained Special Schools in Hackney, over 250 (57%) of these pupils attend Charedi schools.

The number of children in the Charedi Jewish community is increasing and there is pressure on space, and at times on the quality of educational accommodation, in the independent school sector. By comparison, other independent schools within Hackney with a religious ethos include three Muslim schools and one Christian school.

Between 2009 and 2021 there has been a clear trend in terms of an increasing number of Statements or EHCPs being issued and maintained by Hackney with an approximate 80:20 split between non SEND C&YP to 20% including EHC Plans and SEN support. This split may change as the total school population is expected to decrease over the next 3 -5 years.

The impact of this is significant, as while the need for specialist places and support services has increased, the CYP population is projected to fall. This means that the percentage of each year's pupil cohort requiring SEND support and provision will increase.

The decreasing rolls and increasing requirements for SEND will impact on the use of the education estate which will see changes in the coming 5-10 year period. We therefore need to review the Hackney strategy for sufficiency and meeting the needs of education through the asset.

The impact of falling rolls on individual schools creates challenges for school leaders and needs to be managed individually and collectively. Having an excess number of surplus places in the system can lead to more moves between schools than is helpful for young people. The strategy considers guidance for schools who are experiencing falling rolls.

1. Aims of the paper:

To describe the strategy over the coming ten years (2021-2031) for education, education property and estates in Hackney, ensuring that:

- There is a sufficiency of early years, statutory age and post 16 mainstream and special school and college places in our Borough
- The overall spread of schools (mainstream and special) and early years settings meets the **strategic aims of Hackney Council**
- All pupils can travel easily to a local school
- There is equitable access to schools for all families, with attention given to ensuring decisions taken provide and promote diverse intakes.
- Schools fairly reflect the diversity of the Hackney community.
- The range of types of school is continued, including faith schools.
- The changing needs of the population are met: both in terms of education spaces and community spaces

- Our partners in education, headteachers and governors, diocesan boards and academy trusts, are aligned and committed to this strategy
- Communities and colleagues can see a rationale and process of support for any change
- School leaders, including governors, are well informed and supported in understanding possible developments ahead
- Key stakeholders are engaged and supported
- There is broad commitment to any changes proposed, note that proposed changes are the subject of consultation with the community and carried out in line with statutory requirements including school reorganisation and equalities legislation.
- Changes to site use are well considered and sustainable
- The education estate in use supports a good quality of education
- Education sites are well maintained and suitable for use, and will be well maintained for the future/environmentally sustainable.
- Public money is well spent - including ensuring schools and settings are run efficiently; guidance is given on sustainability given pupil numbers
- There are clear guidelines and protocol for responses to external requests for use of sites.
- Attention is paid to contributing to growth of the inclusive economy
- The strategy supports and promotes the health and well being of the borough

This paper sets out the likely need for change to use of sites over a 5-10 year planning period and possible capital investment routes to support the need. This paper does not list individual sites or address individual concerns. Decisions about individual sites will be made in line with the agreed strategy via the implementation plan which will be produced at a later date.

2. Audience:

Officers and councillors, headteachers, governors, diocesan boards and the public

3. Timeline:

Throughout - working group meetings of key officers and senior officers meet weekly

- March 2021: To get initial approval at HMT and 3-1 for scope of document and general steer - Group Director and Cllr Bramble approved 8-3-21; FM group approved 15/3/21; SLT to see paper 18/3/21
- 31 May/30 June 2021: Draft Strategy paper approved by all HE senior officers
- June - November 2021: Ensure discussion with neighbouring boroughs, diocesan boards and other partners: headteachers and governors regarding school place planning and specialist provision; Social care and health leadership teams.
- November - December 2021: Senior Council and member review of the strategy

- February 2022: This strategy paper will go to Cabinet for final approval
- February 2022 - December 2022: The development of implementation plans will take place with stakeholders to formulate proposed solutions. One implementation plan for Priority 1 and SEND proposals. Further implementation plans to address the priorities 2,3 and 4.
- July - December 2022: Council meetings as required to get final approval for the resulting implementation plans.

4. Key input documents:

This paper is supported by multiple key input documents (2020 data), listed below which provide a detailed analysis of each area and the changing need:

- School organisation plan (September 2020):**
<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/school-place-planning#:~:text=Hackney%20Education's%20School%20Organisation%20Plan,the%20School%20Place%20Planning%20Group.>
- Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (March 2020)**
<https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/system/files/extranet/Hackney%20Childcare%20Sufficiency%20Assessment%202019%20to%202020%20%282%29.pdf>
- Map of Schools and Children Centres**
https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/sites/default/files/document/A0%20Hackney%20Schools%20Map_July_2019.1.pdf
- Hackney's Local Plan 2033 (LP33) - adopted in July 2020**
 ■ **appendix-1-LP33-adoption-july-2020.pdf**

The new borough wide Local Plan 2033, known as LP33, is the key strategic planning document used to direct and guide development in the borough up to 2033.

The Council are also developing 2 new area action plans for Shoreditch and Stamford Hill together with supplementary planning documents including Growing up in Hackney - Child Friendly Places Supplementary Planning document.

5. Key officers:

Officers: Fran Cox, Ginevra Davis, Samantha George, Andrew Laidler, Ophelia Carter, Donna Thomas, Stephen Hall, Jane Ball, Hilary Smith, Anton Francic, Meghan Nice

Senior officers: Annie Gammon, Chris Pritchard

HMT champions: Jacquie Burke, Ian Williams

6. Strategic aims for education in Hackney

Hackney's aims are to create a fairer, more inclusive borough, which supports children and young people to thrive. We want to optimise schools' roles as an anchor system in the

borough and we want to ensure developments and changes are sustainable in the widest meaning of the word.

Hackney Education's mission is to **improve the life chances of every child, young person and learner in Hackney**

... making Hackney the most forward looking education system in the UK, where schools, settings and partners provide an exciting environment which ensures inclusion and success for everyone. We see our borough as being one of the best places in the country for young people to grow, learn, develop and achieve – and one of the best places for colleagues to work and thrive in our education system.

The Hackney Schools for Everyone document of Jan 2018 summarises a survey of residents. When asked about the role the Council should take in Hackney's schools, 92% respondents thought the local authority should ensure there are enough school places locally, 88% said the council should support the wellbeing of vulnerable children, 85% identified access to special educational needs provision, 83% said the Council should ensure schools work together to provide high quality education. 83% of respondents believed that it was the Borough's role to oversee the schools admission process and ensure that it's fair. Respondents were also asked to rate on a scale of very important to not important at all the priorities for schools in Hackney. Providing sufficient primary and secondary school places was considered very important for 90% of respondents, with equal opportunities, maintaining high standards and investing in high quality facilities receiving over 80% of responses as 'very important', followed by schools working together at 74%.

Respondents suggested that Hackney schools are diverse with comparatively low segregation between pupils from different backgrounds and this was something to be safeguarded by the local authority. From this emerged a narrative about respondents' fears that children could be left behind, fuelled in part by concerns over demographic changes to the borough.

The document emphasises a strong preference for schools being open to everyone i.e. not selective. In our borough we have maintained schools which have a religious ethos and are open to everyone (Church of England and Roman Catholic schools and Jewish schools; there is also an Islamic faith based academy). The Borough wants to ensure these faith based schools can continue to thrive.

In Hackney we have a number of academies and free schools. Whilst the borough has a particular responsibility to local authority maintained schools, we also see the academies and free schools as part of the wider Hackney family of schools.

There needs to be particular attention to the needs and future of small schools. One form entry schools are particularly vulnerable to the impact of any reductions in rolls.

We want to support schools in any future change of use of parts of their sites.

There is a renewed focus on ensuring all our schools in Hackney both mainstream and specialist are inclusive in their ethos. In the changes proposed in this strategy we want to ensure that we provide the correct training and development to mainstream schools to increase their local offer in relation to pupils with SEND that will be included within their school community. With more and more children with SEND included in mainstream settings there will be a requirement for more specialist training for local mainstream school staff and strategic curriculum development in order to differentiate to meet all needs. Hackney Education is committed to supporting mainstream schools in this.

All sufficiency and estate reviews will be made in consideration of Hackney Education's School Organisation Principles.

7. School Organisation (Sufficiency & Demand)

Needs arise where there is insufficient capacity or provision to meet what is required or the existing provision is not suitable for the current or future need.

Early Years

In total, there are 365 childcare providers in Hackney. These include 176 Childminders, 51 nursery classes in schools, 2 maintained nursery schools and 118 Private and Voluntary nurseries registered with Ofsted as Childcare on non-Domestic Premises. In addition there are 18 independent schools which provide education and care for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. The number of providers has remained broadly stable over the previous two years.

The most recent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (March 2020) concluded that there is a sufficient supply of childcare provision to meet the needs of children requiring funded childcare places. Participation by providers offering 2, 3 and 4 year old funded places has increased over the previous two years thereby improving access to these entitlements for children and families.

The Parenting and Family Information Service monthly collection of vacancy information indicates that there has been an increase in the number of settings reporting vacancies. In May 2021, from a total of 146 schools and settings that completed the survey, 71 reported vacancies. This has increased from 49 in November 2020.

Mainstream Schools:

There are 58 maintained Primary Schools consisting of 38 Community schools, 14 Voluntary Aided (VA), 3 Free schools and 3 Academies. There are 16 secondary schools, of which 8 are Academies, 5 VA, 2 Community and 1 Free school. The complete list can be viewed on page2.

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/school-place-planning#:~:text=Hackney%20Education's%20School%20Organisation%20Plan,the%20School%20Place%20Planning%20Group.>

Primary projections

Primary school rolls are falling in Hackney and across London. This significant shift in demand offers the potential to examine how our school buildings are being used. However caution is needed when considering sites that could be deemed surplus to requirements for the future if rolls increase again (both primary and secondary). Sufficient capacity should be retained within the estate - including for a new secondary school - if there is a future increase in demand for secondary school places.

In January 2021, there were 495 vacant reception class places. Secondary schools were mainly full with 39 vacancies. The Greater London Authority's position is that the mainstream roll forecasts are difficult to predict at this stage given the changing patterns as a result of Covid 19, but rolls are falling. Reductions in the Planned Admission Number (PANs) have been undertaken; 120 reception places were removed in 2019, a further 135 will be removed in September 2022 and the Authority is currently consulting on reducing PANs by a further 120 places in September 2023.

Secondary Projections

Secondary projections are devised by using primary rolls as a baseline, to which various factors are included and others discounted, for example, a projection of the number of non-Hackney resident pupils that are likely to obtain a secondary place in Hackney and the number of Hackney resident children in primary schools outside Hackney that will require a place in a Hackney school at secondary transfer. Consideration is also given to pupils in independent primary provision and those that may transfer to an independent secondary school and an over allocation of Yr 7 places at secondary transfer by some schools.

Based on projections using the January 2021 census, surplus Year 7 places will range from 52 places in September 2022 to 142 in September 2027 with a peak of 247 places in September 2025. Work is underway to determine the impact of falling primary rolls on the secondary phase.

Post 16

Hackney has 12 school sixth forms providing applied general and A Level courses for 3000 students. Over the past 10 years the numbers in Hackney school sixth forms have more than tripled, with 6 sixth forms having opened since 2010. Two schools are 11-16 only. At present, City of London Academy, Shoreditch Park is consulting on opening sixth form provision. There is a sufficiency of post-16 places with half of our sixth forms having an entry of under 100, which, using DfE criteria, would be deemed to be at risk.

Schools are maintaining their numbers by increasing the breadth of their course offer beyond A Level and schools value their sixth form as it sustains the entry of their cohort at year 7. The recent DfE White Paper, Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth, January 2021, has an emphasis on the new T Level courses which would run more easily at a college and this could lower the number of students choosing to stay on in school at 16.

Sufficiency in courses is less well developed. The schools do not offer provision at Entry Level to Level 2. For this type of learning experience and accreditation, Hackney young people can go to the two colleges in Hackney: BSix and the Hackney Campus of New City College, which also has sites at Epping, Havering, Redbridge, and Tower Hamlets, and a number of other colleges in surrounding boroughs. There is some SEND provision at both BSix and Hackney Campus of NCC. The colleges also offer level 3 provision and blended pathways.

Only Stormont House and Ickburgh School offer sixth provision for SEND pupils and this is the area of greatest need. The Garden School is expanding to become an all through school with post-16 provision.

Currently there is a large net outflow of sixth form students from Hackney. This is a potential group of students who could remain in borough if suitable offers were available.

Independent Schools

There are 29 Independent Schools and 3 Independent Special Schools within Hackney, 84% of these are faith based schools - 23 Jewish Schools, 3 Muslim Schools and 1 Christian School. There is only 1 mainstream Independent school.

A strong presence of independent settings in a local authority is always an impacting factor when pupil place planning as it is very difficult to predict when parents may choose to leave the public school system and move their child to an independent setting.

The great majority of independent school places taken up in Hackney are in the Jewish community.

Anecdotally we are seeing slightly more families choosing to access independent education for their children through the pandemic which has been a contributing factor to falling rolls in some schools.

We are keen to work with our independent school settings as a key part of our Hackney Schools community to ensure a consistent offer is in place for children and young people with SEND. Good strategic relationships will also lead to better understanding of pupil flow which will support intelligent pupil place planning in years to come.

Special Education Needs and Disabilities:

There is a need for additional SEND places in-borough. We currently send **460** pupils out of the borough to independent provision and non maintained special schools. This is expensive and involves travel. It is also not in the best interest of the child in comparison to a local provision in their communities.

Further to this the significant increase in the number of children and young people with EHCP requiring specialist provision forecasts that by 2023 we will require an additional **336** places in special provision by 2023 and a further **168** annually after that through to 2026.

The numbers and type of places needed have been reviewed through the SEND Needs Analysis Paper (SNAP) and in June 2021 we began to invite expressions of interest from schools and settings within the borough to be involved in the delivery of new provision.

The numbers and pattern of organisation will be reviewed and informed by the SNAP and the expressions of interest received.

The SEND Needs Analysis Paper (SNAP) has made the following recommendations in relation to future educational need:

1. The delivery of **150** additional all age Special School places for children and young people with ASC and complex needs. This could be through the expansion of the existing Special Schools, or in the creation of a new provision.
2. The delivery of two ASC Additional Resource Provisions (ARP); one **24** place secondary and one **24** place primary setting.
3. The delivery of one **24** place MLD Secondary ARP
4. The delivery of one **24** place Primary SLCN ARP
5. The commissioning of **20** ASC places catering for the orthodox jewish community
6. The commissioning of **24** primary SEMH places
7. The commissioning of **24** secondary SEMH places
8. The commissioning of a **50** place Post 16 provision which supports children and young people with complex needs including ASC and SEMH.
9. The development of more formalised pathways for earlier assessment and **20** assessment places within Early Years settings.

Given the timescales associated with the growth figures there is a need to move quickly in relation to an identified solution.

Hackney Education will ensure that with any new provision support and training for people working in these ARP and special schools will be developed.

Hackney Education's School Organisation Plan in July 2020 identified the following;

Well maintained, accessible, sustainable assets

The strategy will support the aim to ensure that school premises are well maintained, fit for purpose and meet all relevant national standards for space and health and safety.

The education property portfolio has had significant investment over the last 15-20 years through the regeneration of the secondary school estate under the BSF programme and more recently through regeneration of sites through mixed use opportunities, cross

subsidising the building of schools through the development and sale of private residential properties on the same site.

Although there has been considerable investment since 2006, there are still significant ongoing maintenance needs across the estate and with environmental sustainability and quality of life at the heart of the Council’s vision for urban design, these two issues will be important drivers in the decisions made around future investment and location of places. The strategy will also consider the promotion of health and well being for Hackney’s children, to ensure access to good play and sport and leisure facilities.

Asset Management Planning information on the education estate assesses condition, suitability and sufficiency of the school sites and will provide supporting baseline information for the prioritisation of school development. For example there is an asbestos issue in some schools of a particular age that will need to be taken into consideration when looking at viable options. Options appraisals will be considered for existing sites to help decision making on whether to refurbish existing buildings or to construct new buildings if more cost effective.

8. Education Property Surpluses: mainstream, special and early years

The pattern of school organisation over recent years together with new school and mixed use developments has released sites that are currently empty or have a temporary use. This combined with falling rolls and increasing SEN need provides an opportunity for the existing education estate strategy to coordinate providing the future places required with the sites and spare capacity available. The future delivery of school places will need to reflect the policies within the Local Plan 2033 (LP33) adopted in 2020.

Housing Mix Context

Delivering good quality genuinely affordable homes to meet the needs of Hackney’s existing and future households is a key challenge for Local Plan 2033. The priority is for conventional housing, and in particular genuinely affordable housing, where the Council seeks affordable contributions from large and small schemes involving housing. Regarding size mix the main planning policy is LP14 ‘ Dwelling Size Mix’, where the following mix is set out:

Bedrooms / Dwelling size	1 Bed	2 Beds	3+ Beds
Preferred dwelling mix – social/London affordable rent	30-34%	30-34%	33-36%

Preferred dwelling mix – intermediate	Lower % than 2 bed	Higher % than 1 bed	15-25%
Preferred dwelling mix - market	Lower % than 2 bed	Higher % than 1 bed	33%

There is recognition that in the Stamford Hill area the Council will be seeking a higher proportion of 4 bed plus units. In addition the Council will consider variations to the dwelling mix depending on site location and characteristics, site constraints, and scheme viability etc. In some cases and circumstances the proportion of family housing sought in a scheme may be higher, and in others it may be necessary to provide a lower proportion of family units (3 bed plus) units.

The mix advocated in policy LP14 is based upon local housing assessments and the Council housing waiting list, which identifies the quantum of each type of housing required to meet housing needs in the Borough.

Opportunities

Potential Children Centre sites

Hackney has 21 children's centre premises, and one One 'O' Clock Club centre in Clissold Park. Of the 21 Children's centres and One 'O' Clock' Club premises, 18 occupy either a purpose built building or school premises, owned by the Local Authority. Two are owned by charities, one is owned by a management committee, and one is owned by the NHS (see attached Appendix D table, Hackney Children's Centre & Associated Sites).

Potential for spare provision in those primary schools with reducing PANs.

There are a number of schools with falling rolls in the borough; some of which have had temporary PAN reductions introduced. The opportunity to review and consolidate this provides an opportunity to consider new SEN provision on school sites with spare capacity, the possibility of permanently reducing PANS should be considered in coordination with the SEN strategic need for places.

It is important to note that whilst reducing PAN is often linked to schools with falling rolls, this is not always the reason for a PAN reduction. Some schools approach us so that they can change their PAN to plan ahead before they experience a significant impact of falling rolls or to find viable long-term solutions for them when managing their staff and budget. Other schools who are not experiencing falling rolls but are in planning areas which have large surplus are working with us to adjust their PAN in the wider efforts for equity; in hope that this will positively affect school roll numbers at schools around them.

Vacant school sites

There are school sites in the borough that are no longer used as schools but have a temporary use pending future decisions on their strategic use. Their suitability for future

education use and potential for mixed use development to help fund future school places will be assessed in order to determine viable options. Feasibility studies undertaken in recent years provide a positive outlook for future education use colocated with housing developments similar to recent projects completed in the borough and this model will be explored as the needs are further defined. The Local Plan 2033 supports the principle of providing mixed used development, co-located with other social infrastructure.

Subject to the developing school estates strategy and ongoing falling rolls at mainstream schools, some sites already out of use could be used to generate income to provide additional income for school places (such as SEND places) or provide opportunities for alternative community infrastructure.

Schoolkeeper Properties

With less reliance on residential schoolkeepers, there are a number of schoolkeeper houses tied to schools within the borough that are vacant or will become vacant in the short to medium term. Options will be considered for the future use of these properties particularly in relation to the SEND needs in the borough, although many are unlikely to be suitable for SEND need because of their layouts, dimensions and accessibility.

Alternative uses will be considered and will include other internal service requirements such as Benefits & Housing Needs (temporary accommodation) and Adult Social Care (housing with care).

Other Sites within Hackney Estate

HMT is supporting the strengthening of the central strategic asset management function as well as the continued development of a Corporate Landlord operating model. The establishment of the Strategic Asset Management Framework (SAMF) which encompasses the newly established Asset Review Process and the revised Governance proposals would capture the wider corporate estate. The intent is that the pan-corporate thinking which it encourages will complement an increasingly collaborative working culture across services and their operations. As such, non education sites could be considered as an option for education use and development.

Within the SAMF there will be an overarching Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) and the Education Estate Strategy (service plan) would feed into the CAMS. This process is currently under development.

Legal and Land Title

The strategy will consider land ownership and potential restrictions or impact on future opportunities and any additional land requirements and approvals or consents needed. We will work with our partners, for example the Diocesan Boards, on any sites identified for development not owned or managed by London Borough of Hackney.

9. School Organisation Legislation

Statutory guidance from the DfE outlines the legal process that must be followed when making organisational changes to existing mainstream schools. Organisational change can include opening or closing schools, a change of category, size or location and specific duties around establishing, altering and removing SEND provision. The guidance, which is set out in a number of key DfE documents and underpinned by several legal instruments, aid Local Authorities, Governing Bodies and decision makers in bringing forward statutory proposals. The guidance advises that where possible, additional new places should only be provided at schools that have an overall Ofsted rating of 'good' or 'outstanding' as well as the conditions under which the removal of places should be considered and entered into.

[The School Organisation \(Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

[The School Organisation \(Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools\) Regulations 2013](#)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/851585/Opening_and_closing_maintained_schools1012.pdf

Opening New Schools

Free School Presumption

The Free School presumption is the main route by which local authorities can establish a new school in its area. Once the need for a new school has been identified, the LA must seek proposals to establish the new provision via this route.

All new schools established through the presumption process are classified as free schools. This reflects the fact that 'free school' is the department's term for any new provision academy. 'Academy' is the legal term for state-funded schools that are independent of local authority control and receive their funding directly from the government. Schools established through the presumption process are not required to use the term 'free school' in their name: this follows practice within the department's free school programme.

When following this route, LAs are required to draw up a specification and carry out a consultation on each proposal and invite proposers to submit applications. Once applications are received, these are reviewed by the Local Authority and the DfE. However, the final decision on the appointed sponsor rests with the Secretary of State. A funding agreement is then entered into between the successful sponsor and the DfE. The LA is responsible for providing the site for the new school and for delivering the capital programme for the build. All types of schools can be considered under this process. The free school presumption is outlined in the document (link) below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/844346/Free_school_presumption_051119.pdf

Whilst this isn't necessarily an issue from an education perspective, The Free School Presumption does have key implications for the educational property assets as the building and site would be handed over to the Academy Trust or Free School under a lease

agreement. As a consequence of this; the strategy will look first at ways of expanding the existing school community before considering the delivery of a free school.

Merging schools

The amalgamation of two schools involves the closure of one of the schools and a pooling of resources. The Garden School, for example, was created by the amalgamation of Horizon School and Downsvie School. The merging of schools serving the same locality offers the retention of a local school with viable pupil numbers where individual pupil rolls are not sufficient for a single school to be financially sustainable.

Federation

Federating schools has underpinned many successful school transformations in Hackney. Federation can offer much to maintained schools, allowing them to build greater capacity in senior leadership, immediate school to school support, shared teaching expertise, governance, and potential economies of scale offered by joint up administrative functions and pooling of resources. Partner schools in a federation benefit from a broader base of expertise and support. Federations are typically overseen by one executive headteacher/principal with heads of school on each school site. There are two school federation structures, a 'soft federation' where each school retains its own Governance structure and a 'hard federation' where one governing body oversees the federation, typically with subcommittee structures overseeing each school.

Expanding Schools

Expansion of an existing school onto a separate site may be the preferred option for increasing SEND places. If this route is pursued, the new provision must be a genuine change to an existing school and not in reality the establishment of a new school. The type of factors to consider when deciding which route to take are set out in [The School Organisation \(Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#), which is referenced above.

Closing Schools

Under Section 15 of the EIA 2006, a LA can propose the closure of ALL categories of maintained schools following a statutory process. Reasons for closing a maintained school include surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils and there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium to long term; The governing body of a voluntary, foundation or foundation special school may also publish proposals to close its own school following the statutory process. Alternatively, it may give at least two years' notice of its intention to close the school to the Secretary of State and LA.

Support

Hackney Education will ensure that it provides support and guidance to all schools through any change.

10. Finances

Any decision around investment should be considered as part of the business plan for considering the revenue costs of providing SEN Places in borough and the balance to be discussed regarding any savings to the High Needs budget.

Capital Funding Strategy

Options available for capital funding streams will be reviewed and alternative options will also be considered for capital investment to support provision.

Capital Allocations for supporting places for pupils with SEND

The government announced the High Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) in April 2021. This grant is paid to local authorities (LAs) to support the provision of places for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those pupils requiring alternative provision (AP). This funding will form the basis for the capital investment in SEND need and will form part of the wider strategy combined with other capital investment such as basic need.

Basic Need Grant

Basic Need grant funding is a capital funding route allocated by central government to meet local priority needs for school places. The Basic Need allocations are based principally on data collected from LAs in the School Capacity Survey (SCAP) annual returns. The DfE have confirmed that whilst Basic Need funding must be used for capital purposes, it is otherwise un-ringfenced to allow local authorities greater flexibility to make decisions that are best for their local area although the condition for grant application excludes using it for free schools in any capacity. While the funding is calculated based on need for mainstream places across reception to year 11, local authorities are free to use this funding to best meet their local priorities; including creating new provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to ensure every pupil has an appropriate school place.

Revenue Funding Strategy

School Places - revenue funding for additional SEN places

1. The average revenue cost for an ARP place in a Hackney mainstream setting is £21,080 per annum (place funding and top-up)
2. The average revenue cost for a place in a Hackney special school is £30,167 per annum (place funding and top-up)
3. The average revenue cost for a pupil to attend a independent special school or non-maintained special school is £43,672 per annum

The above revenue costs are based on March 2021 costs, and do not include transportation cost of average £7,800 per annum which is more likely to be incurred by pupils attending out of borough independent special schools or non-maintained special schools.

There is a potential savings ranging from £13,505 to £22,592 should a pupil be placed in a Hackney ARP or special school.

The cost of operating a school is dependent on the number of pupils attending as the funding provided is based on individual pupils and their circumstances.

Operational and Maintenance costs of vacant sites

This is an important consideration as the revenue implications for keeping empty sites available and safe can be considerable. By way of an example, costs to mothball a primary school site can cost in the region of £250,000-300,000 per annum.

Running considerations of current schools

There are a number of schools which find the economic pressures of running more challenging. Factors are:

- Not filling places to capacity
- One form entry schools - particularly where the above applies
- Small sixth forms
- Expensive maintenance costs
- Popularity in terms of trends of parental choices
- Quality of education

Schools nationally and locally continue to struggle with managing limited resources and increasing numbers of schools have moved into a cumulative deficit position. Ten schools closed the 2020-21 financial year with a deficit balance. Schools continue to be innovative in terms of merging year groups, sharing support functions and managing contract costs but around 80% of expenditure directly relates to staffing. Regular restructuring is taking place in many schools however it is becoming more difficult to achieve long term financial stability where local declines in pupil numbers are predicted.

Further Considerations

Mixed Use Development

This is a model with many examples in Hackney and across London. It provides the opportunity to cross subsidise the development of school places through the building and sale of residential properties on the same site.

This model has delivered a number of new schools in Hackney including Holy Trinity Primary School in Dalston, New Regents College at Nile Street and Nightingale Primary School at Tiger Way. There is an opportunity on existing vacant sites to deliver a project that could support the costs of constructing a new SEND school on the lower floors of a development

along similar lines either as an expansion of an existing SEND school or a new SEND school.

Sites surplus to education use

The consideration of disposing of site(s) that are or become surplus to education use could be considered as a way to raise capital to support the strategy. This option would need Secretary of State approval. There are risks regarding the free school presumption when identifying a site as surplus to requirements that would need to be carefully considered. Early discussion with the DfE around the strategy is recommended.

DfE Free School SEND Competition

The most recent round LBH bid for SEMH provision for the Family School on the old Harrington Hill Primary site, was not successful. It is unknown when another round may be available but this could be a future option if the DfE hold another round. Timescales associated with this route may make this option invalid.

Section 106 Opportunity / CIL

The opportunity provided by housing and other major developments in the borough for investment using S106 or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the borough will be closely aligned to the strategy.

Cross Borough Project

Potential to provide the site and fund SEN provision through cross borough investment with another neighbouring borough is a possibility that needs to be explored. Liaison with our closest LAs has begun to ascertain their own commissioning strategy which will inform the viability of this option.

11. Comments of the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

The following legal duties of the Council apply to the provision of education for children and young people in its area, and to the various proposals put forward in this report:

- S 14 Education Act 1996 (EA 1996) to ensure the provision of “sufficient schools” for the provision of primary and secondary education in their area.
- S 13(1) EA 1996, as far as powers permit, to “contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary education, secondary education and further education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area”.
- S 19 EA 1996 to make arrangements for the education of children who may not receive education at school for whatever reason.
- S 13 EA 1996 to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential and fair access to educational opportunities for children of compulsory school age at school or otherwise or if under age at maintained schools.

- Ss 507A and 507B EA 1996 to secure that facilities for primary, secondary and further education include adequate facilities for recreation, social and physical training.
- S 22 Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA 1998) to be responsible for the maintenance of schools (Governors also have responsibilities).
- S 45 to give a financial budget to all maintained schools.
- S35 Education Act 2002 (EA 2002) to employ all staff in community, voluntary controlled or community special schools and maintained nursery schools.
- S 176 EA 2002, as amended, to consult with pupils, including pupils at any maintained nursery schools in any matter which may affect them in line with guidance issued.
- S 27 Children and Families Act 2014 (CFA 2014) to keep under review educational provision, training provision and social care provision made both in and outside of their area for children and young people with SEN or a disability and for whom they are responsible.
- S 508A to promote sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of their area including persons of sixth form age.
- S 508B to make arrangements to transport eligible children to and from qualifying schools at the beginning and end of the school day.

The Authority also has the following relevant powers:

- Ss 508B and 508C to provide transport to and from school.
- S 15A to secure facilities for Further Education.
- S 7 Education and Inspections Act 2006 to invite proposals for new schools from persons other than the Local Authority.
- S 65 CFA to access at any reasonable time all educational institutions including academies which have a child or young person with an EHC plan for the purpose of monitoring the education or training given.
- s 1(1) Local Government Act 1999 imposes a duty to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. The Council has fiduciary duties towards residents.
- S149(1) Equality Act 2010 imposes the Public Sector Equality Duty on the Council.

The PSED requires the Council to have "due regard" to:

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA 2010 (section 149(1)(a)).
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149(1)(b)). This involves having due regard to the needs to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it (section 149(4)); and

- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Section 149(6) makes it clear that compliance with the PSED in section 149(1) may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under the EqA 2010 (this includes breach of an equality clause or rule or breach of a non-discrimination rule (section 149(8)).

(Section 149(3), EqA 2010.)

- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149(1)(c)). This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding (section 149(5), EqA 2010).

In taking decisions the Council must act lawfully, including acting within its powers, following its own procedures as well as those required by law, such as those relating to the opening and closures of schools and guidance.

The Council must ensure that all required consultations are properly undertaken in accordance with relevant law and guidance, and the Cabinet Office Guidance on Consultation, 2012.

It must make rational, evidence based decisions, take into account all relevant considerations and for a proper purpose, be compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights and make proportionate decisions that are properly reasoned.

It must seek detailed legal advice where required, for example in meeting the requirements of the PSED, school reorganisation, commissioning and on employment and procurement questions.

12. Proposed strategy

In order to meet the vision as set out the following 4 strategic priorities have been identified:

1. Creation of sufficient additional in borough special school places
2. Partnership working with mainstream Primary schools whose rolls are falling to seek viable solutions.
3. Partnership working over the coming five academic years with mainstream Secondary schools whose numbers are likely to be below PANS over the period 2022-2027
4. A long term sustainable use plan for all education sites in the borough

12.1 Priority 1: Creation of sufficient additional in borough special school places by 2024

Recommendations:

- We will seek expressions of interest from Primary and Secondary schools in relation to the running of 4 Additional Resource Provisions
- We find three potential special school expansion sites and work with our existing special schools to extend provision.
- Should the above 2 recommendations not provide adequate places to meet the growth identified above, we will consider the provision of a new special school.
- We will formulate a commissioning strategy to provide special school places for the Orthodox Jewish community in borough
- We will develop a commissioning strategy for the commissioning of specialist SEMH places for both primary and secondary pupils in borough.

In finding sites we will review the empty sites and those schools under financial pressure or who may benefit from moving site. Consideration of other council endorsed use needs to be a factor.

Options appraisals and subsequent statutory consultations will be initiated for:

- a) providing additional SEND places via the following routes:
 - i) Additional Resource provision in mainstream schools
 - ii) Extending existing special schools by size and or designation
 - iii) A new special school
 - iv) the re-organisation of mainstream primary places where feasible due to falling rolls (see priority 2)

12.2 Priority 2: Partnership working over the coming two academic years with mainstream Primary schools whose rolls are falling to seek viable solutions.

Recommendations:

- We will work with schools under particular pressure in terms of medium term (5 yr) stability and sustainability of pupil numbers and discuss with them plans to manage numbers and budgets: these include amalgamation options, federation options or to support differently to ensure they continue most effectively.
- We have a significant number of surplus reception places (17%) and are seeking to reduce this to levels around 5%. Further reductions will be made in September 2022/23 with additional proposed reductions for 2023/24. Sufficient capacity must be retained in the system to cope with a future surge in demand for places.

12.3 Priority 3: Partnership working over the coming five academic years with mainstream Secondary schools whose numbers are likely to be below PANS over the period 2022-2027

Recommendations:

- We will work with schools under particular pressure in terms of medium term (7 yr) sustainability at current size and discuss with them either plans to reduce 11-16 PANS or to support differently to ensure they continue most effectively. This is in the context

of the need for additional specialist places and the possibility of sixth form expansion at level 2, level 1 or entry level. Sufficient capacity must be retained in the system to cope with a future surge in demand for places.

- We will work with schools and Post 16 providers to aim to map a coherent and attractive Post 16 local offer that provides a range of courses accessible to all.

12.4 Priority 4: A long term sustainable use plan for all education sites in the borough for a ten year period

Recommendations: We will work with our partners and schools to achieve a long term sustainable plan for the education sites within the borough.

- One of the key aims of the strategy is to ensure that all use of council owned education estate is being optimised. Whilst this may mean a change of use within the education range of uses; the priority is to maintain educational use. If any parts of sites or sites are deemed surplus to education use and we are confident that there is sufficient capacity within the estate to provide for future education expansion, then sites could be opened up to wider council or alternative use to support the overall strategy. This will be considered in line with the emerging Asset Review Process and Corporate Asset Management Strategy.
- All education sites will be assessed to understand how each site performs using asset management principles.
- We will work with our partners to assess the investment requirements of education sites through condition surveys.
- All sites will be assessed for space utilisation using net capacity assessments and space (square metre) per pupil measurements to help understand the efficiency of use and improve space utilisation across the estate.
- We will work with our partners, schools and the Council's energy team to gain a better understanding of environmental sustainability within the estate including calculations of energy consumption and future improvements to help support the Council's target of net zero emissions across Council functions by 2040.
- The information collected through these measures will help inform the capital investment decisions and use of the school estate over the next 10 years.

13. Next steps

The above four priorities, feedback from consultation and expressions of interest will be used to form a number of implementation plans - these implementation plans will happen in stages and will include targeted solutions for our sufficiency and estate needs.

Development work within Hackney Education, the Council and with key stakeholders will formulate these detailed plans.

In 2022 we aim to have developed at least the implementation plan for Priority 1 (in separate phases) and then later the next Implementation plans for priority 2, 3 and 4.

The implementation plans will be developed in accordance with the timeline set out in Section 3 of the strategy and in order to align with both the council's internal governance and approval schedules as well as the Department for Education school organisation timescales.

Appendix A - Hackney Education's School Organisation Principles

Hackney Education's School Organisation Principles

Hackney Education's school organisation principles are set out in Appendix 3 of the School Organisation plan for 2020-2025 available [here](#). The principles, which include the following, are considered when bringing forward proposals for school organisational change:

- School popularity
- Number of surplus places
- Ofsted rating
- Suitability and condition of the building
- The school's budget/balance
- The school's resilience to withstand significant change
- Valuing the diversity offered by voluntary, independent and academy sectors in providing school places
- Valuing diversity in schools' intakes
- Believing that generally primary education should be provided in a mixed diverse environment
- Looking at the implications for early years when bringing forward proposals
- To positively support arrangements for schools with admission numbers in multiples of 30
- To generally support arrangements for all through 4-11 primary schools than separate infant and junior schools
- To aim to provide places within a 2 mile walking distance for children aged 5 and 7 and 3 miles for children who are 8 years and above, in line with DFE guidance
- Aim to avoid large geographical gaps in provision
- To ensure that school premises are well maintained, fit for purpose and meet all relevant national standards for space and health and safety.

Appendix B - Map of schools and children centres:

https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/sites/default/files/document/A0%20Hackney%20Schools%20Map_July_2019.1.pdf

Appendix C - Equality Impact Assessment:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Kw5YbRkcybjNRQqFHBTUDLOoD4EUa9KnwvJ-wGfgfZ0/edit?ts=60c3795a>

Appendix D - Hackney Children's Centre & Associated Sites

Planning Area A - North	Nursery	Management	Property
Woodberry Down Children's Centre (Strategic Multi-Agency) Spring Park Drive off Green Lanes, N4 2NP	LBH subsidised childcare places (37)	Hackney Education	LBH
Hillside Children's Centre 1 Leatherhead Close, Holmleigh Road, N16 5QR	LBH subsidised childcare places (41)	Hackney Education	LBH
Clissold Park One O' Clock Club Stoke Newington Church St, Stoke Newington, London N16 9HJ	No	Hackney Education % Woodberry Down CC	LBH
Planning Area B - North	Nursery	Management	Property
Fernbank Children's Centre 1A Fountayne Road, N16 7EA 020 8806 6622	LBH subsidised childcare places (60)	Jubilee School	Homerton NHS
Children's Centre at Tyssen (Strategic Multi-Agency) Oldhill Street, N16 6LR 020 8806 4130	LBH subsidised childcare places (52)	Tyssen School	School site
Lubavitch Chen's Centre 1 Northfield Road N16 5RL	LBH subsidised childcare places (37)	Lubavitch Foundation -Charity	Lubavitch Foundation
Ihsan Children's Centre 66-68 Cazenove Road, N16 6AA	Community nursery	North London Muslim Community Centre (NLMCC) - Charity	NLMCC
Planning Area C - Central	Nursery	Management	Property

Comberton Children's Centre 10 Comberton Road, E5 9PU	LBH subsidised childcare places (49)	Hackney Education	LBH
Linden Children's Centre (Strategic Multi-Agency) 86-92 Rectory Road, N16 7SH 020 7254 9939	LBH subsidised childcare places (58)	Hackney Education	LBH
Brook Children's Centre 1A Atkins Square, E8 1FA	Private nursery	Hackney Education (Linden CC leased to Roof Top private nursery)	LBH Adjacent to Mossbourne Parkside Academy
Planning Area D - East	Nursery	Management	Property
Clapton Park Children's Centre & Forest School 161 Daubeney Road, E5 0EP 020 8986 7437	LBH subsidised childcare places (56)	Hackney Education	LBH
Daubeney Children's Centre (Strategic Multi-Agency) Daubeney Road, E5 0EG 020 8525 7040	Co-located nursery class	Federation of Daubeney, Sebright & Lauriston Primary Schools	Co-located with School nursery class
Millfields Children's Centre Elmcroft Street, E5 0SQ 020 8525 6410	Nursery ceased 2020	Millfields Primary School	Adjacent to School
Children's Centre at Gainsborough Berkshire Road, E9 5ND	Community nursery	Gainsborough Primary School	Adjacent to School
Wentworth Nursery School & Children's Centre Granard House, Bradstock Road, E9 5BN	Nursery School	Wentworth Nursery School	LBH Housing Estate
Planning Area E - South	Nursery	Management	Property
Minik Kardes Community Nursery & Children's Centre 53-55 Balls Pond Road, N1 4BW	Community Nursery	Management Committee	Management committee lease
Sebright Children's Centre in Haggerston Park (Strategic Multi-Agency) Haggerston Park Queensbridge Road, E2 8NP	LBH subsidised childcare places (45)	Federation of Daubeney, Sebright & Lauriston Primary Schools	LBH

Comet at Thomas Fairchild Children's Centre Forston Street, NI 7HX	No	Comet Nursery School	LBH/ Thomas Fairchild School site
Comet Nursery School & Children's Centre 20 Halcomb Street, NI 5RF	Nursery School	Comet Nursery School	School site
Planning Area F -South East	Nursery	Management	Property
Ann Tayler Children's Centre (Strategic Multi-Agency) I-13 Triangle Road, E8 3RP	LBH subsidised childcare places (70)	Hackney Education	LBH
Mapledene & Queensbridge Children's Centre 54 Mapledene Road, E8 3LE	LBH subsidised childcare places (60)	Queensbridge Primary School	LBH
Morningside Children's Centre Chatham Place, E9 6LL	Community nursery	Morningside Primary School	Adjacent to School

Appendix E - [Send Needs Analysis Paper](#)

Title of Report	Supplement to the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy - Falling Rolls		
Key Decision No	CE S247		
For Consideration By	Cabinet		
Meeting Date	11 December 2023		
Cabinet Member	Councillor Anntoinette Bramble, Statutory Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care		
Classification	Open with an exempt appendix		
Ward(s) Affected	All		
Key Decision & Reason	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td>Significant effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	Significant effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Yes	Significant effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards		
Implementation Date if Not Called In	19 December 2023		
Group Director	Paul Senior, Director of Education		

1. Cabinet Member's introduction

1.1. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

2. Group Director's introduction

2.1. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

3. Recommendations

3.1. Cabinet are asked to read three supplementary items outlined below which are to be considered in full alongside the materials and decisions outlined in the primary report to Cabinet.

4. Reason(s) for decision

Additional Appendix

4.1. An anonymised compilation of every comment submitted during the statutory representation period is attached as Appendix A. This appendix was omitted from the primary report due to an administrative error.

- 4.2. All the comments contained in the appendix have been included in the analysis of responses conducted by an independent third party (Kwest). Responses to the themes raised are included in the primary report to Cabinet.

Resubmission of corrupted PDF file

- 4.3. A large PDF document of 284 pages was submitted by Save Colvestone Primary School on 3 November, the deadline for submissions during the statutory representation period, outlining in detail the case not to close Colvestone Primary school.
- 4.4. On 30 November the Council was informed by Save Colvestone Primary School that the document was corrupt, and pages 12-22 were omitted. It was requested that the Council “read and circulate ahead of completing your Cabinet Report, and use the attached for the papers etc”
- 4.5. The complete report is attached as Appendix B. Unfortunately, with the issue identified one day prior to the statutory publication date for the Cabinet agenda, including the report, it was not possible to incorporate the missing pages into the analysis conducted by an independent third party (Kwest).
- 4.6. The first five missing pages (pages 12 to 16) form part of an analysis of vacancies conducted independently by the Save Colvestone group. This analysis is already included in full in the primary report to Cabinet as the analysis was submitted separately from the Save Colvestone PDF. This vacancy analysis was included in the analysis of responses conducted by an independent third party (Kwest). The vacancy analysis and response is included in the primary report to Cabinet in section 4.43.
- 4.7. The remaining ‘missing’ pages (ie. pages 17 - 22) set out in detail the case for not closing Colvestone. Many of the points raised are referenced elsewhere in the original submission however, for transparency and completeness the key points from the missing pages are summarised below for the awareness of decision makers.
- 4.8. Under the heading “Key benefits of Colvestone remaining open” the following points are raised and further expanded
- Ensures the provision of an academically strong, non-denominational, one-form entry community school for families. The impact of the consultation process has meant that many other local schools that are not in consultation are filling up or already full - see the place data analysis included here. If Colvestone stays open, it is more likely that Dalston families will have a highly attractive, local community school they can walk to at the heart of the new 21st Century Street.

- Enables Hackney to recover Colvestone’s budget deficit by allowing the school to pay it down over time.
- Supports the future development of Hackney, attracting families to the new housing in the Dalston Plan and anchoring the borough’s first 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent.
- Preserves provision that reflects desires of Hackney residents, 84% of whom want non-faith education.
- Provides strong SEND provision that can be expanded to meet the urgent need in the borough.
- Saves the taxpayer the enormous cost of closing the school and of paying off the deficit, which, given the school’s potential for financial viability, does not make sense.
- Sends the message that the Council listens and does genuinely take the feedback of residents into consideration. It increases faith in the authenticity of the Council’s consultation processes.

4.9. Under the heading “Key risks of closing Colvestone” the following points are raised and further expanded:

- Colvestone students who go to Princess May will increase their exposure to air pollution and run the risk of having their school closed twice due to an already low enrollment at Princess May.
- With the lack of mitigation for Princess May being forced to raise its PAN, it seems likely that the proposals will actively damage Princess May School and make it financially unviable.
- Unlike other London boroughs, Hackney is closing a lot of schools at once, but the consequences of closing a school is still untested. Closing such a large number means any mistakes in the process—academic, financial, social—are amplified. It’s a high-cost, high-risk strategy that may accelerate the rate of families fleeing to free schools, academies or private schools or leaving the borough altogether, while costing the taxpayer millions of pounds.
- Closing schools is expensive and the costs could skyrocket. The Estates Strategy report estimates closing and merging these six schools will cost £3.5 million in the first year alone, but warns that the actual cost could be much higher, and Colvestone is a particularly expensive school to close. This submission, and the ‘call-in’ document that follows, details multiple additional budgetary considerations (costs) that have not been accounted

for in these proposals or included to allow for genuine consideration of the proposals or inform any decision.

- The Dalston Plan promises to bring hundreds of new family homes to Dalston, but the closure of Colvestone, the closest school to that development, removes key infrastructure from that project - Nursery and Primary School provision. The analysis of future pupil yield from these developments is included in this submission.
- By removing local primary school provision the developments themselves become less attractive to potential families and would be expected to negatively impact on developers' ability to sell those homes to families.
- The threatened closure of Debeauvoir and Randal Cremer has meant that local school places are already becoming more scarce and families may be forced to attend school out of the area.
- Should Colvestone need to reopen in the medium term due to insufficient places in the area, the borough would be forced to reopen it as a free school, meaning the borough would lose another local authority school (both the leasehold and education provision would be surrendered by the local authority to a private, for-profit business under 'free school presumption' on a peppercorn rent for 125 years - as happened recently with Haggerston school).
- There is a significant increased cost to the council for SEND if Colvestone closes as a result of having to send children out of the borough to private schools.
- Continuity in SEND support is extremely important, relationships that will be lost if Colvestone is closed
- Long term damage to student engagement (after already enduring Covid), increased Emotionally Based School Avoidance, and associated problems could result from breaking hard to establish close-knit communities both internally to the school and with the surrounding area
- Hackney Council risk making further errors by acting rashly in relation to GLA population projections - catastrophically wrong as recently as 2017, whilst also failing to account for population increases predicted by GLA analysis of the Dalston Plan proposals included here. Even the GLA data (included in the Statutory Notice) asserts that pupil numbers stabilise at current levels / start to rise by 2031.

- Loss of faith in the Council and in the Labour Party.

Other submissions received outside the statutory representation window

- 4.10. Five emails opposing the proposal to close Colvestone were received on 3 November after the 5pm deadline and were not included in the consultation response or analysis conducted by an independent third party (Kwest). The emails are included in full, anonymised, in Appendix C, for decision makers to consider. The appendix is except on the basis that individuals could be identified from the content of their emails.
- 4.11. The emails were received from five members of the same family who are local Dalston residents and who attended the school.
- 4.12. The emails are repeats of each other, aside from minor changes that reflect the family member sending the email, and raise a range of concerns that have been expressed by multiple other respondents in support of keeping the school open. The themes raised are addressed in the primary Cabinet report however the emails have been included here for transparency and completeness.

5. Details of alternative options considered and rejected

- 5.1. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

6. Background

Policy Context

- 6.1. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

Equality impact assessment

- 6.2. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

Sustainability and climate change

- 6.3. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

Consultations

- 6.4. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

Risk assessment

- 6.5. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

7. Comments of the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.

- 7.1. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

8. **VAT implications on land and property transactions**

8.1. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

9. **Comments of the Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services**

9.1. Please refer to the primary report to Cabinet.

Appendices

Appendix A - Anonymised responses received during the statutory representation period

Appendix B - Save Colvestone Submission (revised-complete)

Exempt

Appendix C - Emails submitted after the deadline

Report Author	Name David Court Title Interim Assistant Director of the School Estate Strategy Email david.court@hackney.gov.uk Tel 020 8820 7667
Comments for the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources prepared by	Name Title Email Tel
Comments for the Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services prepared by	Name Title Email Tel

Citizen Space Comments					
BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE	NIGHTINGALE (2FE)	COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY	DE BEAUVOIR	RANDAL CREMER	Response ID
<p>Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School</p>	<p>Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to close discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	
				<p>I believe that the proposal to close Randal Cremer is sad and disappointing. The school is the heart of a community that not only serves to educate the pupils who attend, but supports whole families of past and present pupils. Pupils who have left us to either move on to other primary schools or to go to local secondary schools frequently visit and as staff, we still continue to provide the love and support we gave them when they attended. The pupils who are on roll are shown love, support and inclusion, all of which are unique to our school. I have been working at Randal Cremer for the past seven years, as an LSA and then I came back to complete my teacher training and now I am a teacher and subject leader. The children are not the only people to receive love and support. I chose to come back to continue my career because I have never felt the love and inclusion I have felt at Randal Cremer and I know that the children and their families feel the same. Throughout COVID we gave families a lifeline by providing food and a safe, comfortable place for children to continue their education, an experience that brought the school and its wider community even closer than it was before. By taking away this support network, families will not survive. We still have many children on roll and local schools are at their capacity. I worry for the children who are still here and where they will end up as they cannot travel to other schools, further away. We have a high number of SEN children on roll and I know we provide an outstanding provision for them. I worry for their future as many schools do not show the inclusion and love that we do, families are heavily supported by us.</p>	ANON-UR67-ZX9U-M
Do not agree with this at all	Do not agree. This school has works because it is small	Princess May works well at it is now, this will not help it. Do not agree	Do not agree, leaves these schools alone	Do not agree	ANON-UR67-ZX9S-M ANON-UR67-ZX9T-K
		I disagree with this amalgamation as this will reduce the number of schools in Hackney. What is the government doing? Why are you reducing services? Princess May Primary School has worked hard to bring up it's standards, why derail that by amalgamating it with another school? I vehemently object to this proposal. Please leave the schools separate and work to improve struggling schools and maintain the number of schools in Hackney.		Randal Cremer is an excellent school with great staff and resources. I hope it remains open. I work with a family with multiple generations who have attended this school and had positive outcomes.	ANON-UR67-ZX9X-Q ANON-UR67-ZX9F-F
Strongly agree with this proposal. The benefit for all the student body is far reaching, with more modern facilities, little change to distance of travel to school, and opportunity to move to a new site with students from same school.	strongly agree, better use of facilities already available				
It is also a much better use of public funds with a dramatic reduction in overheads, both office and leadership.		I do not agree to this proposal. A strong case has been put forward for Colvestone to amalgamate with DeBeauvoir. The "consultation" has not given any consideration to any of the previously submitted evidence. The process feels tokenistic, and not a true consultation.			ANON-UR67-ZX9B-Q ANON-UR67-ZX9H-7
I think this proposal will be beneficial for the children from both schools, giving them more opportunities to make friends and understand more kids from different backgrounds	Nightingale has plenty of space for 2FE and the facilities are excellent, which the children from Baden Powell will enjoy	It feels so disheartening to be writing to the council again and again when no one is listening. Following Colvestone Primary would be devastating not only for the dalston community but also for the SEND children of Hackney that NEED to be able to attend a one form entry school. We have presented evidence, we have run financial projections- we have been fighting this for so long- and no one is listening. I don't even know why you are bothering running this survey.			ANON-UR67-ZX9F-5
		I strongly oppose the closure of Colvestone School. Colvestone has a strong academic record, new (and encouraging) leadership, fascinating architectural history and favourable air pollution figures (compared to Princess May school). A large number of parents have expressed concern to me over the impact on parental choice, with many parents at Colvestone saying they would not send their child to Princess May. I also have grave concerns over the impact that closing Colvestone would have on SEND provision and the impact on staff.			ANON-UR67-ZX9Q-G
				Please do not close this school or any school with out increasing the capacity and funding of all surrounding schools. The teaching and non teaching cohort off the proposed schools for closure should have been an opportunity to be redeployed this academic year. The entire process of these closures has been horrid. Threatening schools and families and then have these closure schools suffer a slow demise which is nasty to experience as a parent, staff member, student and community. Also please tell us what you're expecting to do with the buildings and facilities of the closed schools.	ANON-UR67-ZX9Z-H
Is closing a school short-sighted? Only a few years ago we had to create extra places in schools. What happens if the numbers rise in future?		Given that Princess May faces on one side a polluted high street and cannot have an effective school street, why not do this the other way around - close Princess May school instead?	Is closing a school short-sighted? Only a few years ago we had to create extra places in schools. What happens if the numbers rise in future?	Is closing a school short-sighted? Only a few years ago we had to create extra places in schools. What happens if the numbers rise in future?	ANON-UR67-ZX9A-Z
If closing a school, the remaining school should get a lot more resources - a proper building program to improve its facilities.		Is closing a school short-sighted? Only a few years ago we had to create extra places in schools. What happens if the numbers rise in future?	If closing a school, the remaining school should get a lot more resources - a proper building program to improve its facilities.	If closing a school, the remaining school should get a lot more resources - a proper building program to improve its facilities.	
Baden Powell Primary School has a long history and has been an integral part of Primary school education history for years. It has produced graduates and successful people in the society. I strongly oppose the closure and I believe that there are ways to secure the future of Baden Powell. Baden Powell does not have to be closed.					ANON-UR67-ZX9Z-S
		I object to the proposal of to discontinue Colvestone primary school		I object to the discontinue of de beauvoir primary school	ANON-UR67-ZX9B-1 ANON-UR67-ZX9I-G
	My concerns as a parent of nightgale is the current size of the playgrounds seem to feel over crowded already,my concerns are if a two form entry is implemented how will effect the space in which the children manuve and play safely,what are guidelines in terms of space assigned to facilitate safe numbers ? My other concern is that year one is already mixed with year 3 and these ages are very different. How does increasing the numbers affect benefits the school apart from socially and financially,what example do we have of this work ?				

Citizen Space Comments					
BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE	NIGHTINGALE (2FE)	COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY	DE BEAUVOIR	RANDAL CREMER	Response ID
<p>Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School</p> <p>That is not a very logical move. After COVID, the numbers can be decreased, education is not only the area affected negatively, many things affected. Instead of closing the school families who live/ moved close by the school needs to be notified...as some schools are hidden and so many EAL families don't know where the closest school... please keep the schools how it is</p>	<p>Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School</p> <p>No... if the numbers increases, would council open a new school??? Many families don't know where the closest school are...</p> <p>Colvestone primary should remain open. It is right in the heart of dalston and close to the proposed building of 600 flats as per dalston plan. People with children will not want to live in dalston if you close all the primary schools. I'm not interested in sending my children to Princess may and not having a choice/option so will look at moving to a new area if colvestone closes.</p> <p>This is wrong on many levels. Colvestone is a unique and thriving school which has a huge potential to prosper in future, if given the chance to overcome current financial difficulties.</p> <p>The current financial state is a result of the incompetence of the previous management and can be greatly improved under the new management which is a lot better.</p> <p>There are other options to deal with the current issues and Colvestone could remain open while the council's efforts could be geared towards increasing student numbers in this school. It is a great school for its high numbers of SEN children.</p> <p>There are no good alternatives for many Colvestone pupils and if the school closes many children will find themselves in a very difficult situation when it comes to their education.</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to close discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p> <p>Such a beautiful, local school...it should not be close... families needs to be known where the closest school for them. Some families don't speak English especially who came to the country recently or refugees...</p> <p>Too many schools closing in close proximity</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p> <p>Too many schools closing in close proximity</p>	<p>ANON-UR67-ZX94-K</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZX95-J</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXBU-W</p>

Citizen Space Comments					
<p>BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE</p> <p>Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School</p>	<p>NIGHTINGALE (2FE)</p> <p>Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)</p>	<p>COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY</p> <p>Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School</p>	<p>DE BEAUVOIR</p> <p>Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to close discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	<p>RANDAL CREMER</p> <p>Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	<p>Response ID</p>
		<p>Dear [Name] and [Name],</p> <p>Thank you so much for sharing your experience with me and for this insight into the excellent progress you and the school staff at Colvestone have helped [Name] to achieve. I really appreciate the photographs and the time you have taken to make this case and will pass this on to the Hackney Education team for careful consideration.</p> <p>As promised in the meeting, Deputy Mayor Bramble and I will liaise with the school re: meeting you and other parents and carers of children with SEND who are concerned by the proposals and the implications for you and your children, with a focus on ensuring you are supported during the current period of uncertainty.</p> <p>Best wishes, Caroline Cllr Caroline Woodley, Cazenove Ward Councillor Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure London Borough of Hackney</p> <p>We are writing to express our disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Dalston (Hackney) by Hackney Council. We are very disheartened by this proposal and in the worst case scenario that this is going ahead, in total honesty, this will have a tremendous effect on [Name]'s education and subsequently in her future academic life and our life.</p> <p>We believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children especially for our SEN children, parents and carers and the community in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>We live on ** and have been part of the Dalston community for a long time, we love our diverse community. We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [Name], who is * years-old and [SEND] because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([Name] has a experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [Name] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [Name] to be happy and settled in * school (** years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredible difficult impact on * and it will be practically impossible for * to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on * mental health.</p> <p>Let me give you a brief history of [Name]'s life so that you have an insight of where * is coming from:</p> <p>[Name] was diagnosed at 2.5 years' old with [SEND] by Hackney A&E (with severe delays in communications, severe delays in social interactions and severe repetitive behaviour). [Name] regressed from age 18 months, * was prior to that stage able to say 5 words: Maman, Daddy, cheese, hello and bye (I am ** and Daddy ** - I only spoke *** to [Name] from note to 2) and literally became non-verbal and lost * sounds capacity A, E, I, O, U, [Name] was now only screaming, lost eyes contact and only presented with repetitive behaviours. With tremendous tenacity we managed to access straight away Hackney services of Speech Therapy (once a week where Specs was implemented) and Portage ([Name] attended the later services for one year, at home and in the Garden (in pre-school) once a week alternately). At this point when I thought I would get back to my career I realised that [Name] needed so much support and decided to stop my career to support [Name] full time and at this point I went on a mission and to become my child's therapist and a nucleus that would utilise all services offered and my own therapies. I taught myself an American therapy which is called ESDM (Early Start Denver Model), taking my child everyday to Gymboree (a pre-school private center) and implementing ESDM at the same time, helped also [Name] to support * physical mobility as at this stage * upper-body and hands were going upwards (I used daily a home school bench at home, making [Name] copying me standing on one leg and other leg and also using a climbing wall we had at home). With all these combination of supports from Hackney services and my own therapies, [Name] progressed, we retrieved * eye contacts and * body posture developed now to a straight posture. At the end of the year, when [Name] turned 3, Portage Coordinator asked me what we foresee for [Name] academically and I expressed at this point that [Name] could go mainstream to a nursery, which was 7mins from home. Portage facilitated transition to nursery and [Name] entered nursery with an EHCP and worked hard at making sure * has all support needed so that she attend nursery. The setting kept on using pecs for promoting speech and in 2019, when [Name] started to make the sound A, I, O, I found the Gemini therapy programme and within a month [Name]'s perceptive communications improved tremendously. We have used this programme since then and [Name] is now talking more, single words and understand everything we are saying to *. [Name] attended nursery for two years 3 days a week with allocated one to one.</p> <p>We then chose Colvestone Primary School because it is a one form small school and just 5 mins from home. [Name] remained in one corner of the Reception class for a term and half and by the end of that year * had ventured in all corners of the school with a phenomenal support of * allocated TA. * attended Reception (with of course the pandemic, and attended school during the second lock-down)</p> <p>When [Name] was in year *, after a week at school (Sept. ****) * refused to go to school and leave the house, it took us 7 months to bridge * back to school and as you can imagine, it was a real isolated work for us as [Name] didn't want to go out anymore but with great effort, determination and tedious work we thankfully managed for [Name] to be happy going out and then managed to bridge * back to school, with the School Senco we worked very hard collaboratively to get [Name] back and * did for the end of year one. [Teacher] has done a tremendous work. Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support which as you may have heard from other families is not a given. [Name] has an EHCP and now a level 5 in funding which goes towards * SEN and * needs to be cared by someone all the time.</p> <p>But even though, we have all in place on paper, the tremendous work we have had to do with the school in order to secure [Name]'s support has been a real effort, as well as working hard to make sure that [Name] is happy attending Colvestone and this in view to attend * years at Colvestone to year ***.</p> <p>To be honest I can't believe we have to write this and the idea of this plan going ahead is very difficult for us and we are trying not to think about it!</p> <p>We know our child feels safe and happy at Colvestone, * receives a wonderful SEN support with a fantastic experienced SEN one to one [Teacher] and a brilliant *** [Teacher]. Moving our child to another school will be strongly difficult and disruptive in our child's education and have consequences on * achieving long term education goals. And it will take us years to get to where we are and by then, it will be the end of primary school. This will literally damage all the hard work we have put together for the past * years. I hope you realise the difficulty of what we have to do on a daily basis to get to where we are. We are working hard at [Name]'s school foundation so that * can thrive in the future and become the astronaut * want to be (I asked lately [Name] what * wanted to be and * astonishingly responded to me: "Astronaut" and repeatedly saying: "Captain [Name], to the rescue".</p> <p>I have added few pictures below so that you can see how amazing [Name] is doing at Colvestone. In January, [Name] was awarded a Colvestone's Achiever for:</p> <p>"[Name] enjoys the creative aspects of the curriculum. In art lessons and in Music, [Name] shows good level of engagement. [Name] takes part in daily phonics lessons where * is exploring environmental sounds with * peers. [Name] enjoys drawing and will often draw pictures that are detailed in design. [Name] has drawn pictures linked to * favourite stories, such as "Class *** at the Zoo". Which * enjoys listening to and reading alongside the adult, some of the known phrases. [Name] takes part in PE lessons and will join the class line when * knows that it is time for PE. Well done [Name]!" - [Name] went to receive * award in front for **)* assembly.</p> <p>Last Friday [Name] was awarded 100% attendance Award, there again [Name] during full school assemble stood up when * name was called and went to receive * award and came back to sit with everyone else aside [Teacher]. [Name] has 100% attendance! Incredible! What a journey, what an amazing achievement! And this done to the wonderful work of the school, one to one, Senco, staffs and the Leadership team, [Teacher], [Teacher] and team.</p> <p>I also included a picture showing how [Name] is happy at school with [Teacher] during Easter parade.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, which we strongly believe in and is required. We strongly hope that our wonderful Colvestone Primary School can stay open and all is done to support our school and for our [Name] to keep accessing education as well as all the SEN children and all the children.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, [Name] & [Name] Parent of [Name] (Year *) at Colvestone Primary School</p>			<p>ANON-UR67-ZXB1-J</p>

Citizen Space Comments					
BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE	NIGHTINGALE (2FE)	COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY	DE BEAUVOIR	RANDAL CREMER	Response ID
<p>Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School</p>	<p>Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to close discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	
No	No	No	No	No	ANON-UR67-ZXBH-W
Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	ANON-UR67-ZXB9-1 ANON-UR67-ZXBH-G
		<p>I am against this proposal</p> <p>We are writing to express our disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Dalston (Hackney) by Hackney Council.</p> <p>We are very disheartened by this proposal and in the worst case scenario that this is going ahead, in total honesty, this will have a tremendous effect on [Name]'s education and subsequently in " future academic life.</p> <p>We believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children especially for our SEN children, parents and carers and the community in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>We live on "" and have been part of the Dalston community for a long time, we love our diverse community. We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [Name] who is " years old and [SENED] because it provides a required quiet journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([Name] has a experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [Name] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [Name] to be happy and settled in " school (" years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredible difficult impact on " and it will be practically impossible for " to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on " mental health.</p> <p>Let me give you a brief history of [Name]'s life so that you have an insight of where " is coming from:</p> <p>[Name] was diagnosed at 2.5 years old with [SENED] by Hackney Ark (with severe delays in communications, severe delays in social interactions and severe repetitive behaviour). [Name] regressed from age 18 months, " was prior to that stage able to say 6 words: Maman, Daddy, cheese, hello and bye (I am "" and Daddy "" - I only spoke french to [Name] from note to 2) and literally became non-verbal and lost " sounds capacity A, E, I, O, U. [Name] was now only screaming, lost eye contact and only presented with negative behaviours. With tremendous tenacity we managed to access straight away hackney services of Speech Therapy (once a week where Specs was implemented) and Portage ([Name] attended the later services for one year, at home and at the Garden (in pre-school) once a week alternatively). At this point when I thought I would get back to my career I realised that [Name] needed so much support and decided to stopped my career to support [Name] full time and at this point I went on a mission and to become my child's therapist and a nucleus that would utilise all services offered and my own therapies. I taught myself an american therapy which is called ESDM (Early Start Denver Model), taking my child everyday to Gymboree (a pre-school private center) and implementing ESDM at the same time, helped also [Name] to support " physical mobility as at this stage " upper-body and hands were going inwards (I used daily a home a school bench at home, making [Name] copying me standing on one leg and other leg and also using a climbing wall we had at home). With all these combination of supports from hackney services and my own therapies, [Name] progressed, we retrieved " eye contacts and " body posture developed now to a straight posture. At the end of the year, when [Name] turned 3, Portage Coordinator asked me what we foresee for [Name] academically and I expressed at this point that [Name] could go mainstream to a nursery, which was 7mins from home. Portage facilitated transition to nursery and [Name] entered nursery with an EHCP and worked hard at making sure she has all support needed so that " attend nursery. The setting kept on using peas for promoting speech and in 2015, when [Name] started to make the sound A, I, O, I found the Gemini therapy programme and within a month [Name]'s perceptive communications improved tremendously. We have used this programme since then and [Name] is now talking more, single words and understand everything we are saying to ". [Name] attended nursery for two years 3 days a week with allocated one to one.</p> <p>We then chose Colvestone Primary School because it is a one form small school and just 5 mins from home. [Name] remained in one corner of the Reception class for a term and half and by the end of that year " had ventured in all corners of the school with a phenomenal support of " allocated TA, " attended Reception (with of course the pandemic, and attended school during the second lock-down)</p> <p>When [Name] was in year ", after a week at school (Sept, "") she refused to go to school and leave the house, it took us 7 months to bridge " back to school and as you can imagine, it was a real isolated work for us as [Name] didn't want to go out anymore but with great effort, determination and tedious work we thankfully managed for [Name] to be happy going out and then managed to bridge " back to school, with the School [teacher] we worked very hard collaboratively to get [Name] back and " did for the end of year one. [Teacher] has done a tremendous work. Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support which as you may have heard from other families is not a given, [Name] has an EHCP and now a level 6 in funding which goes towards " SEN and " needs to be cared by someone all the time.</p> <p>But even though, we have all in place on paper, the tremendous work we have had to do with the school in order to secure [Name]'s support has been a real effort, as well as working hard to make sure that [Name] is happy attending Colvestone and this in view to attend " years at Colvestone to year "".</p> <p>To be honest I can't believe we have to write this and the idea of this plan going ahead is very difficult for us and we are trying not to think about it! In case scenario of the school closing, the impact will be very bad for our family.</p> <p>We know our child feels safe and happy at Colvestone, " receives a wonderful SEN support with a fantastic experienced SEN one to one [teacher] and a brilliant teacher/senecio [teacher]. Moving our child to another school will be strongly difficult and disruptive in our child's education and have consequences on " achieving long term education goals. And it will take us years to get to where we are and by then, it will be the end of primary school. This will literally damage all the hard work we have put together for the past "" years. I hope you realise the difficulty of what we have to do on a daily basis to get to where we are. We are working hard at [Name]'s school foundation so that " can thrive in the future and become the astronaut " want to be (I asked lately [Name] what " wanted to be and " astonishingly responded to me: "Astronaut" and repeatedly saying "Captain [Name], to the rescue".</p> <p>In January, [Name] was awarded a Colvestone's Achiever for:</p> <p>"[Name] enjoys the creative aspects of the curriculum. In art lessons and in Music, [Name] shows good level of engagement. [Name] takes part in daily phonics lessons where " is exploring environmental sounds with " peers. [Name] enjoys drawing and will often draw pictures that are detailed in design. [Name] has drawn pictures linked to " favourite stories, such as "Class "" at the Zoo". Which " enjoys listening to and reading alongside the adult, some of the known phrases. [Name] takes part in PE lessons and will join the class line when " knows that it is time for PE. Well done [Name]- [Name] went to receive " award in front for Y7Y" assemblies.</p> <p>Last year [Name] was awarded 100% attendance Award, there again [Name] during full school assembly stood up when " name was called and went to receive " award and came back to sit with everyone else aside teacher). Yes 100% attendance! Incredible! What a journey, what an amazing achievement! And this done to the wonderful work of the school, one to one, Senco, staffs and the Leadership team, [teacher], [teacher] and team.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, which we strongly believe in and is required. We strongly hope that our wonderful Colvestone Primary School can stay open and all is done to support our school and for our [Name] to keep accessing education as well as all the SEN children and all the children.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p>[Name] & [Name]</p> <p>Parent of [Name] (Year ") at Colvestone Primary School</p>		ANON-UR67-ZXB2-T ANON-UR67-ZXBA-9 ANON-UR67-ZX9M-C ANON-UR67-ZXBE-D ANON-UR67-ZXBF-F	
Do not close the school please	Please do not close the school	<p>I strongly object to closing colvestone primary school.</p> <p>I object to the above proposal.</p> <p>Please don't shut COLVESTONE</p> <p>Strongly disagree</p> <p>Please do not close this school, it is so important for the children to stay together, and nurture the community that has been built between students and staff. Colvestone is such a precious school, by merging with Princess May you would be destroying a family.</p> <p>I strongly object to losing Colvestone as a primary school in its own right. My two elder grandchildren excelled in their education at Colvestone and the welfare was excellent. Colvestone primary school is the beating heart of the area - it's has engendered a unique sense of community among the local families and serves as an important counterpoint / softening influence to Ridley road market. It's a brilliant building that has recently had work done to it and unlike Princess May - it is not on a main road, a real concern given pollution levels.</p> <p>Disagree</p> <p>I very strongly object to this. Colvestone plays a vital role in the community and should not be closed.</p> <p>It would be ashame to see this school closed after so many years, heritage will be lost.</p>	Please don't close this school	Do not close this school	ANON-UR67-ZXBB-A ANON-UR67-ZXBN-P ANON-UR67-ZXBW-Y ANON-UR67-ZXBK-C ANON-UR67-ZXBD-C

Citizen Space Comments					
BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE	NIGHTINGALE (2FE)	COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY	DE BEAUVOIR	RANDAL CREMER	Response ID
<p>Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School</p> <p>It's sad that hackney is decreasing in pupil numbers making hackney in the near future to a couples only area.</p>	<p>Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)</p> <p>Is nightingale big enough to hold 2 forms of entry?</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School</p> <p>Why doesn't two failing schools merge to become one instead?</p> <p>The school provides excellent education, the teachers are caring and due to the small number of classes the staff can support the welfare of the students in the difficult post Covid traumas</p> <p>I object to this. Colvestone is a great school with an amazing community and it's important that it stays the way it is.</p> <p>I am against Colvestone Primary School as there are many children with learning difficulties and autism that Princess May could not deal with. It will also destroy the community. Colvestone is an established and friendly, nurturing school. It will be a huge disservice to the children who attend to merge it. Please re-consider</p> <p>I strongly oppose because Colvestone has a high proportion of vulnerable SEN children who should be protected and allowed to remain at Colvestone, not uprooted and sent to Princess May on a very busy main road. This is abuse of vulnerable children in your care.</p> <p>I do not support the proposal to amalgamate Colvestone primary with Princess May. We want Colvestone Primary to remain as it is in the original site and open. Thanks.</p> <p>Absolutely against this proposition.</p> <p>Such a significant part of our community</p> <p>No . My daughter came here from a different school. We just moved here. While we were expecting it to be difficult to get used to, my daughter adapted to school very quickly and loved it. I can't wait for her to get used to it by taking her to a different school once again. This will be very difficult for him. We do not want school to be stopped. Thanks</p> <p>I has become evident that it makes not one bit of difference to how we respond to these fake consultations, that council has made a plan, they defend it with everything they have, even lies and none of what anyone is saying is shaping the proposals.</p> <p>At the beginning of the process and put in a lot of effort, time and words to explain why closing Colvestone Primary School is not the correct solution to combat the growth in vacant places across the borough. Many parents from this school did the same. We demonstrated how the data, which the council is relying on is inaccurate and unreliable, why Colvestone is crucial to the community of Dalston and a unique desirable parental choice for local families. This has all been for nothing.</p> <p>Hackney Labour are feeling so secure and powerful in this borough without any oversight or meaningful debate, which as led to such fake democracy. We've had several rounds of consultation to make it look like there is a dialogue, but in fact the council has made no effort whatsoever to determine what it is Hackney parents want for their children (i.e. proximity, size, faith/non faith etc) and no effort to deliver a vision, which families wish for. Hackney Labour is fueling the departure of families from the borough and risk of 'run-for-profit education'. I am so utterly disappointed in how weak, shortsighted and disengaged the current leadership is.</p> <p>As parents we are no longer just fighting against the closure of Colvestone, but the overall management of Hackney Education. We will do everything we can to bring more scrutiny to the appalling form of leadership by the Labour Party. If necessary we will take this fight to Judicial Review.</p> <p>This school has been in existence for so long and is at the heart of the local community. To close it and amalgamate to princess may school is so sad and shouldn't happen. Schools of this age and stature should be cherished, funded properly and left alone to survive for eternity. This proposal must be canceled.</p> <p>Colvestone is uniquely placed as a one-form entry, non-religious, non-academy, non-free school which should be celebrated instead of being punished - it is harder for the council to propose to close religious schools, free schools or academies so it chooses the easier option of proposing to close this school instead of protecting it.</p> <p>Colvestone School is a listed Victorian purpose-built which should remain true to the purpose it has been fulfilling for over 150 years. Too many new schools in the area are occupying completely unsuitable buildings eg Halley House which has no outside space to speak of.</p> <p>Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan which says it will build family homes. Colvestone needs to be kept open as it is the closest school to this development.</p> <p>Colvestone Crescent is planned to turn into a 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. Crucial to this plan is that it's located next to a primary school. Colvestone School is essential to this ground-breaking project.</p> <p>Hackney Council need to look solutions for the dropping enrolment in the borough: lack of affordable family homes.</p> <p>I strongly disagree with this proposal. Colvestone Primary School is a unique offering within Dalston, the small, one-form entry school is especially nurturing and supportive for children who will struggle in a larger, busier environment with SEND but other children who are particularly suited to a smaller school. Hackney is a wonderful, vibrant place to live but it is also hectic and noisy for primary-age children and Colvestone offers respite from this, which I don't believe will be replicated in a larger school like Princess May, partly because of the size but also because of the location on a busy main road and the longer journey time which we would have to travel there. I feel that discontinuing Colvestone is very shortsighted and that not enough value is being placed on its unique offering.</p> <p>My family are seriously considering moving out of Hackney if Colvestone Primary is discontinued because we want to find a school with a similar feel and ethos there and we don't think this is possible within the schools which have vacancies in our vicinity. So this proposal will potentially drive more families out of the area.</p> <p>I would like to express my serious concern and dismay at the proposal to amalgamate Colvestone school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a successful, intimate school in a purpose built listed building offering the children of local families a calm and inclusive educational environment in which they can thrive.</p> <p>Unusually it offers a maintained (ie free) nursery facility in a separate space providing a seamless progression to the main school.</p> <p>More broadly, the proposals seem to ignore the transformative 'Dalston Plan' which comprises of 600 new homes (including 200 affordable family homes). These would place Colvestone as the school nearest to and best serving the new found needs.</p> <p>For years Colvestone has shown great energy and commitment to the local community, be it fundraising for deserved improvements to the school, to fighting insensitive developments encroaching on its space.</p> <p>Far from being threatened with closure it deserves full backing and recognition for the important function it serves in the area. Please reconsider these plans.</p> <p>It's a terrible idea. Do not discontinue Colvestone School.</p> <p>One entry form is a safe way possible for my child with [SEND] its not too crowded " is very comfortable loves to go school before the new headteacher started my [child] had meltdowns to not go school" hated now everything is changed for [child] " has developed learned even saying words I personally love colvestone primary school too. I have seen so many improvement in my [child] dont want to start from fresh as we have made a long process for " to get to the stage " is in.</p> <p>I strongly disagree with closing this perfectly good school. With extensive building for family homes planned in the area it seems very shortsighted to cut provisions for the local area at this time. In addition, one form entry schools have strong advantages over multiple entry schools in almost every peer reviewed study which suggest the councils decision is financial rather than in the interest of the local community. Colvestone is a priceless resource that the council has undervalued and once sold, it will never be able to be returned to the local community.</p> <p>Disagree as colvestone is a valued community school and essential to the dalston plan</p> <p>I am not supportive of the amalgamation with Princess May and wish for Colvestone to remain open. I still do not understand why the children from the two local schools due to close are not placed on school roll at Colvestone and Princess May to increase numbers</p> <p>My children have just started here having moved to the area. It has been amazing and welcoming for them and they have settled with no issues and made friends. The school really is a community and I have no doubt that if kept open the enrolment numbers would go up (people are leaving because they think the decision has already been made). I have heard nothing but praise from other partners and this is particularly where children have additional support needs. For my gender non conforming child the school has been open and accommodating and normalising. It would be such a shame for the school to close.</p> <p>Colvestone is a wonderful school. She lives up the neighborhood.</p> <p>I object</p> <p>No I do not agree with this</p> <p>I don't believe this decision has been properly thought through with regard to actual numbers of TEACHERS and students in the schools the Colvestone (and other schools) pupils would be distributed to. It is shortsighted and foolish to crash ahead without reexamining the grounds for this decision, and it's repercussions.</p> <p>I strongly disagree with amalgamation.</p> <p>-Colvestone Primary School has a proven track record for successfully receiving children with disability where all others in London, even far west have failed.</p> <p>-Traditional schools where money was invested in a building that lasts need saving.</p> <p>-Schools of a single stream are essential to reasonable life and a valuable legacy to London as a whole.</p> <p>-Colvestone School has the best air quality because of its distance from main roads and children's health should be considered over and above teaching.</p> <p>Disagree. As it stands, Colvestone Primary School is of immense value to the local community and would lose inherent value and tradition by being merged with Princess May Primary School.</p> <p>Opposed- the school is needed for the community and the children.</p> <p>Keep this lovely Victorian school small and focussed on the local community; not amalgamated</p> <p>Keep this small caring school open and relevant to the local community</p>	<p>I'm glad.</p>	<p>Okay</p>	<p>ANON-UR67-ZXB1-S</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXB6-X</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXB7-Y</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXBR-T</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXB4-V</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXB5-Y</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXBS-U</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXBM-N</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYU-M</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXY5-M</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYT-K</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYQ-Q</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXP-F</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXY9-R</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXY8-Q</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYX-N</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYH-T</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYF-S</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYG-Q</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYJ-J</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYC-2</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXY2-H</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYZ-S</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYE-4</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYE-6</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXYB-1</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXN-D</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXY-K</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXP-F</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXD-3</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZX1-G</p>
				<p>Hi,</p> <p>Had there been any assessment on the impact of this in nearby schools?</p> <p>Sebright school is one of the closest, is there work being done w these schools to prepare for a surge in applications or increased demand?</p> <p>Also, what happens to the site? Randall creamer has a lovely historical building, will it be protected?</p>	

Citizen Space Comments					
BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE	NIGHTINGALE (2FE)	COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY	DE BEAUVOIR	RANDAL CREMER	Response ID
Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School	Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)	Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School	Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to close/discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006	Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006	
		Merging Colvestone Primary with Princess May is a very short sighted move from Hackney Council and not well thought through. Closing so many schools in the area will lead to a squeeze of school places in the near future. Colvestone is a single form entry school which don't really exist anymore despite being crucial for SEND children. My own children benefited from the wonderful environment Colvestone provided, academically and socially, and gave them the best start into further education a child could wish for. That is the reason why I now send my third child back to Colvestone despite the threatening closure which I hope will not go ahead. Colvestone's building on the proposed 21st century road is the perfect location for children - with cleaner air than many other schools. Please do not go ahead with the plans and keep Colvestone open. You owe it to the children and the staff who are doing a brilliant job despite everything that's going on.			ANON-UR67-ZXV7-P
		This is a unique one form entry's hook in a historic building with a diverse group of pupils - this school represents what Hackney is all about DO NOT CLOSE IT			ANON-UR67-ZXV8-H
		I am not sure what to say now. I have sent so many message and emails trying to argue against this proposal in the various consultation phases that filling in this box seems rather pointless. Overall I think the proposals to close both Colvestone and De Beauvoir and leave Dalston without any places at a local community school are shameful - Holy Trinity and Princess May have both been restructured since this process began and there are no longer a surplus of places locally - in fact there is a shortage. If you continue with this proposal you will force parents to choose faith schools or out of borough. AND/OR you force Princess May to take an unknown number of pupils and put them in a difficult position. We have argued that Colvestone is unique with the proposed 21st Century Street outside and Grade 11 listed building and a new leadership that is making rapid improvements. As a parent at the school, I will not be sending my child to Princess May but will be looking at other options. Colvestone is a great school whose families want to stay and Dalston needs more spaces in community schools not less! Please look again at the figures locally and rethink the proposals. We know that we need to increase pupil numbers but that is impossible with this proposal hanging over us. Stop the proposal to close Colvestone and encourage families from Randal Cremer and De Beauvoir to come to here.			ANON-UR67-ZXV6-N
We want small local schools and strongly oppose the dismantling of our local communities and we strongly oppose attempts to destroy small schools to pave the way for large academies.	We strongly oppose plans to increase the number of forms. We want the school to remain a single form entry.	We want small local schools and strongly oppose the dismantling of our local communities and we strongly oppose attempts to destroy small schools to pave the way for large academies.	Strongly oppose	Strongly oppose	ANON-UR67-ZXV4-K
Please do not close this school. School closures are terribly disruptive for children, staff and parents. Small classes sizes benefit children. Once closed these schools can only be reopened as academies which are secretive undemocratic institutions as opposed to democratically controlled council schools.		Please do not close this school. School closures are terribly disruptive for children, staff and parents. Small class sizes are good for children. Once closed, these schools can only be reopened as secretive undemocratic academies as opposed to democratically controlled council schools.	Please do not close this school. School closures are terribly disruptive for children, staff and parents. Small class sizes are good for children. Once closed, these schools can only be reopened as secretive undemocratic academies as opposed to democratically controlled council schools.	Please do not close this school. School closures are terribly disruptive for children, staff and parents. Small class sizes are good for children. Once closed, these schools can only be reopened as secretive undemocratic academies as opposed to democratically controlled council schools.	ANON-UR67-ZXYY-R
		I am not in support of this proposal as a relative's child is happy at Colvestone where their individual needs are being met well.			ANON-UR67-ZXYS-J
		This is an ill-advised and badly founded proposal, which ignores all the findings from the consultation. Closing a really good school which plays a key role in a local community, has a very high percentage of SEND, also the only local school for the proposed 500 dwellings in the Dalston plan, continues to be a disastrous proposal and the council is not listening to the evidence. The evidence suggests that the proposal goes against all of the council's own proposals and policies on education (including its own 21st century plan).			ANON-UR67-ZXYM-C
		I as a parent and local inhabitant refuse the validity of this proposal and completely disagree with it. The financial claims made by the Council as a reasoning behind it are false, have not been proven nor researched, there are no models or actual calculations that have been made after the very first proposal, so none of the financial consequences are based on fact. Closing this school actually creates a lack of local places should all proposals proceed, putting local families in a position of having to commute quite far and having no local choices. Finally I question the legality of the consultation itself, as my experience has been a disaster, with the council misleading me as to the terms of the consultation, not giving proper notice for events, not carrying out what they say they will do, not listening to parents, not consulting the local community. This is a failure of local democracy and it is in direct contradiction with Labour's policies, alienating your local voter base.			ANON-UR67-ZXMU-8
		This is unacceptable. I have 2 neurodivergent children who cannot be accommodated by other schools and I will have to go out of borough. We have not been heard and our appeals and questions have gone unanswered.			ANON-UR67-ZXWU-M
		Very sad if the most prominent of the Birkbeck Schools - 1862 and still serving the local community today - is to close.			ANON-UR67-ZXMS-8
		I am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney. I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school - run by the local education authority.			ANON-UR67-ZXMT-7
		As a parent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child feels happy at Colvestone and is thriving academically. We have been part of the school community for over four years. Moving my child to another school will be upsetting and disruptive to her especially given that it took us almost three years for her to settle in and stop crying at drop off every single day.			
		Only days before we were given the news of your plans, you tweeted your commitment to SEND provision in the Borough. Here is your chance to prove that commitment to the SEND children at Colvestone who would find this move particularly distressing.			
		Personally, I'm particularly concerned about the move to Princess May and the children being exposed to further harmful pollution. I think it's quite frankly laughable that you love call yourselves a 'greener' Borough with a vision of 'low traffic neighbourhoods' and yet you clearly see no issue with our children being moved right next to the A10 with constant traffic over the fence at break times. In case you've forgotten this 'vision' please, see below link: https://news.hackney.gov.uk/low-traffic-hackney-at-heart-of-vision-for-greener-healthier-borough/			
		The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school - and with the extra funding from Hackney Council - we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.			
		Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focused environment. It is very narrow minded to think that closure is the only way forward here and we will fight you every step of the way! We will not allow you the opportunity to shaft our children and families in order for to make money from the sale of the school site to the highest developer bid to create more multi-million pound 'luxury apartments' that nobody in the community can afford.			
Do not agree	Do not agree	This is absolutely disgusting behaviour from a Labour Council which is behaving no better than the Tories!!			ANON-UR67-ZXM9-C

Citizen Space Comments					
BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE	NIGHTINGALE (2FE)	COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY	DE BEAUVOIR	RANDAL CREMER	Response ID
<p>Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School</p>	<p>Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to close discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	
		<p>I object completely, and in the strongest terms, to this proposal.</p> <p>There is no good reason to force this closure on Colvestone Primary School, and force it to amalgamate with Princess May Primary School. It is I believe unnecessary and wrong – misguided, myopic, and a needless violence against the hundreds of children and families who will be harmed by your action.</p> <p>Under new leadership Colvestone Primary has a lack of recent deficit: Blossom Federation – who also run 3 other schools successfully in the borough – are the new leadership of Colvestone Primary since 2022. The Federation has turned a budget surplus – despite a low pupil roll – in its first 6 months in charge. So doing Blossom Federation has shown that the school can be financially viable under its new leadership. We, as parents, carers and students, love the stability and improved facilities Blossom Federation has brought the school. Colvestone is financially viable in the future.</p> <p>Colvestone Primary is core to the future of Dalston: It is situated central to your (now) approved policy Hackney's first 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent. Without families, children and the school it was envisaged around, this street will be a tragic token. Furthermore, Colvestone Primary is situated just 200m from the recently approved Dalston 2033 development plans. To me and my family it feels wrong, simply bad policy, tragically myopic, and needlessly violent, of the council to close this successful, high-academic achieving community school, when plans are in place to build affordable housing, and create civic environments/streets designed to attract families but with no school within a short walking distance.</p> <p>It is clear from the information we shared with you during our public meeting on April 24th, 2023, and the summary document we submitted in advance of the cabinet meeting on May 22nd, 2023, that with the support from Hackney Council, Colvestone Primary can turn into an – even more – definitive example of a one-form entry, local authority school to attract pupils from across the borough, and beyond, in a pioneering future facing 21st century street.</p> <p>As parents we worked hard to produce and submit that summary document of reasons to you in advance of the cabinet meeting on May 22nd, 2023. Please read it if you have not done so, and take time (as professionals) to re-read it (carefully, professionally, and with integrity) – again – if you have already. In it you will find our additional and very clear evidence for why Colvestone Primary should not be closed (or as you choose to describe it 'discontinued'), and, Hackney Education's proposal is flawed.</p> <p>As you will see, with careful planning, Colvestone can serve as an even-more attractive, local, one-form community school that parents from the closed schools will want to send their children to. To re-iterate, as well as the lack of deficit under our new leadership, key reasons are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of parental choice <p>The closure of Colvestone (and nearby De Beauvoir) would mean there would be no non-faith, one-form entry local authority schools within a mile of the Colvestone building. Our local area would be dominated by religious schools, free schools and academies, which are currently not being considered for closure, regardless of numbers. This is simply wrong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on the Dalston development plan <p>Colvestone plays a key role in the Council's development in Dalston. Closing Colvestone will have a significant impact on the new housing developments and plans for greener, pedestrian spaces. Closing Colvestone will also mark a tragic absence – children and families – in Hackney's 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on children with special educational needs <p>Seven percent of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), more than well above the 4.3 percent average across the borough. Many of these children would find the transition particularly challenging. Closing a school with such an unusually high proportion of the most vulnerable children is cruel. In doing so you are choosing to harm these children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Air pollution <p>The Council is proposing to send students from Colvestone to Princess May, whose main playground is right next to the A10. (Even) the Council's (own) air quality monitoring system shows Princess May had 40 percent higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO2) in 2021 than Colvestone. Adding more students to a school closer to the A10 with higher pollution levels is a backwards step in the effort to reduce children's exposure to air pollution. In doing so, again, you are choosing to harm our children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historical significance <p>Built in 1852, Colvestone is a Grade 2 listed building, the last remaining William Ellis/Birkbeck school. Closing it would mean shutting the last surviving example of an important 19th century radical education movement. This is a loss of national significance.</p> <p>Finally, we did not choose Princess May (it was a second choice school for only a very small percentage of Colvestone families). We do not want our children to go there. We chose, and want our children to go to, Colvestone Primary School, like all of the other families who send their children to this wonderful school.</p> <p>As is clear from the above, there is no reason to force this merger and closure on Colvestone and its families. Doing so, you are choosing to do lasting, life-long, harm to children and families. Please do not act with such violence towards our children, us, and Colvestone's children and families. Please do not close Colvestone.</p>		ANON-UR67-ZXMP-3	
		<p>This is frustrating for parents and pupils.</p> <p>The school is fine so well as well as the kids. Why would you close and amalgamate it with Princess may which is in the main road. If I wanted princess may I would have gone in the 1st place I do not need to be guided or referred there.</p> <p>I don't agree that colveston primary school closes.</p> <p>Please reconsider.</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXMB-B
		<p>This school has long been at the heart of a community, with a unique single form pupil body housed in a historic building. It would have a detrimental effect on Dalston and the area to lose this important social glue, and create pressure on other schools and student bodies. It is horribly short-sighted and limits the prospects of a generation of children - to be replaced by what, more unaffordable housing?</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXMP-9
		<p>The council is making a huge mistake if it decides with the proposal. Colvestone primary is a really good school which has contributed immensely to my son's (SEND) development. The teachers and staffs are dedicated, friendly, helpful. They treat my son with respect and dignity. Taking my son from his former school to Colvestone has been a big blessing to us.</p> <p>The location of the school is top notch, it is well secured, less hazard and less environmental pollution. The school is not over crowded which gave my son control and awareness of his environment, not too stimulated for him and the fear of bullying has been eliminated. My son doesn't have any anxiety going to school.</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXMH-U
					ANON-UR67-ZXMF-S

Citizen Space Comments					
<p>BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE</p>	<p>NIGHTINGALE (2FE)</p>	<p>COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY</p>	<p>DE BEAUVOIR</p>	<p>RANDAL CREMER</p>	<p>Response ID</p>
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<p>Dear Hackney Council,</p>	<p>Dear Hackney Council,</p>	<p>Dear Hackney Council,</p>	<p>Dear Hackney Council,</p>	<p>Dear Hackney Council,</p>	<p>ANON-UR67-ZXMQ-4</p>
<p>I am writing to express my objections to the proposed closures of Baden Powell, Colvestone, De Beauvoir, and Randal Cremer primary schools, and I have set out below why I believe these closures, and any cuts to schools in the borough, must be rejected.</p> <p>Eroding community in the heart of Hackney: these schools, and the staff who work in them, have been pillars of education in our community for decades. Their closure would be a devastating loss for current and future generations. This is an opportunity to reduce class sizes and improve education in the borough, not make it worse.</p> <p>Forced redundancies: these are not amalgamations, they are closures. Staff in these schools worked throughout Covid, and are some of the most under-paid and overworked in the whole borough. They are being rewarded with forced redundancies and financial insecurity. All schools should remain open so excellent staff who have served the community for many years are retained, and can continue to provide excellent standards of education.</p> <p>Disruption to families' lives: many pupils will be separated from their friends at a key time in their lives, with SEN pupils who have built relationships with staff particularly affected. Relationships between Families will be forced into longer commutes. SEN pupils: Hackney council spends vast amounts of money sending SEN pupils to be educated outside the borough, due to a lack of SEN resource bases. 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These schools should remain open and form part of a wider investment in SEN pupils, by turning them into specialist resources bases, and educating children within their borough.</p> <p>Ultimately, for the reasons set out above, I believe Hackney Council must reject all the proposals to close these schools.</p>	<p>ANON-UR67-ZXMQ-4</p>
		<p>My daughter goes to Colvestone Primary School which, in this proposal, is planned to close. However, Princess May Primary School is not a school that I would choose for her to attend and was not one of my choices when applying for a primary school in the borough of Hackney. There are a number of reasons for this:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colvestone Primary School is a small, welcoming, creative school with a unique feel and benefits hugely from single form entry in terms of the focus and attention this affords the teachers and pupils. In conversations with other parents the reasons they repeatedly give for choosing Colvestone Primary are exactly these and are the reasons that I chose Colvestone. As a smaller single form entry school I believe this affords more individual attention and a more nurturing environment which has benefited her development and learning. Choosing a single form entry school was a deliberate choice based on the experience we wanted for our daughter and the closure of Colvestone Primary School would unfairly remove parental choice for this form of school in the borough. 2. Colvestone Primary School is in a sheltered but stimulating area of Dalston which provides distance from traffic pollution but exposes our daughter to the bustling market life of Ridley Road Market and all the community and history that accompanies it. The pollution levels at Princess May Primary were 40% higher than Colvestone Primary School in 2021 due to the extremely busy main road that the school sits on. With 70% of eligible roads in Hackney becoming LTNs and the councils drive to promote LTNs in the borough the diverted volume of traffic is only going to increase this pollution. Also, the risks and dangers of having my child arriving and leaving a school on such a busy main road are not risks and dangers I would ever choose. 3. Colvestone Primary School is not a Free School, a Faith School or an Academy. I chose Colvestone Primary School because I believe in the Council State-run school model. I am bewildered as to why so many Free Schools and Academies have been granted permission to open with no consideration for the possibility of fluctuating pupil numbers. Why was there a lack of focus on the healthy maintenance of the existing schools in the borough? <p>My daughter has had a fair amount of disruption in her Education already with COVID, redundancies and a change of Head teacher. The council's proposal to close the school is another forced disruption which is not taking her education and well being as its priority.</p> <p>The consultation has listed 6 out of 38 primary schools in the borough to merge or close but Paul Senior, in a consultation meeting on the 27th of June, said this is only the first stage of the 'process' and more schools, including faith and free schools, would be consulted in the next stages. If Princess May Primary is included in the next stage of closures this will mean more disruption to my daughter's education which, as a parent, makes me question whether the well being of my daughter and her education is a priority to Hackney Council and whether the borough is the best choice for raising a family.</p> <p>This brings me as to why the consultation has chosen Colvestone Primary School as a school that needs to close. The reasons for placing Colvestone Primary School on the list of potential closures is unclear and has been unclear from the start. In a number of meetings with Paul Senior the only reason given was that Princess May Primary is a larger building with a two form entry so can accommodate more children. Again, this does not imply that the children are at the forefront of this 'process' and purely financial and logistical factors are at the forefront. I am aware that all schools in the borough are facing financial challenges due to falling child numbers but Colvestone Primary, under its new Blossom Foundation partnership and with proactive help from Hackney Council, has started to reverse its financial situation and is on a path to recovery. To close it now would remove the schools chance to complete its journey of recovery and remove its potential to become a strong and flourishing asset to the borough.</p> <p>I feel that the consultation 'process' as a whole has been completely unfair to the six schools thrown into the melting pot with no solid reasons given as to why they have been singled out. If this was a fair and considerate consultation all schools in the borough would have been included in the 'process' from day one. The six school choices are now having to fill their enrolment quotas for the coming school year with the shadow of closure hanging heavily above them. This is obviously going to have a massive negative influence on their success. If this was a 'consultation' I do not understand why Hackney Council would put a small number of the borough's schools at such a debilitating disadvantage.</p> <p>There have been discussion as to what will happen to the Colvestone School building when it is closed as an educational establishment. The council has stated that it will not be sold and will be kept as a 'closed school' with the potential to reopen. Surely the cost of moth-balling a historic building, already undergoing remedial work, will be considerable. Could we not forecast the potential spending of these funds into the existing and active 'school'? In the duration of this consultation I have not heard of any creative 'outside the box' suggestions to counteract the closure of Colvestone Primary School, only that numbers of children in the borough have fallen and so we must close schools. This also highlights a bigger question as to where Hackney Councils sees the future of the borough and whether this included the a thriving family friendly, diverse and desirable borough with children at its heart.</p> <p>I am grateful for the chance to put forward my concerns and objections to the closure of Colvestone Primary School as my daughter loves attending the school and the closure would leave a gaping and irreversible hole in the community of Dalston. We, as a family, have chosen to make Hackney our home and I hope the council will listen to ours and all the voices put forward to find a way to prove that children in the borough are its foremost priority.</p>			<p>ANON-UR67-ZXM3-6</p>

Citizen Space Comments					
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These schools should remain open and form part of a wider investment in SEN pupils, by turning them into specialist resources bases, and educating children within their borough.</p> <p>Ultimately, for the reasons set out above, I believe Hackney Council must reject all the proposals to close these schools.</p> <p>[Name]</p>	<p>Dear Hackney Council,</p> <p>I am writing to express my objections to the proposed closures of Baden Powell, Colvestone, De Beauvoir, and Randal Cremer primary schools, and I have set out below why I believe these closures, and any cuts to schools in the borough, must be rejected.</p> <p>Eroding community in the heart of Hackney; these schools, and the staff who work in them, have been pillars of education in our community for decades. Their closure would be a devastating loss for current and future generations. 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<p>Baden Powell has been a school which has been loved by the community and many members of Hackney. Baden Powell is unique to nightingale and I feel it would be negatively impactful to lose the school, not only would families struggle to find schools and a educational home for their children, the impact of staff losing their jobs and losing something beloved to the community I feel will cause a negative impact. Many cuts can be made, but education is important therefore cutting Baden Powell with the history it holds and all the great impact it's had would be detrimental. I don't feel educational institutions should ever be cut as this is a important pillar to the community, and located and situated in a good space for a lot of families.</p>	<p>I do not know much about nightingale to comment, however if this will positively impact society, community and everyone collectively it's worth it. With negative changes there's only a sequence of negative events to follow, so right choices are important.</p>	<p>My answer is the same as my 2nd response</p>	<p>Inspections are important if this inspection is crucial to the safety and well-being of other then I do not see why this should be discontinued</p>	<p>I believe inspections are crucial and should not be cut</p>	<p>ANON-UR67-ZXM2-5</p>
<p>Against the closer of Baden Powell school.</p>	<p>Nightingale was designed to be an two form school. That is fine, but they should not be allowed to close a school in order to fill spaces.</p>	<p>Disapprove of Colvestone School closing</p>	<p>Against De Beauvoir closer.</p>	<p>Also against Randal Cremer Primary school closing.</p>	<p>ANON-UR67-ZXMA-M</p>
<p>It's terribly upsetting that the school is being CLOSED. It is not a merger of students and staff IT'S A SCHOOL CLOSURE. The staff are a community a family who are being forcefully being separated. Many of us are suffering anxiously with the unknown. The cost of living crisis, no job. The uncertainty is stressful.</p>	<p>Nightingale can continue to run as a 1 form entry. Staff there will have jobs unlike the rest of us.</p>				<p>ANON-UR67-ZXM2-D</p>
<p>[Name]</p>		<p>I am against the proposals. Hackney needs one form entry schools and this some was purpose built. In the long run it will cost Hackney more money to support the SEND children who are happy at Colvestone as their needs will increase. We are on a 21st Century street and the school is key. Please take us off the list for closure so we can encourage new students to come to the school as we have shown what a strong community we have through this difficult process.</p> <p>Deeply disagree with this proposal. Colvestone has been an exemplary example of a small primary school delivering great learning outcomes. We need to retain some smaller primary schools to suit children who need this environment to thrive and gain confidence. It is extremely shortsighted to discontinue this school.</p> <p>Oppose this proposal as Colvestone school is at the heart of our community and a unique one form entry school which supports children with additional educational needs.</p>			<p>ANON-UR67-ZXME-R</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXMG-T</p>
<p>Disagree</p>		<p>Disagree with the proposal due to it being a community school and my daughter absolutely loving the school.</p> <p>This is a terrible proposal. Colvestone is the beating heart of Dalston. It's a thriving school in an area with no other single form entry schools. It's on a school street, it's away from a main road so has lower pollution levels than Princess May. It excels at supporting children with SEN. The playground is an asset of community value. Please don't close Colvestone.</p> <p>Please keep Colvestone Primary open. Our 2 children are incredibly happy there, the staff are incredible and no one wants it to close!</p> <p>No, important for the community and the safety of the area.</p>		<p>Disagree</p>	<p>ANON-UR67-ZXMB-N</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXMN-1</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXMW-A</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXMK-X</p>
					<p>ANON-UR67-ZXMI-4</p> <p>ANON-UR67-ZXME-9</p>

Citizen Space Comments					
BADEN POWELL / NIGHTINGALE	NIGHTINGALE (2FE)	COLVESTONE / PRINCESS MAY	DE BEAUVOIR	RANDAL CREMER	Response ID
<p>Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School</p>	<p>Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) - Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE)</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School - Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to close discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	<p>Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p>	
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	<p>Although I fully understand the reasoning behind the closure I would like to make the following points: 1. It is a tragedy that a school that has served the community for nearly 150 years is closed whilst schools opened within the last decade are protected because of their academy status. I appreciate Hackney Council's attempt to raise this at a governmental level. My concern is that more primary schools will take the academisation route in order to protect themselves from potential future closures. This will further weaken the Local Authority's decision making. 2. The process of consultation has been too long leading to children leaving each week. Future consultations need to be shorter and also parents given clear information about how the transfers will be managed - for example through a similar process to Reception or Yr 6 transition. Too much of the communication with parents included the right to request an In Year Transfer at any time rather than a clearly communicated plan about how children would be placed in preferred schools. This has been difficult to manage not only for the closing schools but also schools receiving children. 3. The strategy for Hackney Education needs to be shared and shaped by educators and Unions alongside the council. 4. Care must be taken over how some of the most marginalised residents of Hackney are kept informed and supported. More affluent and confident parents from other schools seem to have a louder voice which has made the process even more difficult for the school community. As the [title] of Randal Cremer I have been raising the issue of falling rolls for 7 years and although the process has been difficult and challenging, I also know how difficult it is to provide a quality of education for children when budgets are forever shrinking and staffing is having to be reduced. Difficult decisions do need to be made but also alongside this there needs to be efforts to show parents who seem only to choose a small number of preferred schools just how amazing other local schools are. It saddens me that some schools are oversubscribed with waiting lists whereas other, equally good schools are not considered.</p>	ANON-UR67-ZXM7-A
		<p>Please think about the impact the closure of all these schools will have on the children, the staff, the parents and the communities. Hackney Council could be supporting all these people, but it is choosing not to. It is not too late to step away from this process and find a more constructive and community focussed response.</p>			
		<p>I object to this proposal on the following grounds: 1) Higher pollution levels at princess May school, affecting all the children but particularly those with asthma and other breathing issues 2) closure of the only one form entry school that parents chose because of its size. It's also the easiest school to "fill" 3) the building has a covenant that means it can only be used for educational purposes. So to keep the school will be a huge waste of local taxpayers money. Princess May CAN be turned into flats. Colvestone can't. 4) If the school age numbers are dropping across the Borough why have all schools across the borough not been reviewed and included in the consultation? the fact that locally authority run schools have been picked out for consultation first without considering faith schools, academy or free schools means they have been unfairly penalised and the consultation has not been correctly framed 5) colvestone has a higher than average SEN population who would be more negatively affected by the proposal.</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXM7-C
		<p>I object to this proposal on the following grounds: 1) Higher pollution levels at princess May school, affecting all the children but particularly those with asthma and other breathing issues 2) closure of the only one form entry school that parents chose because of its size. It's also the easiest school to "fill" 3) the building has a covenant that means it can only be used for educational purposes. So to keep the school will be a huge waste of local taxpayers money. Princess May CAN be turned into flats. Colvestone can't. 4) If the school age numbers are dropping across the Borough why have all schools across the borough not been reviewed and included in the consultation? the fact that locally authority run schools have been picked out for consultation first without considering faith schools, academy or free schools means they have been unfairly penalised and the consultation has not been correctly framed 5) colvestone has a higher than average SEN population who would be more negatively affected by the proposal.</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXMS-6
		<p>I'm very much opposed to this proposal. I am extremely concerned that the council is forcing us to move our child to a school on one of the busiest roads in London. Also, I am really concerned that the council has not actively looked at other options that do not involve closing the school.</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXMM-Z
		<p>I strongly disagree with this proposal. I believe Colvestone should stay open. It is such a special school, giving an excellent education. The single form entry enables the school to provide a really good environment for SEN students to engage in learning in a local primary school. It seems to me that you are intent on closing on all the single form entry schools and I think this would be disastrous for your SEN provision. It would seem a much better fit to amalgamate De Beauvoir and Colvestone keeping the friendship groups and single form entry. Is this move to close single form entry simply a cost cutting measure?</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXH3-R
		<p>I do not agree with this proposal because of the damaging effect it will have on the local community especially the existing pupils</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXH3-3
		<p>I totally disagree</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXHX-6
		<p>I object</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXHP-X
		<p>I object to the closure of Colvestone Primary School.</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXH9-7
		<p>Denu</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXH9-4
		<p>I object to the closure of Colvestone Primary School.</p>	Deny	Deny	ANON-UR67-ZXH4-P
		<p>I strongly object to this proposal</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXHF-M
		<p>I object to the closure of Colvestone Primary School</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXH3-1
		<p>I object to the closure of Colvestone Primary School</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXH3-H
		<p>I object to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School.</p>			ANON-UR67-ZXH2-Z
<p>I feel, and from feedback from parents/ carers BP being a small school can and does cater to the needs of all the students especially the students with SEND and EAL. They say the school is very open and easily approachable and their concerns are listed below.</p> <p>Furthermore could you please refrain from using the word amalgamate as this is confusing for students and parents/carers alike, as they are taking this to mean the all students and staff will be going over to nightingale. Which as you are very much aware this is not the case.</p>					ANON-UR67-ZXMD-Q
		<p>Strongly oppose. Colvestone Primary is small, providing a really happy family atmosphere and safe, intimate environment allowing children to thrive. It is well loved and respected in the community. It would be a massive loss to Hackney, and also a very distinctive building like that should not be privatised / lost to community use. Also, Dalston Town Centre is earmarked for significant future development and population growth, so retaining school places across two sites offers the option to increase places at Princess May in future while maintaining Colvestone, when population growth leads to an increase in demand for places a few years down the line. This resilience and flexibility will be lost if Colvestone is closed down and merged with Princess May. That would be a mistake.</p>	<p>School closures seem like short-sighted, short-term thinking. As far as I know, Hackney is planning to build lots more housing and increase its population. What happens when the number of families with children increases and there is then a shortage of school places because schools have been shut down or merged? It's easy to lose a school but much harder (and expensive) to create one a few years down the line. I have seen this happen in Barking & Dagenham where they went through a spate of closures and 5-10 years down the line had to open new schools because there was no longer enough places for a growing population. Once former schools are sold off it's too late to reclaim those sites. This is a serious risk that should be given more consideration.</p>		ANON-UR67-ZXH2-8

Citizen Space Comments					
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		Although there is a statutory consultation, sadly it does feel like no-one is really listening in this case. Colvestone is a wonderful community school, and should be cherished and nurtured rather than thrown under the bus in this short sighted way. It is one of very few schools in the area with a single form intake, and is being penalised for this, rather than the benefits of smaller school environment being valued as they should. My children attended this school for their primary education. Throughout, they felt safe and supported and were well prepared for secondary education when that came. The staff knew ALL the children, and knew them well, which meant that their individual needs were thought about and acted on. The children also knew one another well; relationships across year groups were actively promoted, and this led to a culture where bullying was extremely rare. The relationships between children and families are strong in this small setting. My kids are now towards the end of their secondary educations, but remain solid friendships with their Colvestone colleagues, despite the cohorts being spread across the various secondary schools in the Borough. It has been said many times during consultations that this school provides particularly well for children with additional needs, and that was definitely visible. It is an inclusive environment, which holds true to its motto "everyone matters". Children with additional needs thrive (as opposed to survive) at Colvestone. To "merge" 2 such different schools is a merger in name only. Many of the qualities that make Colvestone so special will be lost. That is a great shame for the current and future cohort of children. I do hope that some actual thinking in response to this consultation will take place, and some more appropriate and creative solutions sought.			ANON-UR67-ZXHE-K
		I object to the closure of Colvestone Primary School. It is a model of what a thriving, accessible, local school should be with an excellent reputation, in particular for SEND pupils. As a parent of an autistic child who struggled in a large two-entry Hackney primary, I understand all too well that Colvestone would have been a far better environment for my daughter: it's too late for her now - the distress that began in primary escalated in a large secondary, resulting in autistic burn out by mid Year 8. She has never fully recovered and, at nearly 17, has missed almost all her secondary education. Hackney Education are well aware of the borough's failures regarding autistic pupils. So why are they pursuing the closure of a school that stands as a beacon of how to support these vulnerable children. The closure of this school will have lifelong impacts on current pupils and those who would have blossomed there.			ANON-UR67-ZXHA-F
		Please do not do this. This small local school offers a place for SEN children who thrive in this environment and will struggle in bigger schools.			ANON-UR67-ZXHG-N
		The small community at Colvestone supporting a number of send children is essential in the area in which it is located. Some of the children being moved on from Colvestone will have their education severely disrupted and as a parent of a send child myself I strongly believe this will seriously affect the education and mental health of those children. Please do not close Colvestone!			ANON-UR67-ZXHG-G
		I object to the closure of Colvestone Road as the school provides an integral part to the local community that cannot be replaced by another school. Furthermore there is a need for more school places in the area, not less! Closure makes no sense at all.			ANON-UR67-ZXHV-V
		This wonderful school provides a safe and caring environment for all the children who attend with autism and other special needs. It has cultivated a community of support and understanding that is not only beneficial to its students but also for their families.			ANON-UR67-ZXHW-5
		I object to closing colvestone primary school			ANON-UR67-ZXHS-S
		I object to the closure of Colvestone Primary School			ANON-UR67-ZXHI-Y
		My [niece/nephew Name] attends this school, and should this closure go ahead the impact on * and other children with Special needs will have a devastating impact on their mental health and social integration and learning and educational needs for many years to come. The school offers exceptional facilities a small school can offer, that will not be provided in other schools nearby. This is not the solution. I do not know how [Name] will be able to access education in the way * is currently. As a family the impact on * parents will be devastating. It has taken years of hardworking by them and other parents, to create the environment, to develop trust, to enable their children to attend this school on a regular basis to a relieve the results they are managing. Even small changes, take months to manage for these children to feel safe and to build trust amongst their small school community. By forcing them to close you will be impacting on all areas of their development, changes that could have a life long effect. These children have no voice. They trust us to make their world better. This move has not been thought through and is not the answer. The stress to parents, teachers and children will be devastating for all especially those unable to comprehend and deal with change. Our children deserve better, the effect on [Name]'s future learning social interactions and subsequently in her future academic life will be totally overwhelming for all involved. The emotional, social and educational cost to all involved is a damaging move for children especially for our SEN children, parents and carers and the community in this area. This school serves a unique group, formed as the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school - run by the local education authority. Our [niece/nephew Name] and * parents have lived on *** and have been part of the Dalston (London E8) community for a long time, we love our diverse community. They have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [Name], who is * years-old and [SEND] because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([Name] has a experienced SEN one to one).			ANON-UR67-ZXHT-5
		These are the 3 fundamental poles for [Name] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [Name] to be happy and settled in * school (* years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredible difficult impact on * and it will be practically impossible for * to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on * mental health and have a huge impact on our family.			
		Colvestone Primary School is a friendly, close-knit, one-form entry community school with a strong academic record and close ties to Ridley Road Market and the surrounding community. Colvestone has been part of the Dalston community for more than 170 years. It is a beautiful Grade 2 listed building, and the only surviving example of the original Birbeck school buildings, part of a mid-19th century radical education movement. Colvestone is the only non-denominational school in Dalston, and with the proposed closure of nearby De Beauvoir school, current and future parents in this area have few nearby options that are not either religious schools, academies or free schools.			
		Colvestone Primary School serves the community it represents, don't destroy this most valuable part of the community. Many thanks [Name] AND ALL FAMILY OF [Name] XX			
Why do this? I have pals who's kids are dependent on this school. They would be lost without the support the school provides	N/A	Wrong decision (see 1st box)	Cannot understand why you'd want to do this	See above	ANON-UR67-ZXHS-1
		I object the closures of Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School			ANON-UR67-ZXHM-U
		I am deeply against this proposal. As a parent we have tried very hard to engage with Hackney Council on this proposal and we have been met with a wall of silence. There are many reasons to keep Colvestone open. I do not accept the idea of a merge with Princess May. I want our small one form inclusive Community school to be available for families of Dalston for years to come. This is a backward step for this area - why are you not engaging with us about our concerns for our SEND children? Our emotional concerns about making us swap a greener location for a playground on the A10? We have the right to choose and this proposal takes away all choice - if Colvestone closes and we don't choose Princess May what are we left with? We want to keep Colvestone open and bring children here that want a smaller, calmer and greener environment that is not religious or an academy. Please help to do this and not close Colvestone-which is now thriving in its new management. We would be so happy to work with the council on ways to ensure sustainability-pupil wise. Please please reconsider and talk to us.			ANON-UR67-ZXGJ-Q
		Colvestone School should remain a separate school in the current premises			ANON-UR67-ZXGS-2
		I'm in opposition to this proposal			ANON-UR67-ZXGT-1
		Colvestone school is an integral part of our community and is really valued. Parents welcome having a small school and also one which is neither an academy nor a faith school			ANON-UR67-ZXGX-5
		I think this will be a good opportunity to gain additional funding for Princess May and hopefully Hackney Education will then back the school financially to improve the premises and cater for these 2 very special communities under one roof.			ANON-UR67-ZXGP-W
		This is a bad proposal as it limits parents choice in the area and gets rid of one of the best single form of entry schools.			ANON-UR67-ZXGS-6
		I utterly object to this proposal as a resident of Colvestone Crescent, a former parent and former governor. I would have a massive negative impact on the children, their families and the community.			ANON-UR67-ZXGV-3
		I object to the closure of Colvestone Primary school.			ANON-UR67-ZXGN-N
Neutral	Neutral	As a resident without children in the school, I would like Colvestone Primary School to remain open, as I personally appreciate the energy and community it brings to the neighbourhood. Object strongly for so many obvious reasons.	Neutral	Neutral	ANON-UR67-ZXGS-5
		We live in Ridley Road and the school is really vital to the community. Lots of young families choose it as it is one of the only 1 form entry schools available. It's so important to have the choice of a smaller schools as for many children this is preferable for lots of reasons including anxiety, overwhelm and SEN. The community will suffer if you close it; young families will be less inclined to choose this area. Keeping families around Ridley Road and Colvestone is what is keeping it wholesome amidst the areas socio economic and crime challenges. It is detrimental to close the school.			ANON-UR67-ZXGK-X
		No			ANON-UR67-ZXGS-Z
I object to this school being discontinued. It provides more than just education to these amazing children and their families. Please just leave it as it is and give these worried families a break for the stresses that arise from these awful worries.					ANON-UR67-ZXGC-G
		I object to the closure of Colvestone Primary School.			ANON-UR67-ZXGY-2
		I strongly disagree with the proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School. I also do not understand how you can say you will amalgamate the student body - unless you are recognising that you are forcing this to happen, and against parental/carer choice.	No pls	No pls	ANON-UR67-ZXGA-E
Please keep open as it helps the local community Xx					ANON-UR67-ZXGZ-7
		This is a consultation in name only. The council has failed to review primary provision in Hackney holistically. In addition, at no point have you engaged constructively with the parents and community to form creative alternatives for consideration. Yes, there are falling pupil numbers but you have gone about this whole process in entirely the wrong way.			

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		I object to this.			ANON-UR87-ZXGG-M
		I disagree with this wholeheartedly. This is a good school , delivering careful education to special needs children.			ANON-UR87-ZXGE-J
		I disagree with this proposal.			ANON-UR87-ZXGB-F
		I object to this proposal.			ANON-UR87-ZXGD-H
		I disagree with this completely. It is the wrong thing to do			ANON-UR87-ZXGW-4
		I object.			ANON-UR87-ZXGK-R
		The closing of four schools in one go in Hackney is unprecedented. It is a fundamental reorganising of the education system in the borough. And it is the first wave of more cuts to come – we understand there are 15 schools in frame for 2024. Ask yourself what this is in service of – and if can it be justified. Current place data suggests that Local Authority surplus is around 11% - not so far from the 10% target after all. Perhaps the problems are elsewhere in the system – in faith schools specifically – and these swinging cuts will ultimately end up with Hackney Labour either just entering a death spiral of families leaving the borough with provision at risk or removed, or demand the opening of more free schools and academies – run for profit (profits found in teachers and staff wages), out of the control of the local authority, buildings lost for 125 years on peppercorn rents. Ask yourself what the consequences are of these proposals and if the evidence supports the stated aims.			ANON-UR87-ZXG1-X
		As a parent who has contributed to the drafting of the Save Colvestone submission I implore you to read that report and to consider the findings and contained data within it – much of which is new. If you are an elected official, please read this with an open mind – challenge and scrutinise the claims made both in it and in the Cabinet Briefing documents. This is your job, your elected responsibility. If a claim is made that is not supported, do not allow it without further scrutiny. Ask yourself whether the case is made for what is being claimed, suggested, or dismissed. If the supporting evidence is not there – ask yourself why: why hasn't the underlying data been included that would help me make this decision? Can I demand it? Ask for what you need, and scrutinise any failings to publicly provide it in either the pre- informal or formal consultation.			
		We have not been invited to consult – I feel throughout that as a parent my questions have been unwelcome, that scrutiny from any parents has been unwelcome. We all (I think) want the same thing – a strong local authority education system in Hackney. Ideas, proposals should be challenged. We know difficult decisions have to be made – but they also have to be the right decisions, for the residents of the borough. Just because you are meeting resistance it doesn't follow that you must be right. Just because we don't work for Hackney Education, it doesn't necessarily follow that we can't read Council, GLA, Statutory reports and guidance. Read these submissions, open your ears to what is written in them. Scrutinise your and our work. This is a ruinous path that you are on – please, turn back, take pause, and listen to the people you are elected to serve. Don't close Colvestone Primary School.			
		I object			ANON-UR87-ZXG6-3
		I object			ANON-UR87-ZXGR-Y
		Colvestone is a wonderful school. I strongly object to this proposal.			ANON-UR87-ZXG7-4
		I object			ANON-UR87-ZXG4-1
		I object			ANON-UR87-ZXGY-6
		I object			ANON-UR87-ZXGS-Z
		No I thoroughly disagree			ANON-UR87-ZXGM-T
		I disagree with this proposal			ANON-UR87-ZXRU-D
		I object			ANON-UR87-ZXRJ-2

EMAIL ID (E-date-number)	Date	Email subject	Email contents
E-071023-1	Sat, 7 Oct, 11:57	Baden Powell	<p>My grandchildren went to this school and were very happy there and have since done well with the education they received. There is a need for a school like this in the community and it would be extremely bad planning to close it.</p> <p>[NAME]</p>
E-091023-1	Mon, 9 Oct, 18:01	OBJECTION TO PROPOSALS TO MERGE OR CLOSE SIX SCHOOLS IN HACKNEY	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am writing to register my opposition to the planned merging/closure of six primary schools in Hackney, on the basis of the extremely deleterious impact the closures would have on the education standards and therefore quality of life of hundreds of young people and their families across the borough.</p> <p>The school I am most familiar with is Colvestone Primary School in Dalston, as I was an ex-student and my parent was a governor there for almost a decade, although it seems that my concerns about the closure of that school apply to many of the others also.</p> <p>It is certain that the quality of education provided to young people in Dalston and broader Hackney would suffer enormously if these plans are approved. Colvestone's single form entry is highly unusual for a Hackney primary school, and is a tenet of the school that has and continues to enable it to meet a wider range of educational and personal needs than other schools in the borough.</p> <p>For example, I know of numerous children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) whose parents have said that were Colvestone not single form entry, they would not have sent their children there, as the scale of a multiple form entry primary school would have been overwhelming for them.</p> <p>Children in Hackney with SEND will then suffer as a result of these changes, potentially never entering mainstream education as the provision for their attendance will not exist within feasible travel distance.</p> <p>The 'discontinuation' of Colvestone school would also severely undermine any feasibility of Colvestone Crescent's future status as a '21st century street.' The 21st century street concept is centred on the benefit both to residents and schoolchildren of a minimum 40% tree cover, traffic restrictions at school open and close times, and more facilities for bike travel, critical for many parents.</p> <p>The move to Princess May would not only cause great disruption in the education of Colvestone schoolchildren and therefore directly worsen the quality of Hackney's educational provision, but would also expose an additional 134 children to the extreme pollution on the A10. For example, pollutant NO2 which impairs respiratory function with a particularly pronounced effect on children is present at 37 ug/m3 in the Colvestone school playground, whereas its level in the Princess May playground is above 58 ug/m3.</p> <p>By moving children from Colvestone to Princess May Hackney Council would be directly reducing the quality of education in the borough, undermining the provision of services to children with SEND and its own plans for the future of Hackney, and worsening the health outcomes of more than a hundred children.</p> <p>I urge the Council to reject these proposals.</p> <p>Sincerely, [NAME]</p>
E-091023-2	Mon, 9 Oct, 18:31	Objection to the proposal	<p>Good evening,</p> <p>I am writing to express my objection and sadness about the proposal of our little lovely school Baden Powell Primary school to be merged with Nightingale School. My son (Name) is with SEN and currently in year * in Baden Powell Primary School. Since we heard the news earlier this year we are devastated. I already had worries about the transition to secondary school and how we are going to cope with it but did not expect and I am not ready to deal with another big challenge. I am a single parent of two boys. I am working and looking after them by myself without any support from a partner. I try my best to raise healthy, happy, sensible and kind children.</p> <p>Moving to Nightingale School, losing their "little safe place" (as my son calls it), their lovely playground in Baden Powell will have a huge impact on [Name] and I believe on other SEN children too. As his mum I know that it will take him a year to settle in and before his confusion ends he will have to go to secondary school. I can't even imagine what tough couple of years are going to be ahead of us. We have had enough hard time during Covid-19. This is not fair on our children, parents, teachers and staff! Please don't make our lives harder! Please let us be in our little community.</p> <p>Kind Regards, [Name] Parent of [Name] (Baden Powell Primary School)</p>

E-061023-1	Fri, 6 Oct, 14:52	Colvestone Statutory Notice	<p>Hi [Name] and SES Team,</p> <p>I was not aware that the full statutory proposal would include financial projections and it would have been courteous for us to have been made aware of this. I would also like to unpick and counter some of the points that are put forward on the document which I am aware stem from the report which was presented to Cabinet at the recent meeting on 25 September.</p> <p>3. Reason for discontinuance</p> <p>'Colvestone is not financially viable and ended the 2022/23 year with an extremely large deficit balance of £561,646'.</p> <p>This is put in as a separate sentence with no context and so could imply that the deficit is not historical, unrelated to the fall in roll and construed as poor financial management. This is quite damning and I feel undermines the hard work I have undertaken with the leadership team to help reduce the historical deficit balance whilst still improve educational outcomes. This could also have a negative reputational impact on me personally.</p> <p>'In order to avoid unnecessary process duplication and to ensure efficient use of resources the council's finance department has not produced alternative modelling for Colvestone following the agreement with the school on the deployment of a SRMA report process. This was carried out by an independent SRMA'.</p> <p>As you must be aware, the deployment of a SRMA is an independent support tool provided by the DfE as part of their School Resource Management Strategy. From my understanding, it is not a replacement for the council's finance department to undertake their duties to help support schools. As stated on the Hackney Services for Schools website, 'the Schools Finance Support Team delivers strategic support to schools by offering a comprehensive financial management, support and advice service'. If LBH are planning to use the DfE SRMA tool as a replacement way to support schools, then this should be mentioned on the S4S website. We have so far only met twice since September 2022 so do not feel we have had adequate strategic support. I also do not feel this 'ensuring efficient use of resources' as adequate time spent with schools could highlight thousands of pounds in savings (which the SRMA highlighted but has not been incorporated in the proposal report). It also needs to be noted that the school requested the SRMA visit and not the LA.</p> <p>'The local authority does not accept the statement made in the report that "the SRMA and school have discussed the pupil number forecasts with the LA, who advised that these numbers are not unrealistic." The local authority is firmly of the view that the projected number of children joining the school, on which the budget is based, are unrealistic'.</p> <p>If this was the case, then why was the draft report approved for publication and the approved school budget accepted without challenge by the council? The statement above again, in my opinion, makes the schools financial management and budget forecasting/setting process sound incompetent.</p> <p>This same paragraph goes on to say 'The budgets are based on 24 children joining reception in September 2023...14 children joined the school in the Reception class in September 2023'.</p> <p>It must be borne in mind however that these lower numbers were, in my opinion, as a result of the communication going out to the public that the school was on the list for closure which deterred the school's projected number of parents from applying for a place. Your original projection during our initial discussions of only 6 pupils joining Reception by October 2022 was inaccurate as we in fact had 14 pupils joining (more than double) but this is not mentioned anywhere on the report. We are also STILL accommodating parent tours and admissions even though the parents are fully aware of the proposals to close the school.</p> <p>'Supported by a £50,000 mid-year additional cash injection'</p> <p>The Schools Contingency Fund is there to support schools who are in financial difficulty. The school has made significant savings elsewhere on the budget so it is not solely the £50k 'cash injection' which helped the £28,319 in-year surplus balance in 22/23. Indeed, other schools have historically received support via this fund in much larger sums but this is not publicised the way you have done so for Colvestone.</p> <p>6. Impact on the community</p> <p>There is nothing on the notice to state the wider negative impact on the community.</p> <p>11. Special Educational Needs provision</p> <p>'As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school'.</p> <p>This statement is disingenuous in my opinion as a parent could move their child to another school which is not financially viable and unsustainable in the long term. What would you define as 'long term'?</p> <p>I look forward to your response.</p> <p>Kind regards,</p> <p>[Name] [Title] Blossom Federation</p>
E-061023-2	Fri, 6 Oct, 08:55	Falling Rolls - Statutory Proposals and Representation Period	<p>Dear all,</p> <p>I also want to reiterate all the points that [Name] has made. I asked at the beginning what financial modelling had been made and there was NO mention of the SMRA at all by the interim director, interim school estate strategy manager and councillor Bramble at the initial and subsequent meetings. We asked these meetings to be minuted but have not seen the minutes.</p> <p>In addition I would like to refer back to my point made at the start of this process:</p> <p>Thomas Fairchild - the only school in the same context as Colvestone a year ago and also with a large deficit budget and also has falling to 2 form to 1 form (a loss of 30 children more than Colvestone) has not been put under this level of scrutiny. They have been given an opportunity to work with their partnership and federate if they do wish, has not had this added pressure whilst doing the day in day out business of the school which is to give children a high quality education and keep them safe and happy.</p> <p>Have they had an SMRA? Did they engage in one? If they did what would they say? I imagine that if an SMRA carried out in any Hackney school currently - including the ones who have seen a significant deficit in one year - would have similar cautionary language. There has been NO reflection of all the positive financial work.</p> <p>I look forward to hearing how this reputations damage is going to be repaired.</p> <p>[Name] [Title]</p>

E-061023-3	Fri, 6 Oct, 08:37	Falling Rolls - Statutory Proposals and Representation Period	<p>Good Morning [Name]</p> <p>Thank you for the information.</p> <p>Indeed, very unfortunate timing given the additional pressure we have been under at the school this week.</p> <p>Fortunately, we had a very pleasing Ofsted outcome.</p> <p>Just to point out a few points from the notice:</p> <p>No one in the Council had a conversation with [Name] or I about the Colvestone budget apart from in June 2022 when we were in discussion about taking on the partnership and then not until May and June of this year. No support has been given to attempt different financial modelling</p> <p>No one in the Council asked to see the financial modelling the school undertook prior to the announcement of the 'merger'. The school commissioned the SMRA not the Council</p> <p>The notice is disingenuous and implies the deficit is the whole reason for the proposal. This was not the sole criteria at the start of this process.</p> <p>The notice also implies that the deficit is our making not the Council's failure to adequately monitor and hold the school to account prior to our involvement.</p> <p>The Blossom Team stepped in to help the school and the Local Authority out. Had the school been inspected this time last year, the school would have been inadequate.</p> <p>The Senior Leadership Team have not been obstructive to the Council's proposal and have kept our distance from the other campaigns for the school. We understand the reasons why the proposals, even though they change - merger / closure / choose Princess May if they want etc - and have maintained a professional and supportive stance.</p> <p>The dropping off of the material at the gate and the notices being put up at night after everyone has gone home is incredible.</p> <p>The reputational damage this notice implies to our leadership of the school in 'not managing the financial situation, not of our making' is considerable.</p> <p>There continues to be little acknowledgement or consideration to the pressure this process creates for leaders in managing a very difficult situation for children, staff and parents.</p> <p>I do feel the Council simply do not care.</p> <p>Regards</p> <p>[Name] [Title] Blossom Federation of Daubeney, Sebright and Lauriston Primary Schools and Children's Centres & In Partnership with Colvestone Primary School</p>
E-061023	Fri, 6 Oct, 09:51	Statutory Notice	<p>Hi [Name],</p> <p>I hope you are well.</p> <p>I just wanted to raise a couple of concerns about our statutory notice:</p> <p>In section 4 it states that our PAN in Year 4, 5 and 6 is 60. This, and therefore the % of unfilled places, is very inaccurate.</p> <p>In section 3 it talks about the forecast deficit position in 23/24. It would have been preferable if this could have been contextualised, i.e. the impact of further depletion of the roll as a result of consultation - I suspect that many will read this as poor financial management.</p> <p>I still remain concerned about the 'promise' in Section 5 that children will be placed in a primary school near to their home. Many parents are already unable to find places in schools that they want and are on waiting lists. There are also a number of schools locally where PANs have been reduced so year groups are over roll with additional waiting lists.</p> <p>In section 11 I think it is disingenuous to say that children with SEND may have improved outcomes as a result of a move to a more financially viable school. Sadly I think there is no school in Hackney which is in a financial position to provide the level of support which some of our highest needs pupils require - in addition, there will be a number of schools in the Dalston / Haggerston area which are going to be inundated with pupils, including pupils with EHCPs. I question that they will be able to provide a better quality of support than we have been giving them.</p> <p>I appreciate that the documents are produced now and need to go home today. It would have been good to have had sight of the document and been able to raise these points with you before they were printed.</p> <p>Kind regards, [Name]</p>
E-021123-1	Thu, 2 Nov, 14:32	Consultation Response	<p>Good afternoon</p> <p>I have submitted a short personal perspective via the online form but I also wanted to send some research of the current vacancy rates (based on data from LB Hackney published on 19 September).</p> <p>I did circulate an earlier draft of this report on the day of the last Cabinet meeting on 25th September.</p> <p>Essentially your September Cabinet report was based on information that seemed to be out of date. It used the formal PAN for each school and that created the impression of a large number of vacancies across the borough. However during the last 6 months, several schools have requested a temporary cap of their PAN due to internal restructures in response to falling rolls. It is these lower figures that the in-year admissions team are working with.</p> <p>This means that the actual number of vacancies is much lower (only a few % above your target of 5 - 10%) and that parents have much more limited options if they are trying to find another school places for their child(ren). In Dalston and SW Hackney THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH PLACES AT LOCAL SCHOOLS. You are forcing parents to choose faith schools or go out of borough as this is where the majority of vacancies are.</p> <p>I urge you to revisit the overall vacancy statistics and then to consider the proposal to close each school individually in light of alternative options that are actually available to parents.</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> <p>[Name]</p> <p>[Attachment: Oct 23 Analysis of vacancy data PDF]</p>

E-021123-2	Fri, 3 Nov, 15:21:00	re submission to consultation	<p>Please find attached a submission from Hackney Education Unions to the proposal to discontinue/amalgamate 6 Hackney Schools</p> <p>Best wishes [Name] [Title] Hackney NEU [Telephone]</p>
E-021123-3	Fri, 3 Nov, 16:50	Final consultation response - objection. attached	<p>Hi.</p> <p>Please find attached our objection to the formal consultation to the Statutory Notice and Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School.</p> <p>Please can you confirm safe receipt.</p> <p>Save Colvestone Primary School E: [email]</p>

Letter ID (L-date-number)	Letter contents
L-021123-1	<p>Re. Proposed discontinuation (closure) of Randal Cremer Primary School, Ormsby Street, Shoreditch. This proposal is preposterous and should be nipped in the bud (cancelled immediately). My name is [Name], I was a pupil at Randal Cremer Primary School from 195*-196*. In 195* I joined Randal Cremer in the nursery aged 4. In 195* I entered the infants school aged 5 years. My class teacher was [Name] (no relation) and my head teacher was [Name]. In 195* I entered the juniors, my class teacher was [Name] and my head teacher was [Name]. My birthday is ***, at the end of January 196* I took my 11-plus examination, aged 10 years ***. I left in July 196*. I entered grammar school in September 196* aged 11 years ***. This is my old primary school and I object very strongly indeed to my old primary school being discontinued. I saw our old rival school, Laburnum, in Laburnam Street closed and demolished, I do not want the same to happen to Randal Cremer, which is a fine example of an original east end ex-LCC primary school. This is a beautiful and fine building and I do not want it demolished to make way for some modern monstrosity. Randal Cremer is a fine example of a primary school. It is a magnificent building and it should be preserved for posterity not to make way for a block of flats or some other ugly building. Laburnum School was demolished to make way for the Bridge Academy, I do not want this to happen to Randal Cremer, my old primary school. It is an absurd suggestion and it should be opposed most vehemently. Under no circumstances should Randal Cremer building be demolished for some modern piece of junk. Even the closure of the school as a teaching establishment should be stopped. These plans should be cancelled forthwith immediately. This is a further destruction of our heritage and must be stopped right away. Find somewhere else to build you modern rubbish blocks. PS. Save Colvestone Primary School too!! Stop its closure!!! The upper stream of Randal Cremer Primary School Class 1 in 196*.* (*****). The class teacher was [Name] (a white South African woman about 25 years old, who wore a ban the bomb badge). The teachers in the juniors were [Name] the headmistress, [Name] my class teacher. [Name] wore glasses, [Name] did not wear glasses, [Name] ([Name], [Name]?) did wear glasses, [Name] did not wear glasses, [Name] (who was Italian) did not wear glasses (she taught choreography, dancing etc). [Name] did not wear glasses, [Name] (balding on top of head, with hair at the back and side) did not wear glasses. There was another [Name], dressed like an artist, who did not wear glasses – he was not a regular class teacher, nor was [Name]. The others were in charge of classes. [Name] and [Name] ([Name], [Name]) were in charge of classes. The others in charge of classes were [Name], tall (about 6 foot) wearing clear framed glasses. [Name] wore glasses, [Name] (I think this was the correct spelling). [Name] was the school keeper in the room facing into Pearson Street (he was 6 foot approximately). He did not wear glasses. He was heavy as well. [Name] and [Name] were in charge of the play centre, after school hours)</p>

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Save Colvestone Primary School



Final consultation
submission

3 November 2023

Should you have any
queries, please email:
colvestonesos@gmail.com

Written and
prepared by
Colvestone
parents and
carers

The following report refers to the following documents in these abbreviated forms:

Statutory Guidance for opening and closing maintained schools (Central Government, published January 2023) – referred to here as ‘Statutory Guidance’

Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy 2021-2031 (Hackney Council, adopted February 2022) – referred to as ‘Estate Strategy’

“Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy – falling rolls” Briefing Report (Hackney Education / Deputy Mayor Bramble, May 2023) – referred to as the ‘Briefing Report’

“Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission – Response to Informal Consultation” (Cllr Conway and Cllr Gordon authors, July 2023) – referred to as ‘CYP Scrutiny Report’

“Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy – falling rolls” Briefing Report (Hackney Education / Deputy Mayor Bramble, September 2023) – referred to as the ‘Briefing Report – Informal Consultation’

“Statutory Notice: Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School and accompanying letter to parents”, published 6th October (author: David Court, Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy) – referred to as ‘Statutory Notice’

Introduction

This document challenges the proposals and their underlying claims on multiple grounds (and identifying the risks should the Council continue with its proposals) and responds to current data not made available either to the public or elected decision makers through the consultation process. Whilst it incorporates evidence presented for the 'pre-informal' and 'informal' stages of the consultation, it augments this evidence with new research to consolidate challenges and rebuttals to claims made by Hackney Education in the *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* and the *Statutory Notice*. Crucially this submission includes up-to-date analysis of place data in the borough that significantly challenges the underlying rationale of the proposals and the capacity of the proposals to achieve their stated aims. It also includes, for example, an assessment of the child yield from the Dalston Plan developments (and the relevant timeframes) that are of specific relevance to Colvestone as the nearest primary school provision to all sites – data that Hackney Council have consistently refused to produce or to address its specific impacts on potential place demand at Colvestone in the short, mid- and long-term (as required by Statutory Guidance).

Throughout this process it has been extremely difficult to get underlying data for claims made in the public consultation documents produced by Hackney Education for this consultation, often despite repeated requests (written, in public meetings, at Cabinet meetings, at the CYP Scrutiny Commission, etc.). Where these have not been forthcoming, Council and GLA tools and datasets have been used to produce this data such that it can be scrutinised – forming the basis for many of the rebuttals and challenges to Hackney Education claims in this document. This new research represents vital data that should have been made publicly available, such that the consultation of stakeholders and elected officials could have been conducted in an informed way. It is our conclusion that the way that the consultation has been framed, the limited information available and the failure to address the specific contexts, locality and circumstances of each school in frame as a separate proposal have made informed consultation and scrutiny of each of the proposals impossible.

We agree that Hackney Council has to address the issue of falling rolls, but we insist that this should be done in an informed, holistic and consultative fashion. Parental choice will be a key determinant in the success or failure of any proposed re-organisation of education in the borough; attempting to understand what families will do if faced with a number of possible proposals is vital in assessing which combination of *potential* proposals will achieve the desired aims. Throughout this consultation, no alternatives have been offered or consulted on, even when directly requested: the consultation has been presented from the outset as a set of fixed proposals (apparently bound to one-another) with only a limited number of alternative proposals already discounted at the outset without evidence of research to be conducted to assess viability (or to sufficiently justify their dismissal). This, and the timings of each stage of the consultation process, appear designed to be as damaging as possible to the schools in frame (a claim supported by the *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation*, p.32 – 'Impact of the proposals on current enrolment' – though of course these figures fail to account for the chilling effect of the public consultation on transfers and enrolments into the schools in scope).

It should not be understated how fundamental a change in Hackney's education provision it is that these proposals represent. Councillor Bramble, statutory Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care in whose name these proposals are made, stated at Cabinet that none of her team had working experience of closing a single school: the proposed closure of four local authority schools at the same time in Hackney is, as far as we can make out, unprecedented in the borough. It constitutes the elimination of over 10% of local authority primary schools in the borough in one decision, whilst at the same time denying the possibility of learning from the consequences of successive, individual closures (not least in understanding choices that families make). This slashing of education provision in the borough also foreshadows further closure proposals forthcoming in the borough should these be carried out – a list that contains 16 further schools, we are told. The place data analysis in this document shows how these proposals will already fail to have the desired consequences – *if* the desired consequences are, as stated, the reduction of surplus places and the strengthening of remaining LA schools in the borough. Increasing flight of families from the borough and the education provision share of academy and free schools run for-profit, we are told, is not a policy aim of Hackney Labour – but if this is what the proposals do, what then?

Because the gravity of the re-organisation of education in Hackney represented by these proposals is underscored by one further danger: there is no going back. Under 'free school presumption' a local authority cannot open a local authority school – new schools will automatically be free schools run by the for-profit sector, with Hackney Council forced to give over the historic (or modern) school buildings to the private company, along with all oversight on how the school is managed and what they teach, on a long lease without generating any rental income (and yet incurring costs) for the Council: in the case of Haggerston School (2023), the academy trust was granted a 125 year lease on the school's Grade II listed buildings on a peppercorn rent. 'Free school presumption' also prevents the Council from merging and amalgamating schools, as it cannot close two schools and open a new one with integrated staff, ethos, and a new identity. It can only close schools (or protect them). It is unclear therefore, after references to 'mergers' and 'amalgamations' of schools was eliminated in the *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation*, why that language has been re-introduced in the *Statutory Notice* letter sent to parents. This danger is clearly outlined in the Council's own Estate Strategy (that frames this consultation) that warns against such actions, and why it advocates protecting schools that may have increased demand in the future.

This report incorporates new data, analysis and the specific case for the preservation and protection of Colvestone Primary School that follows from it. For clarity, this submission also includes a detailed report itemising the numerous instances and contexts in which the consultation has failed to follow the Constitution of Hackney Council, which protects the interests of its constituents, and that would be the basis for Calling In any decision made at Cabinet. Further, it includes a Pre-Action Protocol Letter for Judicial Review prepared for the Save Colvestone campaign group by their legal representation that outlines the basis for taking any adverse decision made in respect of Colvestone Primary School by Hackney Council to Judicial Review. It also includes a point-by-point responses to the Council's 'Response to consultation feedback (Informal Consultation)' document included as an Annex to the *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* alongside representations made to the informal formal consultation and the summary document produced by Kwest for the consultation process.

In high-level summary, this submission shows that:

- Lack of local places (the proposals cut provision in a local area too deep, leaving displaced pupils without non-faith, in-borough local authority provision / flight from borough.
- Unprecedented cuts, ill-informed, not meaningfully consulted, will not achieve aims
- Despite persistent requests, there remains no cost-benefit analysis of each of the individual proposals. The Council-produced Briefing Reports make clear that the schools in frame are academically strong and that the quality of education provision is not a determining factor of the schools being in scope: the underpinning rationale for the proposals must therefore be financial (unless there exists some undisclosed ideological motivation). As the 'Bases for Calling In' (Chapter 3) chapter makes clear, closing a school is hugely costly, and this report identifies multiple additional costs not budgeted for in any of the consultation documents prepared by the Council – revealing the likely costs declared by the Council for realising the proposals to be a substantial under-estimation.
- This report fundamentally disputes the conclusions claimed by Hackney Education as to the financial viability of the school, asserting that selective reading and quoting has failed to give the true picture of Colvestone's finances and future viability.
- New research establishes the short, medium and long term need for primary school places in the immediate vicinity of Colvestone Primary School.

The chapters that follow establish the financial, educational, legal and social case for keeping Colvestone Primary School open, and establishes why this path would best serve the declared aims of the Proposals under consultation.

Chapter Index

1. Analysis of current vacancy and place data: consequences, recommendations, underlying data
2. The Case for Colvestone
3. Failure to consult in adherence to Hackney Council's Constitution: bases for Calling In any adverse decision on Colvestone Primary School.
4. Failure to conduct a legal consultation: Pre-Action Protocol Letter for Judicial Review prepared for the Save Colvestone campaign group by our legal representation
5. Annex A: Informal Consultation responses including expert testimony
6. Annex B: Summary of informal consultation findings, prepared by Kwest (Appendix P, Briefing Report, Informal Consultation)

Chapter 1. Analysis of current vacancy and place data: consequences, recommendations and underlying data

The School Estates Strategy report seeks viable sustainable solutions and work with existing primary schools with falling rolls (2.1). The May Cabinet report highlighted that in January 2023 Reception vacancies were 19% and were projected to rise to 23% by 2025/6, falling back to 20% prior to 2031 (without taking any action, and without accounting for Council / borough housebuilding projects, and assuming the current proposals don't cause further family flight from the borough. Figures: *Statutory Notice*). It stated that Hackney Council aims to operate with overall vacancy rates (across all year groups) between 5 – 10%. The May Cabinet report states that the proposal to close four schools (close two and merge four into two) will lead to a total reduction of 135 Reception places per year:

- De Beauvoir closure 30 places
- Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate 30 places
- Baden Powel and Nightingale amalgamate 30 places
- Randal Cremer closure 45 places

The September Cabinet report still refers to over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (21% surplus). This is based on the School Organisation Plan (SOP) which represents the formal Published Admissions Number for all schools. However, schools can request a temporary cap on their admissions and many schools are choosing to do this in response to falling rolls and to address potential deficit budgets. The Council process has acted as a catalyst for many schools to make those changes. In addition, it is important to acknowledge that school vacancy rates are rapidly changing as;

- Pupils move in and out of the borough
- Pupils move between schools.

The Council is trying to rationalise schools to reduce vacancies across the borough but it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system – free schools, academies, faith schools and even parents.

Parents can make choices within the school system and the Council does not have control of this. Parents will not necessarily take up the offer of guaranteed places. Children are not widgets and cannot simply be moved from one place to another.

The latest school vacancy data (circulated by LB Hackney Education on 19th September) shows very different figures than the May Cabinet report. It shows that there are 391 empty places in Reception classes which has reduced the vacancy rate to 14.5%. Across all year groups, the overall vacancy rate has reduced to 12.7% which is getting close to the target level.

The failure to account for up to date pupil numbers in the September Cabinet Report invalidates many of the suppositions in the report:

- The proposed outcomes (to reduce PAN) will not be achieved
- The vacancy rates are significantly higher in faith schools and the overall target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing vacancies in these schools
- There are insufficient places at the nearby schools to accommodate all the pupils being forced out of closing schools.

1. Proposed Outcomes

These proposals will not be as effective at reducing school places as initially anticipated, with a further reduction of only 60 places rather than 135 places.

a) De Beauvoir closure

SOP states that the PAN here is 30 for 2022-23 and 2023-24 but the school is actually operating with a temporary PAN of 15 per year – this is reflected in the latest vacancy rates. Therefore the proposed closure will only lead to a further reduction of 15 places.

b) Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Colvestone and 60 for Princess May so that closing Colvestone would reduce PAN by 30 places. However Princess May has already agreed a temporary reduction in its PAN from 60 to 30. If two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places!**

c) Baden Powell and Nightingale amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Baden Powell and 30 for Nightingale. The May Cabinet report states that the amalgamation of these two schools would reduce PAN by 30 places. However as stated above, if two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places.** This is acknowledged in the September Cabinet report as the PAN for Nightingale increases from 30 – 60 so no overall reduction.

Therefore this proposal seems to be about the better utilisation of school premises.

d) Randall Cremer closure

SOP states that the PAN for Randall Cremer is 45 and this is reflected in the latest school vacancy data. This proposal will lead to a reduction of 45 places.

2. Vacancies in Faith Schools

The latest school vacancy figures show that the vacancy rates in faith schools are significantly higher than in other schools. Across the borough there are 391 empty Reception places across all schools, and the vacancy rate is 14.5%. In the 14 faith schools, there are 136 empty Reception places – over $\frac{1}{3}$ of empty places in only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the schools. The vacancy rate for Reception places in faith schools is 30%!

For all year groups, the vacancy rate across the whole borough is 12.7%. When considering just faith schools, the vacancy rate for all year groups doubles to 24%.

If the poorly performing faith schools are excluded, then the overall vacancy rates across all other Hackney school types (free/community/academies) reduces to 11%, which is nearly at the target figure.

The Cabinet report acknowledges that the faith schools have responded to the crisis by reducing their Published Admissions Numbers (as other schools have done). It also highlights that the Council has limited powers in relation to the faith schools – they can suggest reductions in PAN but cannot enforce any stronger measures such as closure or merger (as they have done with the community schools).

Looking at the above figures, the Council will not achieve its stated aim of 5 – 10% vacancy rate across the borough unless further action is taken in faith schools. It is neither sufficient nor appropriate to only take action in community schools. They must encourage the relevant faith bodies to have these conversations and make difficult decisions about their schools in Hackney as well, but there is no evidence of this in the Cabinet report.

3. Insufficient Places

The Cabinet report Appendix H presents useful information about the nearest schools and vacancies for each of the four schools proposed for closure. Appendix I to O presents a heat map of the families addresses against school vacancies for each year group. It concludes that across the borough there are sufficient vacancies for all children who need places.

The latest vacancy data shows that both Princess May and Holy Trinity school have restructured into one-form throughout all year groups and have minimal vacancies, which is a significant change to Appendices H-O.

A detailed analysis of vacancies at the nearby schools for all of the schools proposed for closure. It shows that parents are being forced to make very difficult decisions. There may be too many vacancies across the whole borough but in south west Hackney and Dalston there are not enough places at local community schools;

- The popular schools have very few vacancies which makes it very difficult for a family with children in different year groups
- Many of the vacancies are at faith schools which families do not want (evidenced by falling rolls and the Council's own survey where 84% respondents want non-faith schools).
- Some of the closest schools are out of borough – in Islington or Tower Hamlets.

4. Conclusion

This situation across Hackney schools has changed over the last six months The Council has announced that this is just the first wave of potential closures/mergers, and that more schools will be in scope soon. Schools are taking action to manage falling roll and ensure they do not deliver deficit budgets. Parents are also aware now that other schools will be selected for merger/closure in the 12 – 18 months so are very nervous about choosing a school with a lot of vacancies because it might be under threat in the future.

Despite the public engagement and feedback during the informal consultation this proposal has remained the same since it was first announced but;

- It is no longer based on the latest information
- It assumes that vacancies in community schools and faith schools are interchangeable (when they are not)
- It is forcing parents to choose faith schools or go out of the borough.

This proposal does not consider the specific circumstances for each of the proposed school closures. They are different and it is important that each proposal is assessed individually, in terms of the impact it will have on the Council target of reducing Reception places AND the affect on school options/ parental choice in that part of the borough.

5. Our Response

DEMAND: Urgently review latest vacancy data for each proposed school closure and not the borough as a whole.

DEMAND: Each of the proposed school closures is considered and assessed as a separate recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION: Do not close one of the Dalston one-form community schools but explore a potential merger ASAP.

Appendix One: Detailed Analysis of vacancy data for each affected school

a) Proposed Closure of Baden Powell

Here is the latest vacancy data for the schools closest to Baden Powell. The data has not changed significantly since the report was published. Although Benthall appears to have restructured Year 2 as vacancies have reduced from 30 to 1, and maybe considering this for other year groups, (ie Y5) as well. The table below shows data for the seven closest schools as those are sufficient to meet the demand for places and provide a range of choices.

School	Distance as crow flies	Walking Time	Type of School	Forms	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Baden Powell PUPILS			LA	One	20	19	19	28	25	25	17
Nightingale	0.1	2 mins	LA	One*	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
St Scholastica's	0.22	6 mins	RC	One	2	11	1	0	4	13	1
Millfield's	0.31	8 mins	LA	Three	1	0	2	7	3	1	0
Benthall	0.33	10 mins	LA	Two	23	31	1	26	18	33	21
<u>Northwold</u>	0.43	15 mins	LA	Two	27	23	25	16	15	11	16
Southwold	0.43	14 mins	LA	Two	13	3	8	9	5	15	15
Rushmore	0.49	13 mins	LA	Two	0	0	2	2	3	2	2

- The proposal is to increase Nightingale to two form school and take all the pupils from Baden Powell.

Are there enough vacancies in local schools? YES

The expansion of Nightingale means that all children can have a place there. There is sufficient capacity to accommodate larger families with children in multiple year groups and friendship groups. Also there are spaces in most year groups in other nearby schools if parents want to choose a different option.

Is there parental choice for the options?

Baden Powell is a one-form community school. Most of the neighbouring schools are also community schools although they are larger – two or three form entry. The only one form school is a Roman Catholic school. The nearest CofE school is St John and St James which is 0.75 miles and a 16 minute walk although this has minimal vacancies.

Risk of future closure

If Nightingale increases to two-form but not all the children from Baden Powell take the places on offer then it places Nightingale in a difficult situation. It may have increased its capacity to two-form provision (including having additional staff) but be operating well below capacity with high vacancy rates – this may not be financially sustainable.

Based on the figures above, there is clearly still an issue with high level of vacancies in this area of the borough as three of the two form schools nearby are struggling to fill vacancies. Benthall and Northwold are both NW of Baden Powell and Southwold is NE, and it is highly likely that one or more of these school may be under threat in the future.

b) Proposed Closure of Randel Cremer

Here is the latest vacancy data for the schools closest to Randell Cremer. The data has not changed significantly since the Council's report was published. Although St John the Baptist appears to have restructured Year 3 and Year 6 into single forms as vacancies have reduced from 30 to 3 (Y3) and 30 to 0 (Y6), and maybe considering this for other year groups (ie Y Rec) as well.

There are still 118 pupils (excluding Year 6) who need to find new school places if this proposal goes ahead. During the last 12 months, 89 pupils have left the school – presumably most of them in the last six months since these proposals were announced.

	School	Distance as crow flies	Walking Time	Type of School	Forms	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
	Randal Cremer PUPILS			LA	Was Two	17	16	22	18	24	21	34
1	Hoxton Garden	0.26	8 mins	LA	Two	4	12	0	6	7	13	18
2	Columbia	0.34	12 mins	LA - TH	Two	2	2	0	3	7	4	0
3	St Monica's	0.39	13 mins	RC	One	15	7	5	5	5	3	4
4	Sebright	0.4	11 mins	LA	Two	0	1	0	0	7	3	7
5	St John the Baptist	0.41	13 mins	CofE	Two	37	21	21	3	24	25	0
6	Virginia	0.45	13 mins	LA - TH	One	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
7	Queensbridge	0.46	14 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	0	0	10	2
8	Shoreditch Park	0.48	16 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
9	St Pauls with St Michael's	0.52	14 mins	CoFE	One	0	3	5	1	3	8	11
10	Hackney New	0.56	13mins	Free	Two	0	2	0	0	0	10	6
						58	48	31	18	54	79	53
11	Elizabeth Selby Inf/ Lawdale Junior	0.6	19 mins	LA - TH	Two	9	4	4	0	13	4	7
12	St Matthias	0.65*										
13	Thomas Fairchild**	0.69	20 mins	LA	One	3	0	5	6	1	34	30
14	William Davis	0.7	20 mins	LA- TH		12	12	0	1	14	3	1
15	London Fields	0.72	23 mins	LA	Two	0	1	0	0	0	4	5
16	Rotherfield	0.76	23 mins	LA - Is		22	15	12	11	18	16	18
17	Holy Trinity	0.8	24 mins	CofE	One	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
18	St Luke's	0.84	28 mins	CofE - IS		5	1	0	0	0	2	0
19	Gayhurst	0.85	24 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
20	Our Lady & St Joseph	0.86	23 mins	RC		0	0	5	0	0	0	0
	Colvestone	1.09	28 mins	LA	One	18	14	5	3	5	1	14

- * St Mattias is not 0.65 miles but 1.32 miles away so this should not be included as a nearby, unless it was the similarly named school in Bethnal Green, TH but this closed in August 2021.
- ** Thomas Fairchild has Ofsted rating Requires Improvement so not an attractive choice and has also restructured the school from two form to one (except Y5 & Y6?).

Are there enough vacancies in local schools? JUST

There are no schools very close to Randal Cremer but there are lots of schools within a 10 – 15 minute walk in all directions and the top ten are shown above. Looking at just the numbers, then there are sufficient spaces in the nearby schools for all the Randal Cremer pupils – but only just in the case of Year 3.

Is there parental choice for the options?

Randal Cremer is a two-form community school. The closest school is also a two-form community school but surprisingly it has not yet filled up suggesting that local families are not keen on it for some reason. The other local two-form community Hackney schools (Sebright, Queensbridge, and Shoreditch Park) only have a few vacancies and mostly in Year 5 and Year 6 – the lower years are almost full. There are also a small number of vacancies in Tower Hamlets community schools (Columbia and Virginia).

The largest number of vacancies are in faith schools – one Roman Catholic and two Church of England.

Are there other schools further away that provide options (the ten closest schools)?

- Two Tower Hamlet community schools (Elizabeth Selby/Lawdale and William Davis) have vacancies in most years but only 1 in Year 3
- Thomas Fairchild has vacancies in most years inc Year 3 but Ofsted has this as Requires Improvement
- London Fields and Gayhurst has minimal vacancies
- Holy Trinity, Our Lady and St Josephs RC and St Luke's (Islington) are much church schools but have minimal vacancies
- Rotherfield a community school in Islington has plenty of vacancies
- Colvestone is further away but both schools are close to the A10 and the regular buses (13 mins by public transport) means this could be a realistic alternative.

Based on the above list, parents will be forced to choose between a faith school fairly close by or to travel further away to a non-faith school. It is likely that quite a lot of families will choose schools out of borough.

Risk of future closure

This is more uncertain as it depends on where Randal Cremer pupils move to. There are church schools that have high levels of vacancies that may be under threat in the future. We would also

be very concerned about Rotherfield in Islington as we know that other London Boroughs are also looking at school capacity.

c) Proposed Closure of De Beauvoir and Colvestone

Here is the latest vacancy data for the schools closest to De Beauvoir and Colvestone schools. They have similar catchments areas so the top ten closest schools for both of them has led to a list of 13 schools in total. **The vacancy data has changed significantly since the Appendices to the report were produced as Holy Trinity and Princess May have recently restructured.**

	School	Walking Time (De B)	Walking Time (Colv)	Type of School	Forms	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
	De Beauvoir PUPILS		8 mins	LA	One	6	7	8	8	10	10	17
	Colvestone PUPILS	8 mins		LA	One	12	16	24	26	12	13	16
	TOTAL PUPILS					18	23	32	34	22	23	33
2	Our Lady & St Josephs	2 mins	10 mins	RC	One	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
2	St Jude & St Paul's	6 mins	10 mins	CofE - Islington	One	14	10	11	8	28	6	11
3	Halley House	16 mins	7 mins	Free	One*	0	9	4	0	2	13	9
4	Holy Trinity	8 mins	8 mins	CofE	One**	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
5	Shacklewell	18 mins	9 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
6	Princess May	16 mins	8 mins	LA	One***	0	11	13	0	9	0	1
7	St Matthias	16 mins	11 mins	CofE	One	10	17	5	7	9	9	6
8	Newington Green	12 mins	13 mins	LA - Islington	Two	5	6	7	12	2	15	15
9	Hackney New	12 mins	20 mins	Free	Two	0	2	0	0	0	10	6
10	Mossbourne Parkside	20 mins	12 mins	Academy	Two****	0	10	0	0	3	4	5
11	Queensbridge	17 mins	19 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	0	0	10	2
12	Grasmere		20 mins	LA	One	0	0	0	0	0	8	0
13	Gavhurst		20 mins	LA	Two	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
	Total Vacancies					29	68	45	29	53	75	61
	Total Vacancies (exc two Islington)					10	52	27	9	23	54	35

* Halley House has reduced to one form except Year 5 which still has two forms

** Holy Trinity has restructured from two forms to one form for all year groups

*** Princess May has restructured from two forms to one form for all year groups

**** Two form throughout the school but reduced to one form for Year R

Are there enough vacancies in local schools? NO

Based on current vacancy figures, then there are not enough vacancies at local schools to accommodate all the pupils from Colvestone and De Beauvoir, particularly in Year 3. If the two Islington schools are excluded, then the situation is significantly worse with a shortage of places in Reception, Year 2, Year 3, and Year 4 (see highlighted figures in the previous table).

Is there parental choice for the options?

De Beauvoir and Colvestone are both one-form community schools. If they both close, then there are NO similar schools nearby. There are four faith schools in the above list (one Roman Catholic and three Church of England) and a large number of the vacancies are at two of them. The five Hackney community schools (Shacklewell, Princess May, Grasmere, Gayhurst and Queensbridge) have some (often very limited) in each year but would not be able to accommodate a family with children in different year groups. There are three academy or free schools which all have a small number of vacancies, and two Islington schools which both have a higher number of vacancies.

Parents cannot all choose a community school (even a larger one) and will be forced to make compromises. Without alternative options, many will be forced to send their children out of borough.

Risk of future closure

The current proposal guarantees a place at Princess May for Colvestone pupils, if they want it. Many Colvestone families have clearly indicated that they are not interested in Princess May so it is unknown how many places would be needed. After restructuring at Princess May, they are already oversubscribed in Year 3, which is the year group with the least spaces.

Princess May continues to struggle to retain pupils and even if Colvestone pupils move there, it seems as though there will be a risk that this school will be under threat in the future.

Looking at the above figures, it seems very likely that the London Diocesan School Board will be looking at potential mergers and it is likely that both St Jude and St Pauls and St Matthias schools would be suggested.

2. The Case for Colvestone

A vision for the future

We believe Colvestone Primary School has a bright future in Hackney. The school has been an important part of this community for 161 years and with the Council's support it can continue to thrive as a key pillar of the community.

Key benefits of Colvestone remaining open

- Ensures the provision of an academically strong, non-denominational, one-form entry community school for families. The impact of the consultation process has meant that many other local schools that are not in consultation are filling up or already full - see the place data analysis included here. If Colvestone stays open, it is more likely that Dalston families will have a highly attractive, local community school they can walk to at the heart of the new 21st Century Street.
- Enables Hackney to recover Colvestone's budget deficit by allowing the school to pay it down over time.
- Supports the future development of Hackney, attracting families to the new housing in the Dalston Plan and anchoring the borough's first 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent.
- Preserves provision that reflects desires of Hackney residents, 84% of whom want non-faith education.
- Provides strong SEND provision that can be expanded to meet the urgent need in the borough.
- Saves the taxpayer the enormous cost of closing the school and of paying off the deficit, which, given the school's potential for financial viability, does not make sense.
- Sends the message that the Council listens and does genuinely take the feedback of residents into consideration. It increases faith in the authenticity of the Council's consultation processes.

The Estate Strategy document that frames this consultation details and encourages proactive measures the Council can take to protect schools under its control. The protection of schools and their education provision is the purpose of the Strategy. Colvestone has shown itself to be financially viable (addressed here, and pp. 30-34, and Chapter 3, pp.107-110 – grounds for calling in 1.2(c) – budget), educationally strong, and with a long-term future in the community that it serves – and which it plays a key role in holding together.

While Colvestone did accrue significant deficit in the past under the Soaring Skies federation (a problem, it should be noted, for which Hackney Education bears some responsibility due to lack of appropriate oversight), a new governing body constituted after Soaring Skies defederated worked closely with Hackney Education to address this problem and the problem of falling roll. They brought in a strong new leadership team and formed a partnership with the Blossom

Federation that has been very successful. Because of these changes the school is being closely monitored and its strong academic performance continues to improve.

The new Senior Leadership Team produced a three-year projected budget and commissioned an independent SRMA report, which improved the overall conservative school budget projections by identifying further highly achievable savings on operating costs. These two reports confirmed both the financial viability of the school and its capacity to pay down the deficit. Hackney Education should be proud of its contribution to establishing the new partnership and leadership and should give them time to continue to succeed.

Curricular improvements, increased social media presence, additional resources, and improvements to security and IT infrastructure have made Colvestone more competitive in the short term. Colvestone is also just finishing a period of substantial works (exterior and interior) that have restored the Grade 2 listed buildings to their historical splendour whilst incorporating new security and technology investments externally, in communal spaces and in the classrooms. In the medium term, the housing created by the Dalston Plan coupled with the attractiveness of Hackney's first 21st Century tree lined pedestrianised street should provide an influx of new families to the area and to the school.

Colvestone is central to Hackney Council's ambitious plans for Dalston (the Dalston Plan / Hackney Local Plan, adopted July 2020). The Plan promises to bring 200 new, genuinely affordable 3-bedroom homes for families to the area. Colvestone is the closest school to all of the major sites and is essential to helping attract new families to the area. Colvestone is also a key component of the fully-funded (and Hackney's first) 21st Century Street that forms part of the Colvestone Crescent masterplan: a community-led project that will make the space directly in front of the school a permanent school play street as part of an ambitious greening / pedestrian-focussed landscaping project around the school. This report includes new calculations using the GLA Population Yield Calculator that establishes the considerable number of pupils to be expected from the Dalston Plan project and clearly contradicts Council claims (without supporting data) that the effect of the Dalston Plan on Colvestone specifically would be negligible.

The school is praised by Ofsted (2018) for building "a strong [knowledge of and] sense of identity and connection to where [pupils] live". Small community schools like Colvestone operate as social binders. Colvestone Primary School is central to preserving the genuinely diverse nature of central Dalston against forces that drive people away - cost of living, Brexit, escalating rent and property prices etc. If you take the social binders away then the community will be gone - and will never return. This consultation gets to the heart of the kind of place the Labour Council and Mayor want Dalston to be - one with a sense of history, solidarity and strength through difference, or the next soulless and transitory zone of 'regeneration'.

The strength of this community is clear from the campaign to save the school that has seen ex-students or friends of the school from age 8-80 campaigning against its closure. Why would a local Council want to destroy that? Hackney Council recognised the centrality of the local

Ridley Road market to the Dalston community by the resistance to plans to remove traders' storage and access, focussing instead on new landscaping and branding to support this asset. To remove the children from this community would further diminish the social relations that bind generations, and communities, together. Why would Hackney close a financially viable, academically strong community school at great expense when it could be championing it as an asset?

Keeping the school open provides a solution to the SEND provision issues Hackney that are clearly identified in the Estate Strategy. One-form entry schools have become more rare, and the small, village-school environment of Colvestone offers a great setting for SEND students allowing them to access integrated education. As such, Colvestone has great success as a gateway school for neurodiverse pupils and those with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs. This integrated provision and current surplus capacity also has the potential to save the council money otherwise spent sending SEND children to independent / private schools outside of the borough at a cost of between £35-70,000 per pupil per year.

The Estate Strategy recommends the expansion of SEN provision in current schools with capacity (p.13), and Colvestone has a track record of excellent provision. Additionally, the Estate Strategy supports the repurposing of underused school infrastructure both for revenue generation and specifically to respond to the strategic need for expanded SEN provision in the Borough (p.14). Independent advice has suggested the currently vacant yet teaching-adapted caretakers house on the school site be used as a viable ARP unit in future funding rounds. This would represent a substantial saving on current arrangements for out of borough provision and promises to be far more successful.

In addition, Colvestone offers a strong option for the remaining De Beauvoir School families as their closest non-denominational school. The consultation process has driven families out of both De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer, who have left in such large numbers that they have filled up local places in the schools that are not under consultation. The families remaining in both those schools are now struggling to find places within walking distance where they can send their children, particularly families with more than one child. Despite the consultation, Colvestone has retained most of its students. Colvestone is similar to De Beauvoir in that it is a small school on a quiet road, and it has space to accommodate groups of classmates and family groups, enabling them to stay together.

Keeping Colvestone open is also a win for the Council, showing the entire Hackney community that the Council does genuinely listen to residents, is carefully considering which schools to close and was telling the truth when it said a decision had not been made. It restores faith in the democratic process, increasing the likelihood that the community will engage in future consultation processes.

Risks of Closure

Key risks of closing Colvestone

- Colvestone students who go to Princess May will increase their exposure to air pollution and run the risk of having their school closed twice due to an already low enrollment at Princess May.
- With the lack of mitigation for Princess May being forced to raise its PAN, it seems likely that the proposals will actively damage Princess May School and make it financially unviable.
- Unlike other London boroughs, Hackney is closing a lot of schools at once, but the consequences of closing a school is still untested. Closing such a large number means any mistakes in the process—academic, financial, social—are amplified. It's a high-cost, high-risk strategy that may accelerate the rate of families fleeing to free schools, academies or private schools or leaving the borough altogether, while costing the taxpayer millions of pounds.
- Closing schools is expensive and the costs could skyrocket. The Estates Strategy report estimates closing and merging these six schools will cost £3.5 million in the first year alone, but warns that the actual cost could be much higher, and Colvestone is a particularly expensive school to close. This submission, and the 'call-in' document that follows, details multiple additional budgetary considerations (costs) that have not been accounted for in these proposals or included to allow for genuine consideration of the proposals or inform any decision.
- The Dalston Plan promises to bring hundreds of new family homes to Dalston, but the closure of Colvestone, the closest school to that development, removes key infrastructure from that project - Nursery and Primary School provision. The analysis of future pupil yield from these developments is included in this submission.
- By removing local primary school provision the developments themselves become less attractive to potential families and would be expected to negatively impact on developers' ability to sell those homes to families.
- The threatened closure of Debeauvoir and Randal Cremer has meant that local school places are already becoming more scarce and families may be forced to attend school out of the area.
- Should Colvestone need to reopen in the medium term due to insufficient places in the area, the borough would be forced to reopen it as a free school, meaning the borough would lose another local authority school (both the leasehold and education provision would be surrendered by the local authority to a private, for-profit business under 'free school presumption' on a peppercorn rent for 125 years - as happened recently with Haggerston school).
- There is a significant increased cost to the council for SEND if Colvestone closes as a result of having to send children out of the borough to private schools.
- Continuity in SEND support is extremely important, relationships that will be lost if Colvestone is closed

- Long term damage to student engagement (after already enduring Covid), increased Emotionally Based School Avoidance, and associated problems could result from breaking hard to establish close-knit communities both internally to the school and with the surrounding area
- Hackney Council risk making further errors by acting rashly in relation to GLA population projections - catastrophically wrong as recently as 2017, whilst also failing to account for population increases predicted by GLA analysis of the Dalston Plan proposals included here. Even the GLA data (included in the Statutory Notice) asserts that pupil numbers stabilise at current levels / start to rise by 2031.
- Loss of faith in the Council and in the Labour Party.

The closure of Colvestone poses a lot of risks for Hackney.

Hackney Education has put forward a high-risk plan to send Colvestone students to Princess May. The Briefing Report projects that 120 children will move to Princess May. Two surveys of parents conducted at Colvestone, an exercise the Council has never bothered to do, showed that 95.7% of parents surveyed did not include Princess May in any of their six preferences when selecting a primary school. Further, 87% said they would not send their children to Princess May, with a further 6% undecided. Their reasons included distance, size and air pollution on the A10 (further details in the report that follows).

There is a significant risk that far fewer than 120 students transfer to Princess May and that the school remains at risk of closure. When the Interim Director of Education was asked at Colvestone's pre-consultation meeting whether Hackney Education could offer any assurances that Princess May would remain open, he said he could not, meaning students who do transfer to Princess May are at risk of having their school closed twice. Given the damage that this would cause to pupils undergoing successive closures, it is a further clear discouragement to making the move to Princess May in the first place. There are no financial protections in place for Princess May should it be forced to raise its strategically-reduced PAN and operate with insufficiently full classes, thereby destabilising it financially. This is a failure of planning, budgeting and mitigation. It is likely that the forced acceptance of pupils will make the school financially unviable after it has (legitimately, as per Council Briefing Documents) limited its PAN for financial stability.

Hackney has undertaken an unusually aggressive closure/merger plan, starting with six schools, in contrast to other inner London boroughs. The process is untested and the consequences unknown—it doesn't know where parents will go when schools are closed; it doesn't know how best to support staff, families and students and minimise damage to educational outcomes; it can't predict what all the costs will be or how to design the process to minimise them. For example, the timing and length of this process means schools will need to pay staff retention bonuses (£100k at Colvestone alone), which may have been avoided had the process been different. Chapter 3 raises multiple other costs not accounted for in the proposals.

The Estate Strategy predicts that closing and amalgamating all six schools will cost £3.5 million in the first year alone. It warns that those costs are likely to go up, and in fact they already have, as the report fails to account for £100k in retention bonuses for Colvestone. Amongst multiple other costs detailed in Chapter 3, the Briefing Reports fail to account for the possibility of increased out-of-borough SEN provision (£35/50-70,000 per student per year) if SEND students in Colvestone are not able to make the transition or thrive in a busier, larger environments. No budgetary provision has been made for the costs of facilitating (even successful, Hackney local authority) SEN and EHCP transfers and access. While Hackney Education did estimate redundancy costs at £1.6 million, it has only belatedly reached out to the schools to get HR data (therefore not informing the public Briefing Reports), so the accuracy of the estimate is highly questionable (carrying 'significant risks of being higher...', p.43, *Briefing Report*). It also does not account for loss of revenue to the borough if families leave the borough or go to free schools, academies or private schools, or the effect this has on the stated aim of reducing surplus places in the LA system. Colvestone's deficit and restrictive covenants on the building make it a particularly expensive school to close, one that could cost the borough for years to come (moth-balling a school site is estimated at between £250-300,000), and for which non-education repurposing is extremely difficult – if not explicitly forbidden in the case of Colvestone – see discussion of protections in this Chapter and Chapter 3. The only other alternatives (i.e. the creation or gifting of the site to a for-profit free school / academy MAT operating outside of local authority control) for the site appear to run explicitly contrary to all of the declared aims of the proposals under consultation.

Colvestone provides strong SEND support and is well situated on a quiet street for SEND children. By losing this school, SEND children who struggle with the transition to Princess May (a much larger school on a busy main road) and may have to be sent out of the borough to private schools (at cost of £35-70,000 per pupil per year) and some will be at risk of being lost to education provision altogether.

In discussions with Planning officials at recent Dalston Plan engagement events it was clear that Colvestone, as the closest primary school provision, was central to the infrastructure for these major homebuilding sites. Why have Planning not been more actively engaged by the Education department in the drawing up of these proposals – specifically as they relate to Colvestone?

It is not clear in either the Briefing Report or the risk assessment why absolute faith is being placed in GLA projections population figures when in 2017 the projections were wrong. Predictions of a shortfall of provision that led to the disastrous greenlighting of free schools in the Borough largely produced the current problem. Shouldn't, following Estate Strategy, viable schools be supported through this period to see what actually happens particularly, in Colvestone's case, given the scale of housebuilding projected in central Dalston?

If the consultation process demonstrates strong objections to the Council's plans (90% of the hundreds of responses received to the Informal Consultation are explicitly against the proposals), but those plans go forward without change, it will appear the Council was lying when it said repeatedly, publicly, that no decision had been made. People will see that the Council consultation was phony because the Council never had any intention of listening to the community, which could significantly erode people's faith in democratic process generally and in this Council and in the Labour Party in particular.

Finally, there is the damage that closing Colvestone would do to the community. The impact of this is hard to quantify, but in a time of continual loss and stress—COVID, the deterioration of public services, the threat of climate change and the associated weather extremes—closing institutions that function as social binders will further exacerbate exactly the kind of social atomisation and flight of families from the Borough that the closures are meant to address. It threatens the mental well being of children in particular, driving phenomena such as Emotionally Based School Avoidance.

Dalston is in the eye of this storm, and closing one of the institutions that is integral to people's connection to the area for generations proposes to initiate a death spiral of lost identification, lost provision and further flight. Small local schools and the generations with attachments to them are key to holding communities together. If the Labour Council moves to destroy this alongside the closure of nearby De Beauvoir, it commits to generations of damage to Dalston – and to the Council's persistent claims to be a Council and Mayoralty that listens to its residents and acts in their best interests.

Flaws in the consultation process

There are multiple instances where the consultation process has failed to follow or deliberately misrepresents both the Statutory Guidance (Statutory Guidance for opening and closing maintained schools, published January 2023) and the Council's own Estate Strategy (Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy 2021-2031, adopted February 2022) under which the consultation is held. Many of these errors have been repeated in the public forums where the consultation has been discussed by elected officials and representatives of Hackney Education. In addition, both the informal and formal consultation process has been inaccessible and ineffective as well as financially and emotionally damaging to the schools. Examples of these flaws are highlighted below, and are detailed in greater detail where they relate to adherence to Hackney Council's constitution (Chapter 3) and the legal responsibilities inherent upon the Council when conducting a public consultation (Chapter 4). Many of these criticisms are also raised by the Council's own Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission Report to the Informal Consultation which as yet has not been responded to in detail by the Council.

Key flaws in the process

- The consultation failed follow the statutory guidance and estate strategy
- The Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet was ill informed and lacking detail
- We were told the consultation was intended to help the Council determine whether to close the schools, but its design made it ineffective for that purpose
- The consultation was inaccessible to some of the groups that should have been included
- The consultation process itself damaged the financial viability of the schools in scope

Failure to follow Statutory Guidance and / or the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy 2021-2031 under which this consultation is proposed

The “Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy – falling rolls” Briefing Report (subsequently referred to here as the “Briefing Report”) produced by Hackney Education / Deputy Mayor Bramble describes, frames and justifies the current consultation to both the public and to the key officials in Cabinet who voted to enter into the current ‘informal consultation’ phase. Instances where it fails to follow the Statutory Guidance or the adopted Estate Strategy that empowers the consultation are therefore highly problematic. It should also be noted that these misrepresentations and/or failures have not been corrected when challenged and frame the ‘informal consultation’.

In the Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet members prior to the vote to proceed to informal consultation, clause 3.5 addresses the need to consider “school place demand in the short to medium term”; however both the Statutory Guidance (p.23) and the Council’s own Strategy document that incorporates it (p.16, also quoted in our own submission during the pre-informal consultation) state that potential demand for places must be considered in the “mid- to long-term”. The original *Briefing Report* prepared by Hackney Education misrepresents the terms of reference required when considering potential demand for places to both elected officials charged with decision-making and the public, and subsequently fails to include any mid- to long-term modeling in its report contrary to the demands of both Statutory Guidance and its own Estates Strategy. The *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* changes the terminology used (from ‘short to mid-’ to ‘mid- to long’) but fails to detail in high level or granular fashion any of that modelling, how it was arrived at, and how the stated conclusions were derived from it.

When considering this future demand for places the *Briefing Report* and subsequent *Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* fail to account for the specific impacts of local development (the Dalston Plan) for Colvestone Primary School – the closest primary school provision for all the main sites (p.16). Both because the Briefing Report (p.16, 3.5) identifies the wrong time frame and fails to address the specific proximity of Colvestone to the development sites, an accurate assessment is not made to the mid- to long-term impacts of these major homebuilding projects. When the quoted timeframe is changed, there is still a lack of underlying data that would support or justify such a claim.

The Briefing Reports also fail to account for financial opportunities provided for by Section 106 / CIL investment levies from major local developments (Estate Strategy – p.19). As the local primary school provision for all of the major Dalston Plan sites, Colvestone would reasonably be expected to benefit financially from this significant infrastructural investment. By failing to address the centrality of Colvestone Primary School to the Dalston Plan and both the financial and demographic benefits of that proximity, the Briefing Report therefore fails to address significant future benefits to the school (identified in the Estates Strategy, p.19) in it's summary of the effect of new housing / regeneration.

The Estates Strategy states that all proposals will “consider land ownership and potential restrictions or impact on future opportunities and any additional land requirements and approvals or consents needed.” (p.14) The Council and Hackney Education have been persistently warned that there are educational use covenants on the Colvestone site. These have been confirmed by campaigners who worked on a previous campaign to save the school (1980) when, in addition to these protections, Hackney Council was shown to be deliberately diverting pupils to other schools to suppress student numbers. Despite being warned about these protections, the Council continues to rely on Land Registry documents based on registration documents from 1912 when the school site was expanded through purchase of additional land at the north of the site (then known as ‘Birkbeck Works’) and not the original deeds (1906) that detail the restrictions on the site – a consequence of the school being acquired from a still-existing educational trust under license from the Charities Commission. It has been confirmed with Land Registry that the Title Registration for the school site does not list the precise nature of the restrictions and covenants on the site, only that they exist. Whilst research is ongoing to locate secondary copies of these documents, Hackney Council (through a detailed FOI request) and Strategic Property Services (through direct approach) have failed to provide copies of the original deeds that transferred to the London Borough of Hackney from the ILEA through the London Residuary Body in 1990. Both have been sent the receipt for the documents (including relevant filing references) produced in 1990 to expedite this search, but no commitment to do so has been received in return, with the FOI request unfulfilled (and now subject to ICO review) and legal requests for this highly relevant material rebuffed without justification.

In addition, the Council has refused to supply requested allocation data to assess whether Council allocated places in preceding years have artificially suppressed pupil numbers at Colvestone. High level analysis of allocations data suggests that Free Schools and Academies have been artificially favoured in this allocation process over recent years with disproportionate allocations going to those schools. The refusal to release this data even as requested as case work to local ward Councillor Zoe Garbett as case work for non-public review (given the sensitive nature of postcode data) leaves open the possibility that admission numbers for Colvestone (and possibly other schools in frame) have been artificially suppressed.

Though further details are given in Chapters 4 and 5, The deeds to the buildings (original, 1906 amended, and all subsequent) were requested in April. As the campaign has consistently stated (since the announcement of the pre-informal consultation, April 2023) we have been informed that there is an educational use protection on the deeds (likely specifically on the deeds produced in 1905/1906 when the ownership of the original school buildings was transferred from an educational charity to the LCC, in a transfer of ownership overseen by the Charities Commission). We have provided the Council with a copy of the receipt from Hackney Council for the deeds from the London Residuary Body dated Dec 1990. These documents are of clear relevance to the consultation as:

1. If restricted by covenants standard disposal of the buildings would not be possible and so consideration of the buildings as an asset in the general Council holdings (and therefore potential source of revenue) as described in the briefing reports / consultation meetings etc. / Cabinet would have been in error.
2. The buildings might potentially be forfeited to the (still extant) educational charity who sold them under restriction should the educational use cease – a clear source of jeopardy for the pursuit of the current proposals, of which public / Cabinet have not been made aware.
3. Should such a covenant be contained within the deeds it limits the reuse of the buildings significantly and would likely force the Council to reopen a school on the site – having paid hundreds of thousands of pounds in retention contracts, redundancies of staff, building protection, and associated costs of transferring pupils (potentially out of Borough at great expense) for SEN provision currently being provided by the school. It would also jeopardise student numbers in the new school as the current pupils would have relocated elsewhere. (N.B. as repeatedly insisted upon by the Council, there is no academic attainment argument for closing the school – it is performing very well). This path would be an egregious waste of public funds. There is recent precedent in Hackney for this wastage – the closure of Hackney Downs School / discovery of covenanted deeds / establishment of Mossbourne Academy.
4. The Estates Strategy is clear about the jeopardy posed by ‘free school presumption’. Closing the school and reopening it would result in a free school where control of the school and land would be forfeit to a private enterprise. This would be a direct consequence of the covenant – and manifestly changes the consequences of the proposals on which decisions are being made.

The requested additional data on place allocation (school place allocation by the local authority where no preference is given or available) is of high relevance to the consultation: as the criteria for selecting schools in scope of the consultation is driven heavily by pupil numbers (specifically in Reception intakes, see scoping criteria) this allocation data is required to check that places have been allocated appropriately and not artificially suppressed by the Council. We have also been told that, as recently as the early 90s, there is precedent within the borough of artificial pupil suppression through the allocations process. See Chapter 3 for further details on this request and the centrality of these materials to the effective consultation on these proposals.

Regarding access to the original deeds, held by Hackney Council, there is clear precedent that establishes the jeopardy that the Estates Strategy is attempting to guard against concerning due diligence on land, sites and protective covenants: in 1995 Hackney Downs School was closed at

great expense to the London Borough of Hackney – local campaigners have told us an estimated £3m was paid in redundancy payments) and the Borough's intention was to sell the land. When the original deeds were addressed however the educational use covenants that protect the school site were discovered (not at that point recorded on the Land Registry Title documents which were subsequently amended) and the Council forced to embark on the project that would become Mossbourne Academy.

To embark on a similar project represents a catastrophic waste of public funds. This jeopardy is increased by 'Free School Presumption' (see Estates Strategy p.15) which dictates that any new school would automatically be a Free School, outside of Local Authority control, which has "key implications for the educational property assets as the building and site would be handed over to the Academy Trust of Free School under a lease agreement." The Council would also be responsible for delivering the capital programme for the new school, incurring yet further costs. In addition to the waste of public money and the loss of one of the area's major heritage sites, the Estates Strategy explicitly advises to support alternate options to this path to avoid "the delivery of a free school" (p.16).

In addition, the Grade 2 listed status of the building, which makes repurposing difficult, the protections against disposal (if possible) that would require Secretary of State approval (Estates, p.19) are similarly unaccounted for in the Briefing Document as required.

Contrary to Statutory Guidance (p.29) the consultation proposals were made public two days before a school holiday (the Easter break), deliberately limiting stakeholder response.

The consultation continues to use the terms 'merger' and 'amalgamation', implying a new school with a new school name, number and continuity of staff and senior leadership from both schools. This impression was also explicitly given in SLT / Governor meetings with the school before the consultation was made public. Both the Briefing Report (p.17) and Estate Strategy ('free school presumption', p.15/16) make clear that this is not possible – the proposals in the consultation are to close four schools as all staff in those schools will lose their jobs and sites will be closed. There would be no continuity of staff, ethos or curriculum. This has led to much confusion publicly as to the ramification of the proposals. To be genuine, consultations should clearly state the ramifications of the proposals being consulted upon. Here this has not been the case.

Briefing Report ill-informed and lacking in detail

Whilst the school satisfied some of the broad determinants for inclusion in the consultation, it fails to satisfy the qualitative determinants and the narrative description of schools considered to be most at risk. In the Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet the intention given was to identify schools under “serious financial pressure” where options to reduce expenditure had already been exhausted and where “efficiency”, “financial stability and education outcomes” have begun to deteriorate (p.11). None of these criteria have been met in the case of Colvestone.

The financial modeling used to assess the financial health and projected finances of Colvestone Primary School was a draft SMRA report commissioned by the school business manager of the Blossom Federation and Senior Leadership team of the school to test the school’s conservative 3-year budget projections (submitted to Hackney Education in November 2022) and to identify further reasonable savings. This budget projection (and in year surplus guarantee for the subsequent two years) remains unchallenged. Indeed, the full independent SMRA report commissioned by the school identifies over £614,000 of ‘high achievability’ savings (and a further £167,00 in ‘medium achievability’ savings) over the next three years. Not only does the complete version of the independent report, used as the Council’s only financial modelling for Colvestone Primary School, suggest financial viability, it proposes a full deficit reduction plan to break-even over five years. Even if this independently-produced data is taken to be optimistic (though it constitutes the only financial projection data the Council has for the school for the purpose of this consultation) it clearly states financial viability with the projection to pay down the deficit accumulated under previous management over time. See this Chapter (A: Financial Viability) and Chapter 3 for further details on this and the SMRA report projections on which Hackney Council signed off as recently as April 2023 (well after the commencement of the consultations on these proposals and yet in contradiction of the proposals underlying rationale.)

The consultation failed to establish a holistic approach to the challenge of maintaining optimal education provision appropriate to the stated desire of the population of the Borough. Why isn’t the whole of an area’s Primary provision being considered at the same time – including Faith / voluntary-aided schools? The Briefing Report goes to great lengths (by using inappropriate metrics to suggest they are at capacity) to mask the fact that vacancy rates are much worse in the borough’s faith schools (local authority 80% capacity, faith/VA schools 60%) and that Hackney data shows that 84% of residents want non-religious educational settings. When other boroughs, Lambeth and Southwark for example, have closed faith schools, why is the Council not taking a more holistic approach that consults on all settings as decisions about local provision mutually affect one another.

In responses given to the Scrutiny Committee it was stated that, as opposed to local authority schools, VA / faith schools are being afforded a more holistic set of criteria in relation to their evaluation – not simply financial viability (or pupil numbers). Why is there a difference in evaluation metrics for faith schools – particularly when there is clearly overprovision (and accordingly low occupancy) in the borough and specifically, as it applies to Colvestone, around

central Dalston? By consulting only on local authority provision, faith / voluntary-aided schools are being given preferential treatment. (See Chapter 1 on Place analysis).

The target of surplus capacity of 5-10% is an advisory figure. Why is the council pursuing this for all schools regardless of financial viability, academic achievement, specific character / social make-up of the school and the well-known and tangible benefits of smaller class sizes (for all pupils, with particular advantages for SEN children accessing integrated teaching)? Staff-pupil ratios vary with need already through TA and support staff provision, and these variations are not reflected in the data provided in the Briefing Report. In addition the consultation fails to make any distinction between large and small schools and their relative merits, or indeed the difference between non-faith and faith schools in regards to available local provision (despite the overwhelming majority of Hackney residents desiring non-faith education). As such the consultation attempts no modeling or research that would identify the significant role of parental choice in pupil movement.

Ineffective

It is not clear how the consultation document will inform the decision. At the May Cabinet meeting Cllr Bramble said that financial viability was key to determining if a school can stay open. But there were no questions on the document related to the financial viability, nor is there underlying data in the consultation documents that address viability on a school by school basis – data presented relates only to ‘lost revenue’ and figures are presented without context (for example: lost revenue is not discussed in relation to overall budget, or in relation to school/site-specific operating costs). Because these questions went unanswered in ‘engagement events’, it has been impossible for stakeholders to understand, let alone scrutinise the Council’s logic or proposals. Councilors and council staff have not been able to explain to us (or the Scrutiny Committee) how the consultation will inform a decision whether to close a school. If, as stated, this is a consultation on *whether* to close schools, not *how* to close schools, why has the Council thus far done no work with schools to develop alternatives to closure? Failure to allow for alternatives or modification within the consultation process – that is, meaningful consultation – the framing of the consultation denies any meaningful learning process or capacity for optimisation. A simple yes-no decision has been presented with scant underlying data. The lack of any framing criteria for the Informal or Formal Consultation is criticised in the *CYP Scrutiny Report*, Chapter 3 (Bases for Calling In), and Chapter 4 (Failure to Conduct a Legal Consultation).

Key decision makers did not participate in the consultation. Repeated attempts by parents and governors to meet with the Mayor and/or Cllr Bramble to discuss alternatives to closure were rebuffed or ignored – a belated meeting was arranged at short notice but only on the explicit condition that it took place *after* the end of the Informal Consultation period. The school engagement meeting offered a repetition of information shared (and previously challenged) at the pre-consultation phase, but did not engage in discussion about alternatives to closure or challenges related to adherence to the Council's own strategy documents, the contents of the presentation or to specific questions concerning underlying data.

Headteachers were not asked for their advice or expertise about how a process to address low enrollment might work. Headteachers were informed of the school closure consultation plan in advance of a public announcement, but never asked about potential consequences, leading to a process that was more damaging than it needed to be.

The staff at Colvestone Primary are Hackney Education employees. There has been no consideration of them in the decision to 'merge/amalgamate' – indeed in initial school discussions prior to the 'Pre-Informal Consultation' staff were told that merging schools (pupils *and staff*) was possible – an indication that key officials failed to understand the Statutory Guidance incorporated into the Council's own Estate Strategy that clarifies the impossibility of merging schools and staff under 'free school provision'. At the initial meetings, even though questions were asked, there were no answers or reassurances given to what the proposal would mean for staff.

It is now clear that staff would have to apply *if* there were vacancies at Princess May and have no guarantee that they would be employed. It is also probable that Princess May, which has recently gone through a staffing restructure, would employ support staff or teachers who are more experienced with UPS or TLRs as they would already have these positions in school and also by employing support staff and teachers in higher pay scales and with TLR's they would be increasing their staffing costs. Colvestone staff are dedicated and experienced professionals which makes them on a higher pay scale therefore at a disadvantage for a school who has restructured recently. There is also no consideration of office staff, cleaners, premises managers and catering staff. These positions will also be in place at the proposed site for merger and there will be no deployment of these positions.

In addition, with three other schools closing and many schools restructuring, there will be a glut of staff on the market, meaning there is no guarantee of any job vacancies for staff.

There were no separate consultation documents for staff and there was no communication made that the consultation documents and websites were for them.

The consultation documents had no mention of staff in them at all. The fact that the words 'merger and amalgamation' were used has led to confusion. Would their jobs be safe? Were they being moved to Princess May? Would they have to reapply for jobs? None of these questions were considered or answered until the second HR meeting and none of these factors were considered in the initial proposal to Cabinet.

The timeline has also been challenging for teaching staff; the resignation date was the end of May – the cabinet decision was not published until the end of that week therefore staff had no time to find a job or resign.

There is also no consideration of the children at Colvestone who have built relationships with the staff at Colvestone. They will move (if they choose too) to a school that has no familiar staff. For children with SEND there are no guarantees or reassurance that their 1:1 LSA will be moving with them, a stressful and concerning issue for both families and the school.

Parents were not consulted about their preferences with regards to potential school mergers. Colvestone parents were never surveyed about the likelihood that they would attend Princess May in the event of a merger. Parents at De Beauvoir asked about the possibility of a merger during their pre-consultation meeting, but they were never surveyed about their preferences. With approx. 70 pupils still on roll at De Beauvoir, this is now a viable merger on the Colvestone site that would accommodate all pupils (maintaining family and friendship groups as intended).

Inaccessible

All published documents up to and including that voted upon and the Decision Paper published after the Cabinet vote to proceed to the 'informal consultation' stage has a clear list of stakeholders to be consulted in this phase of the consultation. This list consistently contains 'all residents. When the printed Consultation document was circulated 'all residents' had been removed as a group being consulted.

The Briefing Report says that local residents are a key group to consult, but the document was not sent to local residents. The Council made token efforts to publicize the consultation—a page on the website, in the Council's own free paper and a couple of tweets—but did not send materials to houses in the vicinity of the school. The infographic leaflet that was to be 'delivered to key stakeholders' was printed (midway through the informal consultation) in a print run of 825 copies (FOI request data). Of these, 100 were circulated to Town Hall staff. Of the remaining 725, not one was sent to a local resident. For comparison, there are approximately 250,000 residents in Hackney, and even minor changes to local parking restrictions results in glossy publications delivered to individual residents in an impressively wide area local to the proposed alterations. It appears clear on this basis that the Council has been keen not to engage relevant stakeholders in the local and wider Hackney community on this issue: the fundamental reorganisation of local authority education provision in the borough and the potential closing of over 10% of the borough's local authority, non-faith primary school provision.

Although Colvestone's consultation meeting was interpreted into different languages at the school's request, the consultation document was not provided in any language other than English even though multiple languages represented in the school community were requested. Alternate language versions have been available for the current stage of the consultation as far as we are aware, but no discernable work appears to have been done by the Council to encourage engagement with this stage of the process.

There was no attempt to get feedback from local organisations that may be impacted by school closures, nor was there any tangible attempt to engage with clear stakeholders in education provision, for example: families and staff at local nurseries, childrens' centres, childminders, playgroups, drop-in play centres, the family sections of the local libraries etc. outside of a single email (to the provision manager) announcing the informal consultation midway through its consultation period. We are unaware of any engagement activities conducted by the Council in relation to the Formal Consultation.

Damaging

We warned the Council before the Cabinet voted to move all six schools to the information consultation stage that the consultation itself would damage the financial viability of the schools and asked what mitigating measures were being put into place. The consultation is supposed to determine whether a school should be closed, which means it should be possible for schools to survive consultation. However, no measures were established and as a result, two of the schools have lost so many they are probably financially unsustainable. In essence the consultation, which was meant to determine whether they should close, has created a situation where they are forced to close.

Because Colvestone is under the consultation, it is not picking up pupils it would normally expect to from families who did not receive offers from the first preference(s), in-year transfers and parents considering leaving local schools undergoing structural turmoil because also in frame (De Beauvoir), about to enter a phase of massive staff turnover (Halley House) or experiencing highly disruptive staffing issues (Shacklewell for example, where one Reception class has had 8 teachers in a year). This damage is particularly acute when Colvestone has recently resolved many of the temporary issues that had made the school less attractive (at the time of visits and application).

We have also recently been made aware of at least one parent attempting to apply for a place at Colvestone since the announcement of the consultation being advised by officials on the Hackney Council Admissions and Pupil Benefits Team Helpline explicitly that the school was closing. This suggests further artificial suppression of pupil numbers, the extent of which is hard to quantify (see Chapter 4: Failure to Conduct a Legal Consultation).

The consultation process has been hugely damaging to school finances because of pupil movement (albeit limited in the case of Colvestone) and potential staff retention payments for 23/24 that have been designated to come from school budgets rather than central funding. There has been a complete absence of mitigation planning or financial support put in place to protect schools damaged by the consultation process itself, or to support them should they go through the consultation process and not be closed (which has to be an option in a genuine consultation).

The consultation has been hugely destabilising for SEN / EHCP parents and pupils for whom promised individual advice and support has been entirely lacking.

These damages are particularly galling at a time where Hackney Council, in partnership with Blossom Foundation and a new senior management team at the school have worked hard to formulate and commence a plan that was working (in the 6 months it was given) to increase financial health (income, savings, structure, oversight and projections), parental offer addressing recent falling rolls and staff and parental satisfaction. The Labour Council should be owning and celebrating their part in this success story that would be given a chance to continue if the school was pulled out of scope.

Because the Council cannot close free schools and academies, there is a possibility that this aggressive schedule of local authority closures and the knowledge that there are more closures to come will scare people away from local authority schools in general and into free schools and academies, which they may view as safe from closure.

As raised in the Scrutiny Commission, schools with higher free school meal uptake, proportion of SEND pupils and greater diversity will overwhelmingly fall into scope of the proposed closures under the current metrics. How can the framework for considering scope of this and future consultations be adjusted such that it will not always be these children whose lives (and access to education, which is often already difficult) are constantly disrupted?

This report and the analysis which follows paint a compelling picture of a 'constantly improving' (Ofsted) and genuinely diverse village school in the heart of Hackney's vision for a vibrant Dalston: the meeting of the affordable, family-focussed new homebuilding of the Daston Plan with the area's historic, academically progressive past in the setting of the Borough's first 21st Century Street – the vision of a greener, more inclusive public space that connects the youth of the community with the vibrant market and bustle of contemporary Dalston. All of this future planning, to which the school is its academic provision (the Dalston Plan) or direct inspiration (21st Century Street), would be undermined by the closure of the school that is the beating heart of this community.

Reports and underlying data

What follows in this Chapter builds on and expands research submitted for earlier stages of the consultation period that are still pertinent and are augmented by new research and data analysis.

Positive:

- Strong improvements made by the school since Federation with Blossom
- Positive financial outlook
- Continual academic success
- Specific advantages to Colvestone of the Dalston Plan and the 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent

In addition the report shows:

- that the Council fails to follow the Statutory Guidance and their own Strategic Plan when planning for future demand for places
- Data showing that parents won't move to Princess May and which identifies key determinants of parental choice for Colvestone families
- Specific SEND impacts of the proposal
- Impacts on local developments
- the Council's briefing report deliberately masks the far worse problems in voluntary aided / faith schools, where capacity is at 60% compared to 80% in local authority schools
- Fails to account for significant increase in pollution (+40%) at the proposed merger site
- Identifies a range of historical protections on the site (and its use) that make re-purposing extremely difficult and risky
- Identifies a failure to follow the Strategic Plan when proposing to close and open school sites rather than to support and protect local authority provision (check clear in report)
- Strongly evidences community support for the school and its protection amongst other conclusions, analysis and recommendations.

Colvestone: A village school in the heart of Hackney

Colvestone Primary School offers a unique opportunity to showcase the future for Hackney Council's ambition for education. The current vibrant, buzzing community – rich in history and local association – has relevance to all the borough's needs for families now, and the future.

Financial viability

Following more turbulence than many other schools have battled over the last 3-4 years, the new school leadership team and partnership with Blossom Federation has turned around the financial position and viability of Colvestone. That transformation is *not solely* as a result of any 'additional investment' made above statutory funding from Hackney Council, but can be attributed to some excellent planning, prudent financial acumen and skilled resource management.

This efficient use of resources – and in some areas – a budget surplus, are a solid commercial reason for Colvestone to remain open. Blossom partnership should be given a chance to continue their skilled and committed financial transformation implementing the deficit recovery plan, taking the school to 'break even' by 2027/28 [1].

Vacant places

Well-documented falling pupil numbers across the borough, and vacancies at schools like Colvestone, can impact the efficient running of a school. But it has *not impacted* the quality of education – and contrary to predictions, Colvestone is proud of its newly found financial stability. These unexpected, but positive outcomes, are because a small school like Colvestone can be nimble, it can be flexible, and it can be quick to adapt and change when needed.

When is a merger a closure?

When planning any proposed merger, many factors clearly need to be considered – this is an exercise in efficient use of public money and Council resources, so due diligence is a critical part of the process. However, regardless of the size of either Princess May or Colvestone, and regardless of the suitability of either site to host the merger – if 87% of those parents (who responded) from one school in the merger, refuse to send their child(ren) to the other site – what happens then? The main reasons people gave for not wanting to send their child(ren) to Princess May were due to its location on a main road (81.5%). So rather than a proposed merger, this plan will effectively close down Colvestone Primary School without necessarily improving the situation at Princess May.

The need for Colvestone

Part of Hackney Council can actually see how special, unique and essential Colvestone is to the development of Dalston, as the school forms part of the planning of a new-build neighbourhood proposed over the road. The Dalston Development Plan includes building more than 600 new homes in the area around the school with around 30% of the housing being family sized units. This could bring 200+ families into the immediate area (see new analysis, this Chapter).

Offering real parental choice and an attractive proposition for families in these ambitious plans for 'genuinely affordable' new homes in Dalston *have to be supported by local infrastructure* – Colvestone Primary School was specifically identified as such key infrastructure in recent Dalston Plan / Hackney Planning engagement events. This is a school that will suffer less from pollution and that can be safely walked to. It appears extremely short-sighted therefore to shut down a well-performing school that could form the heart of a family-focussed, community-led Dalston vision.

Ofsted rating and projected outcomes

Colvestone is academically strong. This is due to the excellent and effective staff and leadership team, the closeness and individual attention of a one-form entry environment and the high standards and expectations across the school.

The last Ofsted inspection paid tribute to the school's excellent community focus, in addition to the effective teaching: "You have a relentless focus on improving the quality of the curriculum. You are providing the pupils with a creative and diverse curriculum which broadens their minds and helps them think critically. The curriculum often focuses pupils' learning on the community around them. This provides pupils not only with good subject knowledge, such as the geography and history of the area, but also with a strong sense of identity and connection to where they live." What parent would not want that rich and diverse learning environment for their child(ren)?

Summary

Colvestone Primary School brings together the best of Hackney in a non-denominational, local authority school – and it shows the way forward, by putting a small, well-run financially viable school at the heart of the borough's future.

Colvestone is a village school, at the heart of a 21st Century Street, in the centre of Hackney. It's a school where every child matters, and we implore Hackney Council to take Colvestone off the list of schools to merge or close.

Footnotes

[1] School Resource Management Adviser Comprehensive Report for Colvestone Primary School 2042120 Hackney. Education and Skills Funding Agency. 16.03.2023

Context for Colvestone

After a period of instability Colvestone has entered into a successful partnership with Blossom Federation, which is seeing rapid impact on all areas: quality of education, finances, premises, leadership and have kept the community at the forefront of the changes they make. The dynamic and proactive approach has resulted in positive changes that will only continue. The governors have recommended that this partnership continues for the next 1-2 years and a decision about Colvestone's future after that would be made swiftly to ensure stability, continuity and success.

A successful partnership with Blossom Federation

Colvestone has had three years of instability alongside the pandemic. There has been a challenging restructure of support staff, defederation of Soaring Skies and the restructuring of the Senior Leadership Team which led to the unexpected resignation of the Executive Head and resignation of the Head of school in May/June 2022. As a result, Hackney Education asked the governors to seek partnerships with other schools to support Colvestone rather than externally recruiting a Headteacher. At a meeting with parents in May 2022, the then Director of Education Annie Gammon explained this approach and talked about the process. During the meeting, she was asked about the future of Colvestone and she confirmed that there was no intention to close the school.

Altogether 5 partnerships were proposed, which included a proposal from the Princess May leadership team, and 3 were selected for interview – 1 pulled out because of capacity and the other 2 were interviewed. Blossom was selected for many reasons:

- Successful partnership with other schools before their schools joined the federation
- Capacity and experience of Executive Headteacher
- Capacity to have a dedicated and experienced Head of School with a focus on teaching and learning and wellbeing
- An experienced federation school Business Leader which was paramount for the financial management of the school.

This successful partnership is in place and from the start Blossom have bought clear direction both with regards to finance and resources and also the teaching and learning. They have managed to keep the stability of a highly dedicated staff with minimal change to the school and the community.

Building on the success

The Partnership with Blossom Federation only started in September 2022 so it is still very much in its infancy. By proposing the amalgamation (closure) for Colvestone there has been no opportunity to continue to build the successful partnership and see the impact.

With hard work, there have been rapid changes and developments with impact already being seen in only 6 months most notably in:

- Finance: There is an improved financial picture and the team are on their way to bringing the school back to financial health. The school has a clear understanding of the finances with an in year surplus achieved in the school budget.
- Safeguarding: Safety and safeguarding within the school has dramatically improved. The building is compliant and has seen significant cosmetic and structural improvements
- Marketing and Communication: New website and increased use of social media to raise the profile of the school.

Despite the uncertainty around the change of leadership, the staff and parent community are largely stable and overwhelmingly supportive of the partnership and the school development.

Prior to the Council's announcement, the governors had decided to continue to partner with Blossom Federation for another year to continue building a stable and successful school.

Footnotes – Context for Colvestone

Soaring Skies Federation Governing Board minutes September 2020 – July 2021

Colvestone Primary School Governing Board minutes September 2021 – April 2023

A. Financial viability

Through the successful partnership with the Blossom Federation, in only 6 months the new Senior Leadership Team have demonstrated that they can return the school to financial health despite the reduced pupil numbers. We believe there is a strong case for the financial viability of Colvestone for the following reasons:

- New strong financial leadership led by Senior Leadership Team with experienced Senior Business Manager with proven track record of successfully returning schools to financial health.
- The new SLT have delivered a surplus school budget for Colvestone for the years since its arrival (2021/22, 2022/23). This financial modelling has been submitted to Hackney Education by the school and which, viewed in tandem with the independent SMRA report commissioned the school, projects considerable savings and surplus potential (even on reduced pupil numbers).
- The new SLT have worked closely with the Local Authority over the last 6 months to identify detailed cost savings and provided a viable budget deficit recovery plan based on detailed forecasted pupil numbers, evidenced efficiencies and cost saving measures.
- Hackney Funding: whilst significant investment has already gone into the building over the last 12 months, Mr Senior implied at the Colvestone engagement meeting on 24 April that the surplus in the school budget was a result of that investment, but we don't agree with Mr Senior's assumption. The Council invested £50k last year as part of the Schools Contingency Fund and £25k as part of the Supported Schools Programme. Firstly, Colvestone is entitled to de-delegated school contingency funding as much as any other school in financial need so implying that it is only funding from Hackney that has kept Colvestone in surplus is not a fair point. This could also be said of other schools in the borough and historically. Colvestone had received contingency funds from Hackney last year yet were not in further deficit. See below and Chapter 3.
- The deficit situation of Colvestone should have been more closely managed by Hackney Council over the last 6 years. Colvestone's cumulative school deficit has **not** been added to in the last 2 years (School financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23). The deficit has not entirely been caused by falling roll of pupil numbers over the last 2 years (the school has historically been far more resilient to these effects) so the deficit narrative as a result of the falling roll is inaccurate.
- Low reception numbers for Sept 2023: we think the unusually low reception preference numbers were a blip, the result of a building that was under extensive repair during the time when school tours were taking place, a leadership team that was new and unproven in the eyes of a prospective parent, and a reputation that may have taken a hit due to the turbulence of defederation and restructure. We believe the improvements to the physical

building and the new equipment, the increased social media presence, the strong academic performance, the embedding of successful leadership, and the construction of the 21st Century Street will restore sustainable numbers to the school. In addition, an independent report has been commissioned by the Education & Skills Funding Agency titled the School Resource Management Adviser Comprehensive Report for Colvestone Primary School written in March 2023 working with the Local Authority and SLT in which pupil numbers are forecast to rise by 15% [1] from now until 2025. This SRMA report and the pupil projections contained within it were signed off on as recently at April 2023. The claims not to recognise or agree with these projections (Briefing Report – Informal Consultation, 4.22) are therefore both contradicted by this officially-stated position and without substantiating evidence that contradicts the claims produced with, and signed off by, Hackney Education.

- Partnering with the Blossom Federation (that includes Daubeney, Sebright and Lauriston) allows Colvestone to share some costs and deliver cross-federation financial efficiencies. Only incremental costs are being charged to Colvestone by the Blossom Federation for cross-federation support to help the school financially and also realise the benefits of economies of scale through this type of collaboration/structure.
- In the case of closing/amalgamating Colvestone, the historical debt would have to be swallowed by Hackney, making Colvestone an extremely expensive school to close. There may be less risk-taking to first see if the school can be financially viable and run down its own debt fairly rapidly.
- Through proactive marketing measures including social media the new leadership has increased Colvestone's profile and with the recent upgrades in the premises and new hall, we believe Colvestone will further prove it's financial viability by attracting new pupils cementing it's position in the community and establishing new revenue streams through lettings and community events.

Specific rebuttals of claims made in the Briefing Report – Informal Consultation (4.22, p.17, 18, repeated pp.775-6), challenged at Cabinet (Sept 25th, 2023) and repeated in the Statutory Notice.

See also Chapter 3 for where these challenges intersect with a failure to follow the Constitution.

Questions raised at Cabinet challenged the selective representation of financial modelling for one of the schools in frame in the Briefing Report and the conclusions reached in the LA's summary of its resources, underlying data and analysis. It is unclear how these differences can be dismissed by the Cllr without full disclosure of the documents that underpin the conclusions of the LA, disputed by members of the public with access to the same documents, such that decision makers, Council and the public can inform their own evaluation of the situation. The

bases of these challenges to the LA's conclusions are outlined below (and in **Chapter 3 – Appendix A – misrepresentation of financial data – 1.2 (a) – a presumption of openness**): The Briefing Report, Responses to the Consultation (Appendix S, pp. 775-6) and subsequent references to its conclusions at Cabinet, misrepresent the content of the independent SRMA report on Colvestone by omission, and the overall financial analysis on the school presented in the Report – the analysis that concludes with the stark claim that Colvestone is “particularly financially unsustainable” (Briefing Report, 4.22, pp.11/12) – fails to accurately represent the data on which it is based: the school's own conservative budget projections and the savings (and conclusions) of the independent SMRA report “proactively requested” by the school's Senior Business Manager “to support him in improving the financial outlook of CPS (Colvestone Primary School)” (SRMA Report on Colvestone School, p.4). Viewed in combination, the two sources of modelling data the Council are using suggest “highly achievable” savings (SRMA Report) leading to budget surpluses and debt repayment, albeit over a longer period than that modelled in the SRMA report. This is achievable on lower pupil numbers than those used in the SRMA report – lower pupil numbers reflected in Colvestone's own financial modelling.

By referencing a table in the Briefing Report of school deficits as evidence of “financial unsustainability” the Briefing Report conflates debt and financial sustainability. The SRMA Report claims that the rapid running down of the school's deficit in 3-4 years would be “extremely challenging” – a comment the Briefing Report extracts – *but not impossible*. What the SRMA report does not do is suggest that a longer term of deficit reduction would not be viable, or that the running of surpluses be achieved and sustained through the identification of “highly achievable” savings as the deficit is run down over time and pupil numbers improve. The SRMA lists a number of reasons for this recent drop in pupils, many of which have been reversed (see 1.2(a) above). The specific points of misrepresentation are outlined below:

‘High achievability’ of surplus and longer-term deficit reduction

The Colvestone Senior Business Leader produced a 3-year budget projection for the Council, the headline figures of which are included in the Briefing Report for Cabinet (p.11/12). Omitted from the reporting of this highly conservative budget projection produced by the school are a series of caveats to these budget figures that suggest sources of additional funding that would improve the financial projections (as has been the case in 22/23 when the school ran a surplus – see ‘Notes / Assumptions’ in the 3-year budget produced by the Colvestone SLT). Further, when this highly conservative budget projection (that relies on far fewer numbers of pupils joining the school than the SRMA report – see below) is viewed in the context of the SRMA report commissioned by, and to support, the school's Senior Business Leader, a huge volume of additional savings are identified: £614,000 in ‘high achievability’ efficiency savings (and a further £167,000 in ‘medium achievability’ savings) over the next three years. (Note: only £30,000 p.a. is speculative in the form of grant targets). This suggests a ‘high achievability’ of in-year surplus and progressive deficit reduction over time. The Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet fails to reflect the savings identified in a report that is their best financial modelling and on which it signed off, and therefore fails to disclose the positive financial outlook that results from viewing these two documents together (as the Briefing Report purports to do).

Pupil projections

The Briefing Report (4.22, p.11) disputes rising pupil forecasts contained within the SRMA report in which it is quoted “the SRMA and school have discussed the pupil number forecasts with the LA, who advised that these numbers are not unrealistic.” The report states: “The local authority is firmly of the view that the projected number of children joining the school, on which the budget is based, are unrealistic.” It is unclear on what grounds this claim is made as it obscures the Local Authority’s role in producing the SRMA report, including during the pre-publishing review phase of its production, and signing off on its conclusions (without challenging this specific point) in April/May 2023. The relevant section of the Briefing Report for Cabinet (4.22) also fails to disclose that the financial projections produced by the school are not based on such steep rises in enrollment, as projected by the SRMA report, and are therefore far more conservative on this point – in line with what appears to be Hackney Council’s current position.

That the school, as is subsequently pointed out, had 14 new enrollments in Reception in 2023 whilst the school had been under the public threat of closure for several months, and Hackney Education had advised at least one parent (that we are aware of and have signed dispositions from) looking to apply to the school that the school was to be closed and not to transfer, is, frankly, remarkable. The true extent of pupil number suppression due to the consultation will be hard to gauge, but is likely to be considerable – p. 32 of the Briefing Report documents the considerable damage done by the consultation to many of the schools in frame. Further, the allocations data for previous years has been requested (both as casework and through the Pre-Action legal correspondence) but not produced by the Council. By failing to disclose this information it is impossible to ascertain whether pupil numbers enrolling at Colvestone may already have been artificially suppressed through the allocations process over preceding years. (We understand that there is precedent for this mode of artificial suppression by the LA in the borough from education campaigners in the 1990s).

Deficit Reduction

By focussing on a rapid paydown of the deficit the Report fails to model for a more manageable deficit reduction plan that could be sustained by the school. It is unclear from the Report, and from responses received in Cabinet, why this would not be more desirable for the overall Council budgets – a budget that would have to absorb the whole of the deficit were the school to be closed. Indeed, in its responses, the Council appear to focus purely on attempting to produce additional arguments as to why the school should be closed, rather than on possible alternatives (advocated for in the Estates Strategy, p.7) that might enable the protection of a single-form intake LA school.

The comment in the Briefing Report that Colvestone ran a surplus in 22/23 because of ‘a mid year additional cash injection’ suggests that Colvestone was only in surplus in the last financial year because of emergency Council intervention. This insinuation was repeated at Cabinet (25th September). The school received funding from the Schools Contingency Fund, the de-delegated fund to which all schools contribute and to which all are eligible to apply. This money was applied for to help improve the school building and in particular ensure that it was statutorily safe and compliant. The school had a right to apply and were eligible for this funding which is why it is there. One might suggest that the Management Team would have been remiss not to have applied for it – as is the case for all monies that the school applies for and receives from the Council and other funds. To imply that this an emergency intervention by the Council, or the only reason for running a surplus, is highly subjective and contestable at best. Many schools (both in frame of this consultation and outside) apply for and receive this funding, as they are entitled to do. To suggest that it was a vital intervention fails to disclose the nature of the Council funding and its purpose, and thereby misrepresents it as emergency funding.

Without greater clarity it is unclear how Cabinet (and the general public / stakeholders in the further consultation) might be expected to make financially-based decisions on the proposals. Note that the Briefing Report identifies ‘financial sustainability’ as a key metric for both determining schools in scope and for the evaluation of the proposals outlined in the consultation.

Footnotes – Financial viability

[1] School Resource Management Adviser Comprehensive Report for Colvestone Primary School 2042120 Hackney. Education and Skills Funding Agency. 16.03.2023
Soaring Skies Federation Governing Board minutes September 2020 – July 2021
Colvestone Primary School Governing Board minutes September 2021 – April 2023

B. Academic record

Education standards at Colvestone have been consistently high. This is a successful school with children receiving a high quality of education.

Colvestone has a 'Good' Ofsted rating and this has been in place for the last 15 years. There have been three Full Inspections (2008, 2011 and 2014) and a Short Inspection in 2018 that confirmed the on-going rating.

Colvestone achieved excellent KS2 SATs results in 2022 that were well above the national average AND the Hackney average. For instance, 81% of children at Colvestone achieved expected attainment in all three subjects – this is 12% points above the Hackney average of 69% of children.

The attached attainment data for the last three years shows that Colvestone has been improving its outcomes for children, despite challenges at the national level.

RWM	2018	2019	2022 *
	EXS	EXS	EXS
Colvestone	71%	76%	81%
Hackney	71%	66%	69%
National	65%	65%	59%

Reading	2018	2019	2022 *
	EXS	EXS	EXS
Colvestone	71%	79%	88%
Hackney	78%	72%	80%
National	76%	73%	75%

Writing	2018	2019	2022 *
	EXS	EXS	EXS
Colvestone	89%	83%	81%
Hackney	84%	84%	79%
National	79%	78%	70%

Maths	2018	2019	2022 *
	EXS	EXS	EXS
Colvestone	86%	79%	81%
Hackney	79%	78%	78%
National	76%	79%	72%

Colvestone has been noted as a school that centres diversity effectively in its curriculum and that this is a strength which is important in the current climate and Hackney's dedication to Anti-Racism.

A letter of support to keep Colvestone Primary School open has been sent by Hackney National Education Union (see [Appendix](#)).

Summary

In its statement announcing the potential closures and mergers, Hackney Education states that part of the purpose is "to ensure all our schools continue to provide excellent education for our children, with the very best resources and facilities." If the intent of closing schools is to ensure educational excellence, **it doesn't make sense to close a school that is consistently delivering above average performance in the borough.**

C. Parent choice

The merger of Colvestone with Princess May and the closure of De Beauvoir would erode parent choice in two ways:

- It would directly undermine the choices Colvestone parents have made for their children
- It would severely reduce the choices local parents have for educating their children

Impact on current Colvestone families

Hackney Education is proposing merging two schools that are very different. Princess May is a two-form entry school in an imposing Victorian building that sits on a busy main road.

Colvestone is a one-form entry school in a small, intimate building that sits on a quiet side street.

A recent poll of Colvestone parents, in which $\frac{2}{3}$ of households responded, **showed that 95.7 % of respondents did not list Princess May as one of their top 6 choices** when they originally selected a primary school. Out of 70 households, only 3 had originally placed Princess May on their elective list, with only 2 having it in their top 3.

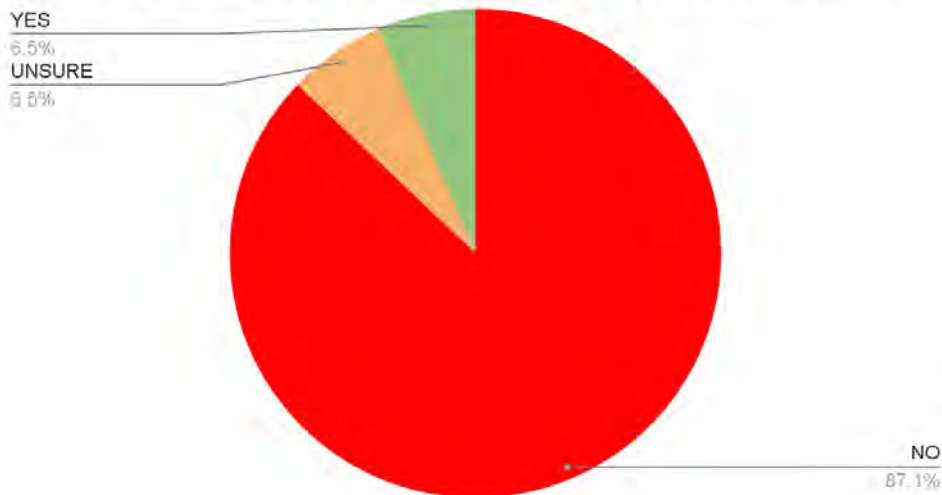
When parents questioned Paul Senior very directly at the Colvestone engagement meeting on 24 April as to what would happen if the Council went ahead with this decision to merge the schools and a majority of parents **chose not** to send their children to Princess May, no clear answer was provided. It doesn't seem Hackney Education has prepared for this scenario.

Colvestone parents then conducted a second survey of our parent and carer community, to provide Hackney Education with some more detailed insight about parental school choices. In our second survey, we reached again approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of Colvestone households. We were very careful to ask for only one response per household so that we were not doubling up on opinions. **There are 104 households with children at Colvestone and 73 took part in the survey.**

Our first question was very simple: "If the Council were to go ahead with the proposed merger of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May in September 2024, **would you agree to sending your child(ren) to the Princess May Site.** (Please answer as honestly as possible – Please don't answer (this question only) if you only have a child in year 5 or 6.)"

Out of 73 answers, 62 have children who would be affected by the proposed merger in 2024. Of these 62 households, 54 answered **NO, they will not agree to send their child to Princess May. This is 87%.** A further 4 households were unsure at this point. Only 4 households said they would agree to sending their children to Princess May.

WILL YOU SEND YOUR CHILD(REN) TO PRINCESS MAY?



The main reasons people gave for not wanting to send their children to Princess May were around:

- Location on a main road (81.5%)
- Pollution levels (77.8%)
- Not liking the school itself (66.7%)
- Not wanting to send their children to a bigger school (63%)

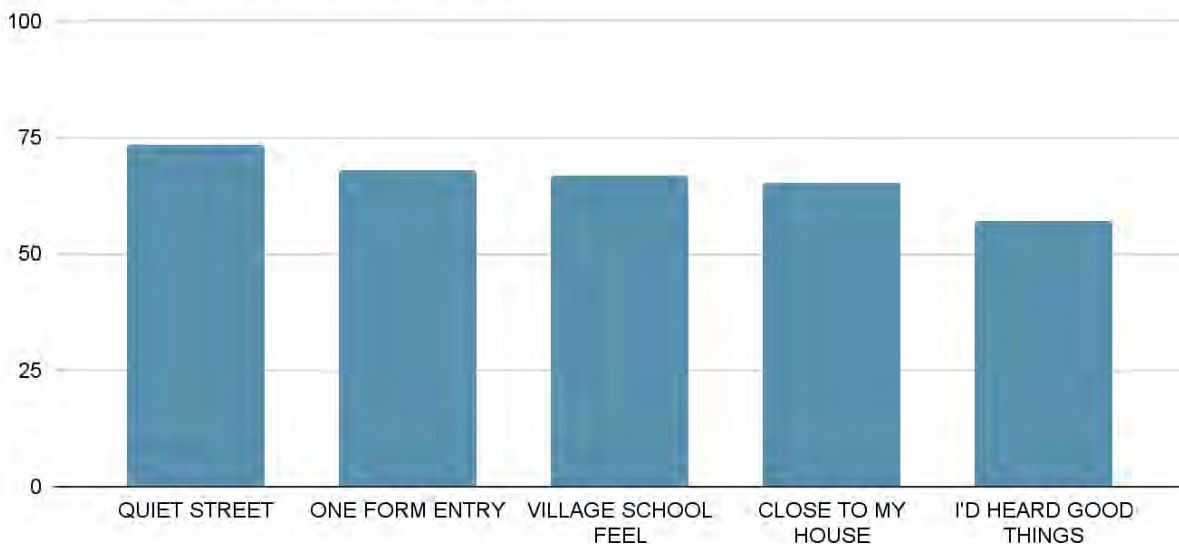
We also asked our families what the principal factors were that they took into consideration when choosing a primary school for their children. **Distance from home** was overwhelmingly the most important (chosen by 70.8% of families). A close second were **pollution levels around the school** (65.3%) and the **size of the school** (63.9%), coming in at **more important** than **academic performance and Ofsted ratings** (58.3%). The **quiet location of the school** was also considered important by over 50% of the parents. Another very important factor for many parents (40.3%) was being able to choose a **non-faith** school. **SEN** support and community feel of school were also repeated themes (22.5% of respondents to our survey have a child with SEN). Most of these categories, such as quiet street, distance and one-form entry, are not qualities that can be fulfilled at Princess May, hence Princess May barely featured on families' radars when they were making their initial choices.

Comments from the survey:

"I sent my eldest son to Princess May 8 years ago and had to change schools after a few months because we were really unhappy with the standards of the school. We visited the school again a couple of years ago, whilst going through the selection process for my youngest child, who currently attends Colvestone and we were disappointed to discover that Princess May is still not a viable option for us to send our children. We would not send our child to Princess May, our child is very happy at Colvestone and we're it to close we would look at finding a similar school to Colvestone probably outside the borough."

We proceeded to ask parents and carers, what were the **specific appeals of Colvestone itself**. See the graph below:

WHY WE CHOSE COLVESTONE



Other important reasons were of course the wonderful staff, and the architecture and layout of buildings, the SEN support, the experience of older siblings, and the strong community feel.

We thought it would also be useful for the Council to know **which schools parents are actually interested in**, should they no longer be able to send their children to Colvestone. Here are the responses, ranked in order of preference:

- 1) Shacklewell Primary (35.3%) – yet this school is oversubscribed
- 2) Out of borough (22.1%) – a clear risk of losing even more school funding for the borough
- 3) None of the closest schools but staying in borough (16.2%)
- 4) Halley House / Queensbridge / Mossbourne Parkside (all 14.7%)

The local faith schools all attracted much lower numbers. The remaining survey results are in the [Appendix](#).

When reviewing what Colvestone Primary School has to offer, it is clear from the factors listed above that parents are choosing it very deliberately. **It is simply not acceptable to ignore all of the factors that go into making this choice.**

Also, please note that at the 24 April meeting, parents asked Paul Senior if they were to send their children to Princess May what guarantees they would have that Princess May, which is

also struggling with under enrollment, would not be closed in the next 5 to 6 years. Mr. Senior replied that he could make no such assurances.

If a minority of parents send their children to Princess May, the merger could do little to improve the enrollment problem at Princess May. In addition, Colvestone children who move there could have the deeply traumatic experience of having their school closed twice. **If the Council can't ensure the stability of the Princess May/Colvestone merger, it should not be undertaking this plan.**

Reduction of choice for local families

The closure of Colvestone and nearby De Beauvoir Primary School would mean there would be no non-faith, one-form entry local authority schools within a mile of the Colvestone building.



Our local area would have three religious schools, Holy Trinity, St Matthias, and Our Lady and St. Joseph. According to a 2017 consultation report, **84% of respondents agreed that they would like Hackney's schools to be non-denominational.**[1] But the closure of Colvestone and De Beauvoir could force parents to choose between sending their child to a religious school or travelling further for school. And the further they are from a school, the less likely they are to get in.

The area also has an academy, Mossbourne Parkside Academy, and a free school, Halley House.

Halley House has deeply troubling ownership. It is run by the Bellevue Place Education Trust, (BPET) which operates 10 primary schools mostly in London and which is a joint venture of the Bellevue Education Trust and a company called the Place Group. Bellevue Education Trust is owned by GEMS Education, the largest operator of private kindergarten to grade 12 schools in the world, whose founder and chairman is based in the UAE. A consortium led by the private equity firm CVC Capital Partners owns a 30 percent share of GEMS Education including its stake in Bellevue Education Trust. BPET and its related companies have been the subject of several newspaper articles questioning their ownership and business practices. The articles include:

- Trustees of BPET own substantial shares in companies, including the Place Group, to which BPET has awarded large contracts. [2]
- In 2016 the Sunday Times revealed that a Saudi oil tycoon was the largest investor, via a British Virgin Island's company, in Bellevue Education. [3]
- The Good Law Project threatened to issue legal proceedings after the Place Group won a contract to run tender competitions on behalf of public sector bodies to procure services to reach their net zero goals. The framework was valued at £70 billion and the Place Group was the only bidder. The agreement was withdrawn after the Good Law Project exposed this shoddy procurement deal. [4]

It should be noted that although Hackney Council says now it was against the establishment of free schools, in fact BPET says it was fully supported by the Council to open up Halley House.[5] A 2014 article in the Hackney Citizen about the opening of free schools in Hackney states, "Hackney Council's newly-appointed Cabinet Member for Children's Service, Councillor Antoinette Bramble said: 'We've always been very open to innovation within education, and the phenomenal improvements seen in our schools over the last decade are testament to that.'

'We work closely with all of the schools in Hackney and *we look forward to supporting any free schools which open in our borough*. They join a family of schools with high aspirations for all of Hackney's young people.'" (emphasis added) [6]

It appears rich people are using schools, including Halley House, to become richer. Parents in the area should not feel forced to send their children there due to limited options in the area.

The only nearby local authority options would be Shacklewell, which is currently full, and Princess May. Hackney Council is proposing sending students from Colvestone to Princess May. However, as indicated above, Princess May is a very unpopular choice for Colvestone families.

The reduction of choice in the Dalston area also threatens to jeopardise the Council's ambitions for the new development in Dalston Plan (see [Impact on local development](#)). While the Council claims that it wants to attract families to the new flats, **those flats may not be attractive to**

families if the only choices in the area are three religious schools, a free school owned by remote and global corporations, an academy, a school on the busy A10 and a school that is oversubscribed.

The Hackney Labour Party 2022-26 Manifesto states, “We will continue to oppose the forced academisation of schools... and campaign for an education system that is democratic and inclusive.”[7] However, the current proposal could lead to academisation via the back door. **If Hackney closes local authority schools and later demand requires new schools to be built or reopened, the government’s Free School Presumption policy means the Council will be under pressure to reopen them as free schools/academies, further reducing the proportion of local authority schools.** [8]

Hackney Education has already been disproportionately allocating students to free schools, academies and faith schools. In 2022 although academy, faith and free schools represent 33 percent of schools, they received 40 percent of allocations and in 2021 received 46 percent of allocations.[9] Using current per pupil funding figure (£6,484), that means that in 2022, Hackney gave more than £162,000 per year to academy, faith and free schools and in 2021 more than £233,000 per year that might have gone to local authority schools.[10]

In the 24 April Council engagement meeting with Colvestone parents/carers, Hackney Education said that students are allocated to their closest school. In a time of dropping enrollment Hackney Education is allocating students and hundreds of thousands of pounds to schools that it says it has no or limited authority to close. That practice undermines local authority schools, and is based on a presumption that academy, faith and free schools are the same as local authority provision, which this current situation has clearly demonstrated is not the case. **If Hackney were genuinely committed to ensuring local authority schools can survive this period of decreasing enrollment and remain a viable choice for parents now and in the future, it would allocate students to their closest local authority school.**

Summary

The consequences of this proposed merger have not been fully considered. In merging Colvestone and Princess May, the Council is attempting to send families to a very different education environment and our evidence suggests a majority of parents do not want to go to Princess May. In a choice system the Council has limited control over where parents send their children and the question of which school parents will choose is hard to predict. Parents may go to free schools or academies, which doesn't help the Council's finances. They may leave the borough altogether.

The Council appears to have no plan in the event that only a minority of parents send their children to Princess May, which seems likely therefore leaving Princess May in a similar vulnerable position. In the absence of a plan, those who do send their child(ren) to Princess May, run the risk of having their school closed twice.

The proposed merger and closure plan also severely reduces choice for all local parents and prospective parents and increases the proportion of faith, academy and free schools both now and in the future.

Colvestone offers families of this area a choice that should continue to be available. This community deserves to have a non-denominational, local authority school they can walk to, one that has a strong academic record and that offers the closeness and individual attention of a one-form entry environment.

Footnotes – Parent choice section

[1] Hackney: schools for everyone, Consultation Report, Dec. 2017, page 30. See:

https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/communications-engagement/hackney-schools-for-everyone/user_uploads/hackney-schools-for-everyone-survey-report.pdf

[2] "Will government plans lead to 1,000 academy chiefs paid £150,000+?," The Guardian, 26 Apr. 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/apr/26/academy-chiefs-pay-bromley-schools-rachel-de-souza>

[3] Saudi oil tycoon revealed as investor in schools company, The Sunday Times, 10 April 2016. See: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/f53a9274-fe97-11e5-b5b9-5f40d4ddd6f6?shareToken=06209c7b9c1b19f09b17eec896f6d00b>

[4] Transparency has prevailed this time, the Good Law Project, 11 November, 2022. See:

<https://goodlawproject.org/update/transparency-has-prevailed-this-time/>

[5] Bellevue Place Education Trust—the free school group you've never heard of, Schools Week, 22 Apr. 2016 See: <https://schoolsworld.co.uk/bellevue-place-education-trust-who-are-they/>

[6] Three new free schools approved for Hackney, Hackney Citizen, 19 June 2014 See: <https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2014/06/19/three-new-free-schools-approved-hackney/>

[7] Hackney Labour Party 2022-26 Manifesto, page 26. See:

<https://www.hackney-labour.org.uk/hackney-labour-2022-26-manifesto/>

[8] The free school presumption, Jan. 2023. See:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/113056/5/Free_school_presumption_guidance.pdf

[9] Applications and Offers at Hackney Primary Schools 2018-22, See:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/sites/default/files/document/Applications%20and%20Offers%20at%20Hackney%20Primary%20Schools%202018-22.pdf>

[10] Primary schools potential closure / merger plans, See:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/primary-schools-potential-changes#:~:text=Hackney%20Council%20is%20considering%20consulting,September%202024%20at%20the%20earliest.>

D. Impact on children with special educational needs

Colvestone has a high proportion of children who are on the SEND register (25%).

Seven percent of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), above the 4.3% average across the borough and significantly above the national average of 2.2%. This is 10 individual children with a range of identified needs.

In addition, there are another 25 children who have identified as needing additional support due to their special educational needs. This 17% is similar to the Hackney average but much higher than the national average.

This proposal will affect the majority of children on the SEND register as they are concentrated in the lower year groups (rather than Year 5 and Year 6 who will not be directly affected).[1]

Year Group	EHCP	SEN Support
Reception	0	6
Year 1	3	6
Year 2	2	2
Year 3	1	2
Year 4	1	1
Year 5	1	4
Year 6	2	4
Total	10	25

There were 16 SEND families who responded to the second parental survey about parental choice. ALL of those families affected (14 families) stated that they would NOT send their child(ren) to Princess May.

For SEND families the main reasons people gave for not wanting to send their children to Princess May were around:

- Not wanting to send their children to a bigger school (71%)
- Pollution levels (64%)

We also asked our families what the principal factors were that they took into consideration when choosing a primary school for their children. For SEND families, the **size of the school** was significantly more important (chosen by 81%) than **distance from home** (chosen by 38% of SEND families but 71% of all families). In second place were **pollution levels around the school** (63%).

“Colvestone is the ideal school for my 6-year-old autistic son,” said one parent. “As a one-form entry school, tucked away from busy roads, it provides a calmer, less overwhelming environment, which is of utmost importance to children that are autistic and struggle to process overstimulating surroundings. I could never imagine him settling into a two-form entry school and being as happy as he is at Colvestone. Losing this school would be devastating for him.”

We also asked SEND parents which schools they are interested in. Again there are very broad responses:

- Queensbridge (25%)
- Out of borough (25%)
- Shacklewell Primary (19%) – yet this school is oversubscribed
- None of the closest schools but staying in borough (19%)
- Halley House / Mossbourne Parkside (both 13%)

The local faith schools were not chosen by faith schools at all. Two SEND families stated that they would not choose another school and would consider home-educating instead. The remaining survey results are in the [Appendix](#) to this Chapter.

Once again, it is clear from the factors listed above that parents are choosing Colvestone very deliberately. At the public meeting, a parent talked about how they travel from Newham with their SEND child because it is a small, friendly, inclusive school where her son is supported and encouraged rather than feeling excluded from the other pupils. We are aware of another family who travels from Islington for similar reasons.

This informal proposal to close/amalgamate Colvestone, places these SEND children in a very vulnerable situation as they would have to move to another school. The parents are particularly concerned about potential transitions as these children need stability and routine.

It should be stressed that Colvestone’s position with regards to children with SEND (and the excellent access to education and provision that it provides) differentiates it from other schools in scope. It should be noted that the new Equality Impact Assessment accepts this (*Briefing Report – Informal Consultation*, pg 68); the response is that the level of support provided by Colvestone will inevitably fall because of the financial impact of low pupil numbers. There is no evidence provided that this would be the case, or concern from the school that given future projections that it would be impacted as is suggested in the future. Also it should be noted that an Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team responded to the consultation with concerns about the proposed closure (*Briefing Report – Informal Consultation* p.345), highlighted by Kwest, but unresponded to by Hackney Education in the report.

Two example letters from parents of children with special education needs can be found in the [Appendix](#).

The Council should understand that Colvestone is a positive choice for many SEND families, and this is a strength to build on for the future as there is increasing demand for SEND places.

Footnotes – Impact on children with special educational needs

[1] Colvestone SENCO presentation to SEND parents in October 2022

E. Impact on local development

Impact on the Dalston Development Plan

The Draft Dalston Plan has ambitious plans for Dalston with Hackney's population set to increase by 16% [1], which, as the Mayor stated, was created so that "Residents' priorities will be put at the heart of the Council's work in Dalston". The Dalston Plan forms parts of commitments made and adopted in 2020 as part of the Hackney Local Plan (LP33). These proposals would benefit Colvestone by delivering new children to the immediate locality in need of primary school provision in the short to mid-term, and long term place demand downstream from these projects. These committed projects would be harmed by the closure of Colvestone Primary School.

In summary, these plans include:

- [Building more than 600 new homes in Dalston](#) [2]. For all of the major new developments, Colvestone would be the closest primary school provision. There is no similar development plan near Princess May.
- Turning Colvestone Crescent into the [first 21st Century Street](#) [3], the borough's first permanent play street.

Most of the development would be concentrated at the [Kingsland Shopping Centre](#) [4] (see reference image below) with around 30% of the proposed housing being 3 bedroom family sized units and the aim of 50% of the development to be affordable housing (as well as smaller residential developments at surrounding sites) [5]. This could bring 200+ new families into the immediate area. See the new, specific analysis included below. If Colvestone and De Beauvoir schools were closed, parents in that development would have to travel almost half a mile to get to a non-denominational school. And even the closest one, Princess May, sits next to the A10 (see map in [Air pollution](#)).



Reference image: Hackney Local Development Plan 2033 – opportunity site D5 – Kingsland Shopping Centre

[Government guidance](#) [6] on school closures advises that local authorities can close schools when “there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils and there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium to long term”. The Dalston Plan makes it clear that there is demand for Colvestone’s school places in the medium to long term, because of the large number of new housing which the SPD will encourage in the immediate vicinity, and for which Colvestone will be the nearest primary school. The specific impact for Colvestone for the homebuilding projects are detailed in the following GLA-modelled child yield analysis.

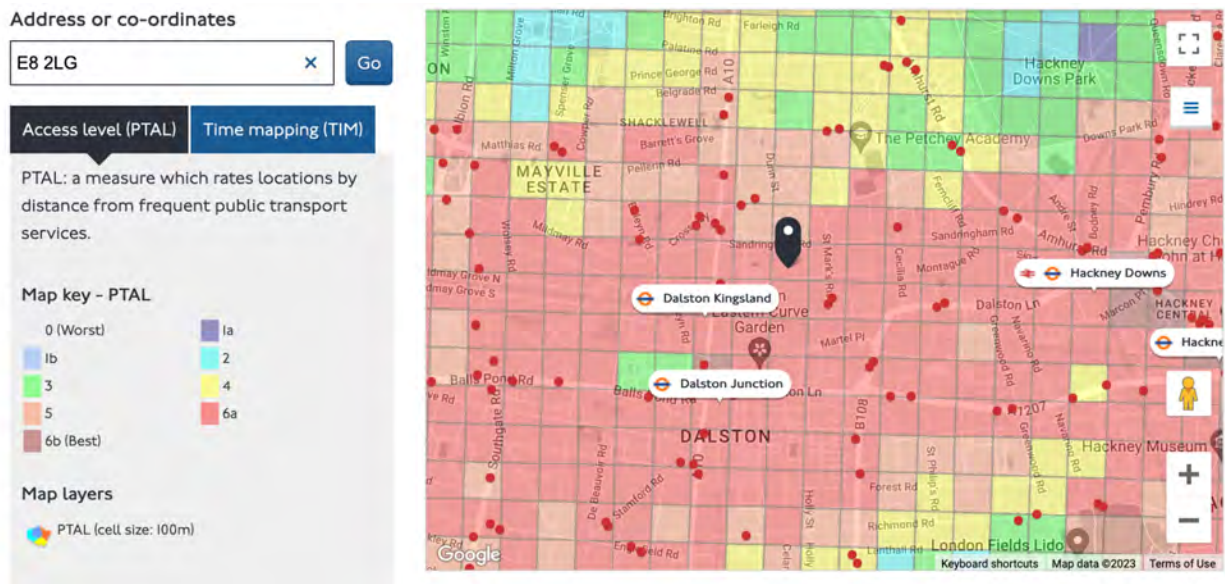
New expected child yield data from the Dalston Plan and homebuilding commitments made by Hackney Labour for new housing delivery (2019-2029)

Despite housing, and affordable family housing being identified as a key driver, very little attention or scrutiny is given to the question of housing in the Briefing Reports. Where the *Briefing Report - Informal Consultation* addresses housing development – §§4.37-4.43 - the references are generic and don’t respond to the specific position of Colvestone in relation to particular proposed growth – this is why the response in Appendix S §43 / p.776 is not convincing. Despite repeated requests for the underlying planning materials for the specific

allocations close to Colvestone (for all of the Dalston Plan developments Colvestone is the nearest primary school provision), with details of the mix of housing (ie how much is family housing), and the necessary underlying data / population calculations necessary to arrive at the conclusion in the Briefing Reports that homebuilding - and specifically the Dalston Plan and its proximity to Colvestone - would have negligible effect, none of these resources have been produced by Hackney Council for the consultation. This is particularly alarming as the recent Dalston Plan engagement events repeatedly identified Colvestone as key infrastructure for the project and further, that responses in Cabinet to questions regarding this that 'children wouldn't arrive soon enough' (Sept. 25th, 2023) suggests that either this data was being withheld, the elected official failed to understand the necessary timeframes that should be respected when considering future demand for places ('mid- to long term', Statutory Guidance), or to understand that the Dalston Plan developments are scheduled for delivery in the 'short to medium term' (Dalston Plan planning documents). In the absence of these materials from the Council, we have used Council figures and the GLA Population Yield Calculator to predict the child yield from the developments.

Dalston Plan Analysis

The following child yield figures for the Dalston Plan (delivery: short to mid term) were calculated using the projected housing mix for each of the developments identified in the Draft Dalston Plan and using the GLA's current Population Yield Calculator (v3.2). For this, the location of Colvestone Primary School was identified as Inner London (Geographic Aggregation) and with a PTAL of 5-6 (confirmed by TfL's WebCAT PTAL identification tool, as pictured below:



Source:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/urban-planning-and-construction/planning-with-webcat/webcat?lat=51.54912&lon=-0.07257&type=Ptal&locationId=ChIJSbNPHY0cdkgR3dziaXv3R8s&input=E8+2LG&>

[zoomLevel=15&places=Stations+stops+and+piers&places=Stations+stops+and+piers&comparePtaYear=&scenario=2021+%28Forecast%29&name=2011](https://www.google.com/maps/@51.525,0.125,15z/data=!3m1!1e3!3m2!1sStations+stops+and+piers&places=Stations+stops+and+piers&comparePtaYear=&scenario=2021+%28Forecast%29&name=2011)

For each of the Development Sites the number of proposed 1, 2 and 3 bed units were identified from the planning documents (Draft Dalston Plan). Using the LP33 (Hackney Local Plan) the target dwelling mixes were identified as 50% affordable housing. These mixes are accessible here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HRu0A_fdoWUi3OBfzUT03TT4S9gYwHDq/view

Of these, the affordable housing is split 60% social rent / 40% Intermediate 'affordable'. For the GLA calculations, 'intermediate' dwellings are classed as the same class as 'market rent'.

One development site, D5, has upper and lower values of dwelling yields, and so the following total numbers of dwellings (market / intermediate and social) have a higher and lower set of values. Child yield figures were produced for both.

Once each of the proportional values are applied (market / affordable, then subdivided social / intermediate) the following number of total units for the Dalston Plan by size, type, and GLA class are as follows:

Using the upper unit value of D5, the Development yield totals are:

1 bed: 62 social, 146 market and intermediate
2 bed: 67 social, 157 market and intermediate
3 bed: 67 social, 155 market and intermediate

Using the GLA Population Yield Calculator with the above criteria, this dwelling mix would deliver:

Children aged 0 - 4: 132.7
Children aged 5-11: 103.4

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Market and Intermediate Units	146	157	155	0
Social Units	62	67	67	0

Total Units	654
-------------	-----

Geographic Aggregation	Inner London
------------------------	--------------

PTAL	PTAL 5-6
------	----------

Notes

Sample size of 23 sites

Shaded cells require user input

Select both geography and PTAL

For developments in Outer London with PTAL 5-6 use [London/PTAL 5-6] or [Outer London/3-4] to calculate yield

Yield from Development (persons)

	Market & Intermediate	Social	Total
Ages 0, 1, 2, 3 & 4	41.0	91.7	132.7
Ages 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11	29.5	73.8	103.4
Ages 12, 13, 14 & 15	11.0	38.6	49.6
Ages 16 & 17	5.8	20.4	26.2
18-64	873.7	313.7	1187.5
65+	20.9	7.3	28.1
Total Yield	981.8	545.6	1527.4

For the lower unit value of D5, the Development yield totals are:

1 bed: 46 social, 107 market and intermediate

2 bed: 50 social, 116 market and intermediate

3 bed: 49 social, 113 market and intermediate

Using the GLA Population Yield Calculator with the above criteria, this dwelling mix would deliver:

Children aged 0 - 4: 97.6

Children aged 5-11: 76

GLA Population Yield Calculator

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Market and Intermediate Units	107	116	113	0
Social Units	46	50	49	0

Total Units	481	
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Geographic Aggregation	Inner London
------------------------	--------------

PTAL	PTAL 5-6
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Notes

Sample size of 23 sites

Shaded cells require user input

Select both geography and PTAL

For developments in Outer London with PTAL 5-6 use [London/PTAL 5-6] or [Outer London/3-4] to calculate yield

Yield from Development

(persons)

	Market & Intermediate	Social	Total
Ages 0, 1, 2, 3 & 4	30.0	67.6	97.6
Ages 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11	21.6	54.4	76.0
Ages 12, 13, 14 & 15	8.0	28.4	36.4
Ages 16 & 17	4.2	15.0	19.2
18-64	640.5	231.8	872.3
65+	15.3	5.4	20.7
Total Yield	719.7	402.6	1122.2

As can be seen from the above figures, the Dalston Plan developments (planned for delivery in the short to medium term) will deliver 76 and 100 children to the immediate vicinity of Colvestone primary school - between 2.5 and 3.5 entire year groups of school aged children within very short (most sites, less than 100m), fully pedestrianised access to primary school provision. This is anything but negligible, and the proportion of 0-4 year olds suggests an even healthier future demand for places downstream. This data draws a compelling picture of future demand for places in the short to medium term.

Note, all of the Dalston Plan sites are scheduled for completion in the short to medium term, timeframes identified by the Planning documents in the Draft Dalston Plan. With the exception of site D2, this short or medium timeframe designation projects completion by 2029. D2 is still classed as a 'Medium Term', for completion by 2033, but is a much smaller proportion of the total dwelling mix.

Closing Colvestone could impede the success of the development by making it hard for developers to sell those apartments to families, given the limited schooling options. The closure of so many local authority schools, and particularly one close to a new development, threatens

to lock Hackney into a death spiral when it comes to families living in the area--a reduction in families leads to the closure of schools and reduction of choice, which makes the area unappealing to families, which leads to more closed. If Hackney wants to get out of that pattern, it has to fight to keep as many schools afloat as possible during these difficult times, especially ones near new family-friendly developments, in order to make it possible to bring families back to the area.

Additional Hackney Council Homebuilding Commitments in Dalston

Hackney Council have committed to delivering 1330 new homes per year to Hackney over ten years, 10% of which are designated in Hackney (i.e. 1330 over 10 years). Assuming all houses are sold at market rates (the Hackney Planning document above states that the borough struggles to enforce affordable provision in dwellings of 0-9 units, but this should be assumed to be a low estimate), and using the guideline planning size guidelines (equal 1/3rd proportions of 1, 2 and 3 bed dwellings) the new homebuilding will add:

Dalston plan upper limit subtracted from 1330 = 676 new homes.

Of which 226 x 1 bed, 225 x 2 bed, 225 x 3 bed.

Child yield:

Children aged 0 - 4: 56.6

Children aged 5-11: 41.2

Dalston plan lower limit subtracted from 1330 = 849 new homes.

Of which 283 x 1 bed, 283 x 2 bed, 283 x 3 bed.

Children aged 0 - 4: 70

Children aged 5-11: 51

Note these are additional children to the numbers generated by the Dalston Plan developments: new to Dalston, in the immediate vicinity of Colvestone, in need of education provision.

Impact on Hackney's first 21st Century Street

Colvestone Crescent is slated to become the first 21st Century Street, a long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, spaces for congregating and a small playing field. A key tenet of the 21st Century Street is that it is located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without the school, that plan makes less sense.

[The plan](#) [7][8] says “The first phase – positioned directly next to Colvestone Crescent Primary School presents an opportunity to create a permanent school street. It will expand the existing school playground into the street, creating a safe space for children to play on the street itself”

(see more about 21st Century Street in [Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street](#)).

Summary

The proposed closure of Colvestone could be potentially damaging to Hackney's plans for Dalston's future, making the new developments a harder sell to parents and ripping out the heart of the first 21st Century Street.

Footnotes – Impact on local development section

[1] 16% Hackney's population to increase by 2033, LP33 Supplementary Planning Document – Draft Dalston Plan – Summary Doc – Buildings 2021.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WNNYPAJPzAIDtg3nOnJDWtwbQOtyl8LI/view>

[2] Hackney Local Plan 2033 – Development Plan – Dalston Opportunity Sites.

<https://dalstonplan.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/opportunity-sites-in-dalston/step1>

[3] Hackney's 21st Century Street consultation – Colvestone Crescent, Dec 2020.

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/streetscene/21cstreets2/>

[4] Hackney Local Plan 2033 – Opportunity Site D5 – Kingsland Shopping Centre.

<https://dalstonplan.commonplace.is/proposals/opportunity-sites-in-dalston/step6>

[5] DfE paper on Opening and closing maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, Jan 2023,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1131568/Opening_and_closing_maintained_schools_Jan_2023.pdf

[6] LP33 Supplementary Planning Document – Draft Dalston Plan, Hackney, 2021.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ARhuxFDHuwAC8_sYifs7LhSkdgbJFqYk/view

[7] LP33 Supplementary Planning Document – Hackney Draft Dalston Plan – Implementation Strategy May v13, 2021. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GDFSBDiMkl5cz5g-XMebwQxjYvvzhqIF/view>

[8] Colvestone Crescent Engagement Pack prepared by 00SW for London Borough of Hackney, Nov 202.

https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/streetscene/21cstreets2/user_uploads/266_221129_cc_consulationpres.pdf

F. Air pollution

This section details London-wide and London Borough of Hackney policy commitments regarding pollution generally and specifically in relationship to schools, the problems inherent to proposals to merge Colvestone Primary School with Princess May School on the Princess May site, and landmark planning commitments to make Colvestone Crescent the first London Borough of Hackney 21st Century Street.

Background

The Mayor of London and the London Borough of Hackney have both made commitments to reducing pollution generally and the Mayor of London has made reducing pollution specifically around schools a key policy focus. As identified by the Mayor of London: 'There are two main air pollutants of concern in London, based on their impact on human health: nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). Poor air quality stunts the growth of children's lungs and worsens chronic illness, such as asthma, lung and heart disease. There is also emerging evidence of impacts on mental health and an increased vulnerability to the most severe impacts of COVID-19. For particulate matter the challenge is even greater still. All schools in London still exceed the World Health Organization guideline for PM_{2.5}.' [1]

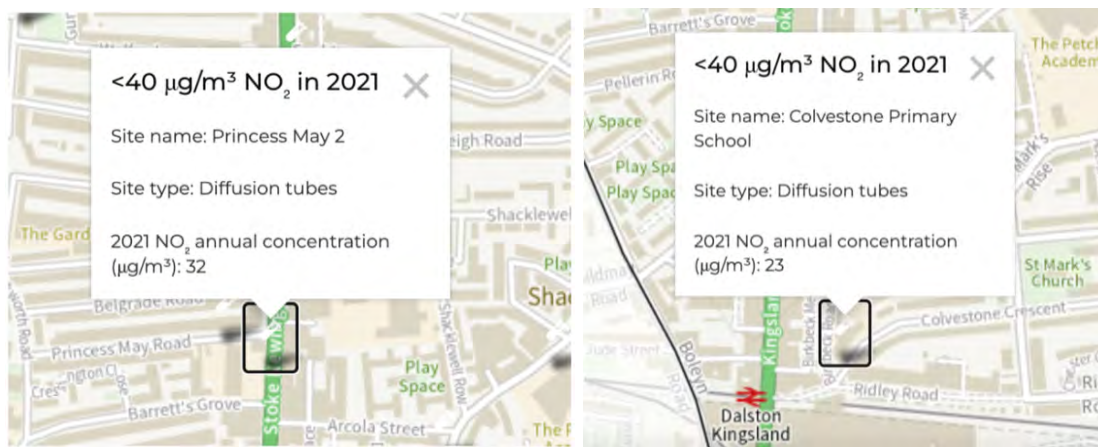
Each year, 'the capital's poor air quality contributes to around 1,000 emergency hospital admissions for children with asthma and other respiratory conditions.' [2] Furthermore, 'children growing up in polluted areas in London showed significantly smaller lung volume, with a loss of approximately five per cent in lung capacity – equivalent to two large eggs – compared to their peers in the rest of England...[and] research shows that *those exposed to the worst air pollution are more likely to be deprived Londoners and from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities*.' [3] Furthermore, pollution has been shown to 'also affect [children's] working memory and hence their ability to learn' [4]

In 2018 the Mayor of London launched the School Air Quality Audit, a scheme in which the London Borough of Hackney took part and committed to further measures across the Borough [5] – a pledge to expand these schemes borough-wide is an explicit commitment to funding received under the Mayor of London's Clean Air for Schools Audit. As part of these initiatives, a greater number of pollution monitoring sites have been installed enabling us to see clear disparities between sites across the borough.

Hackney's own Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2025 identifies school communities as amongst the most susceptible groups to the serious health impacts of air pollution within its strategy to improve air quality throughout the borough. [6]

Proposed merger of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May School on the Princess May site

The Council is proposing to send students from Colvestone Primary School to Princess May Primary, whose playground is right next to the A10. To get to and from Princess May many Colvestone students would be forced to walk along the A10.[7] As [Hackney's Local Plan 2033](#) states, "Kingsland High Street (A10) is the main route through this area and is heavily traffic dominated. As a result of this, it suffers from high noise and air pollution levels." [8] The Council's [air quality monitoring system](#) shows that the Princess May site had 40 percent higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO₂) in 2021 than the Colvestone Primary School site.

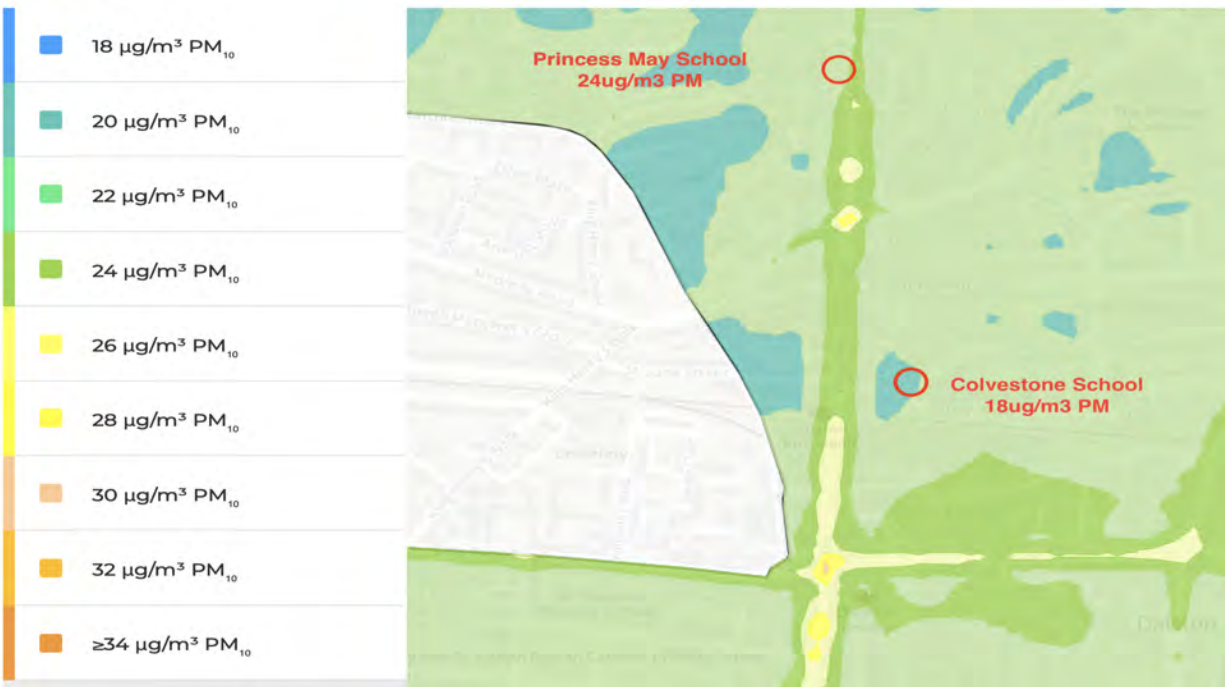
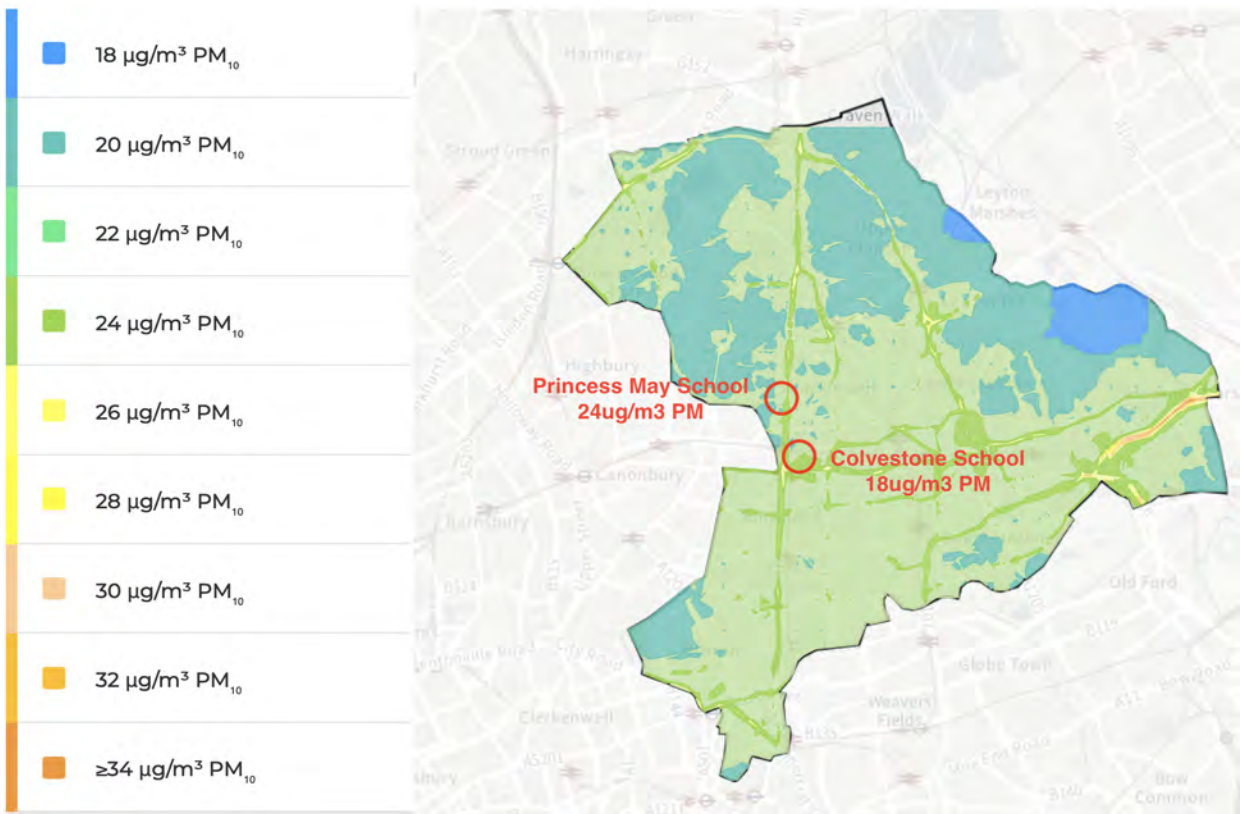


Key: Hackney Council air quality monitoring figures from 2021 showing that the Princess May site has 40% higher concentrations of NO₂ compared to the Colvestone Primary School site. It is reasonable to assume that the completion of the Colvestone Crescent 21st Century School Street with 40% tree canopy and other pollution-mitigating measures will reduce it further around Colvestone Primary School, whilst Princess May will remain on the A10, further increasing this disparity.

Ref: <https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality>

[Note the WHO annual mean air quality guideline is 10 µg/m³ for NO₂.]

In addition to Breathe London air quality monitoring project figures that show 'almost 40 per cent of the NO_x pollution at schools comes from road transport, with diesel cars being the single biggest local contributor to NO_x pollution at London primary schools...' [9] the borough is also recording dangerously high levels of particulate matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀). Whilst more dangerous PM_{2.5} levels are not currently available on the London Borough of Hackney website [10], it is reasonable to assume that these figures track (if not exceed, owing to the types of vehicles on main roads) PM₁₀ concentration comparisons between the Princess May site and that of Colvestone Primary School. These comparisons, using London Borough of Hackney data, show particulate pollution at least 20% higher at the Princess May site compared to those at Colvestone.



Reference images: Hackney Council air pollution mapping (2018, prior to LTNs and removal of parking / School Street at southern end of Colvestone Crescent) shows PM₁₀ levels at least 20% higher at the Princess May Site.

Ref: <https://map2.hackney.gov.uk/maps/air-quality-pm10/index.html>

[Note that the WHO annual mean air quality guideline for PM10 is 15 µg/m³]

At the Princess May site approximately half of all available outdoor space sits next to the A10 with a bus route and a traffic-light-controlled pedestrian crossing immediately adjacent that serves to further concentrate congestion and idling traffic. As noted above, these stark differences in levels of pollution are likely to increase both with recently completed and future plans at both sites: the greening of Colvestone Crescent as it becomes the borough's model 21st Century Street (see below) contrasting with LTNs that entrench Princess May's position on the main road traffic route through the local area.[11]

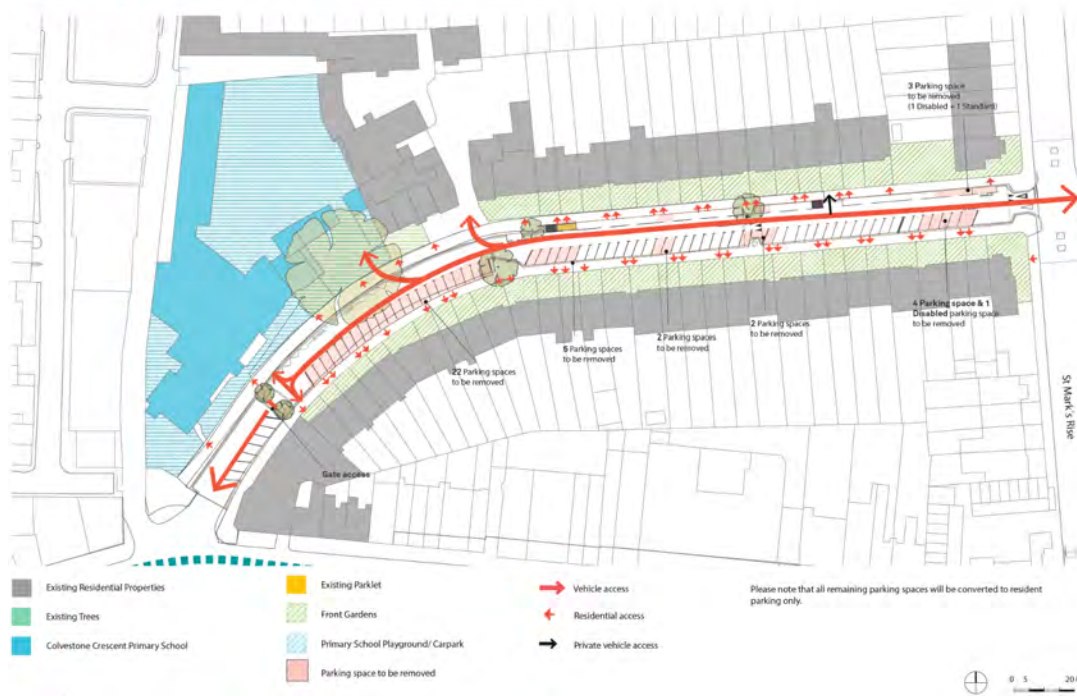
Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street

Adjoining the £1m Ridley Road Market scheme that incorporates local landscaping (portions of which are already completed at junction of Colvestone Crescent and Ridley Road) the Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street forms part of the Colvestone Crescent masterplan.

The Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and School Streets the Council have established to improve air quality in the borough could drive even more traffic to the A10. By contrast, Hackney Council already has an intelligently-designed and fully-funded plan to reduce air pollution around Colvestone Primary School. Colvestone Crescent, the road on which the school is located, is already a [School Street](#)[12], closed to traffic during the school run. The next fully-funded[13] stage is to develop it into the borough's first 21st Century School Street, the initial phase of which, 'positioned directly next to Colvestone Crescent primary school – presents an opportunity to create a permanent school street. It will expand the existing school playground into the street, creating a safe space for children to play on the street itself.'[14]

The consultation documents notes that the project, with the school at its heart, builds on 'a highly successful parklet project on Colvestone Crescent, instigated in 2019 by an active and passionate group of residents' and has 'been developed in collaboration with residents to ensure that the proposed green space will serve as an extension of an active and passionate local community.'[15] The Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street is a community project formed around a community school, and a bold and forward-looking plan that promises both to draw and retain families in the heart of Dalston.

Existing Site & Proposed Parking Removal



The Colvestone Crescent 21st Century School Street reinvents Colvestone Crescent into a long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, spaces for congregating, 'wobble walks' and informal play structures.

Proposed_Overall Masterplan



① School Street/ Parklet

② New trees/ kerb build out

③ Entrance Zone with greening, cluster seating & cycle stands



Paving enhancements & greening replace car parking at intervals along the street.

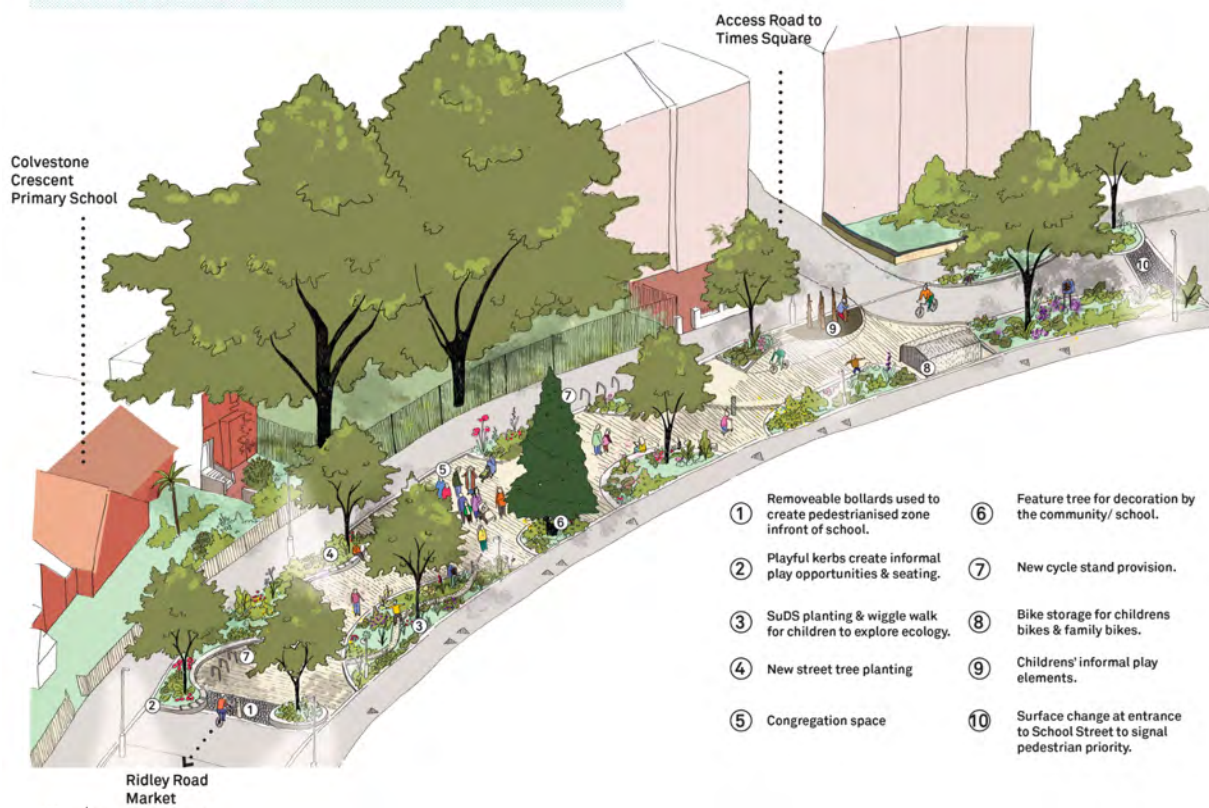


Clustered seating along the whole length of the western stretch of the street





Illustrative Axonometric



Whilst remaining accessible, the scheme incorporates an ambitious tree-planting strategy, significantly increasing the tree canopy of the street, active travel infrastructure and an innovative play strategy.[16] It could be assumed that further funding for the expansion of this

plan, if desired, would reasonably be derived from Community Infrastructure Levies on the Hackney Local Plan (LP33) / the Dalston Plan – CILs having the intention of ‘ensuring that a new development contributes to the cost of the infrastructure that the development will rely on, such as schools and roads.’[17]

The Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street will be the London Borough of Hackney’s first demonstration of how ‘streets can adapt to help tackle the climate crisis’.[18] Oliver Lord, Head of policy and campaigns at Environmental Defense Fund Europe has said: ‘The health burden of air pollution is not equal. Whether kids attend school on a main road or in a leafy suburb should not determine the quality of air they breathe, which will affect them for the rest of their lives. Our schools should become a catalyst for safer, quieter and less polluted roads.’[19] Colvestone Primary School is a shining example of exactly this catalyst: an historic school, imbedded in its local community, directly inspiring the model 21st Century Street project – a progressive prototype of which the London Borough of Hackney should be extremely proud.

It is impossible to see how a proposal to move children, one of the most vulnerable groups in the borough to the ruinous effects of pollution[20], to a site with higher levels of pollution is either defensible on duty of care terms or commensurate with Hackney Council’s public pledge to ‘no increases in pollution at schools in Hackney’[21]. Indeed the site at Colvestone – embedded as it is in the landmark 21st Century Street project, adheres to bolder commitments to *lower* pollution specifically around schools, in accordance with the Mayor of London’s strategy to improve the air quality around all London schools.

Summary

As identified by the Mayor of London and Hackney Council there is a clean air crisis in London. Children are amongst the most vulnerable groups to the damaging long-term effects of pollution: it determines future quality of life (in terms of health, attainment and other vectors of inequality). The pollution at Princes May Primary School, the proposed site for a merger with Colvestone Primary School, is drastically higher than at the Colvestone Primary School site (as demonstrated by London Borough of Hackney figures). The Council has an innovative, fully funded plan to continue to further reduce air pollution near Colvestone. No such plan yet exists for Princess May. While it is incumbent on the Council to protect the children who attend school there currently, it makes no sense in the meantime to move children from a school with lower pollution and a plan for further reductions to a school with higher pollution and with limited scope for further reductions.

The landmark London Borough of Hackney Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street is a signature demonstration of how our streets and our communities can adapt to rise to the challenge of the climate crisis, and it has Colvestone Primary School at its heart. To remove the vulnerable group for whom, in the first instance, the project has been designed would be perverse: moving students from a school where there is a clear plan for improving air quality to a school whose playground and buildings are close to a high traffic, high pollution street simply doesn't make sense – either for a proposed merger or for prospective parents. On the contrary, the position of Colvestone Primary School at the heart of the model 21st Century Street greatly enhances its offer to families, the retention of whom in the heart of Dalston is a priority concern for Hackney Council with ramifications across education, planning and community cohesion. Further, given concerns for falling roll numbers (challenged in 'Financial Viability' and 'Impact on the Dalston Development Plan' earlier in this document), the Colvestone Primary School site is a more viable and attractive destination site for pupils affected by any proposed mergers or closures of primary schools in the borough.[22]

Footnotes – Air pollution section

[1] Press Release / Policy Announcement, Mayor of London, 1 November 2020. See:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-plans-to-reduce-toxic-air-at-schools>

[2] Harriet Edwards, Senior Policy and Projects Manager, Air Quality, at Asthma UK and the British Lung Foundation, quoted in Press release, Mayor of London, 6th Aug 2021:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/31m-kids-going-to-schools-in-areas-with-toxic-air>

[3] Emphasis added. Press release, Mayor of London, 6th Aug 2021:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/31m-kids-going-to-schools-in-areas-with-toxic-air>

[4] Larissa Lockwood, Director of Clean Air at Global Action Plan, quoted in Press Release / Policy Announcement, Mayor of London, 1 November 2020. See:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-plans-to-reduce-toxic-air-at-schools>

[5] Mayor of London School Air Quality Audit (2018), re: Local Implementation Plan (funding that could be applied for, for work 2019/2020), p.46/7, quoting from the bid guidelines: '2.34 In the short- to medium-term, there must be a particular focus on action to reduce air, pollution, reducing exposure to it and tackling pollution hotspots, which boroughs should support through their LIP. Locations that have

large numbers of vulnerable Londoners, such as schools, should be prioritised for action. In particular, the boroughs have an important role in ensuring recommendations from the Mayor's school air quality audit programme are implemented, and LIP funding can be directed at both the audits and the delivery of measures.' Accessed here:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/saq_report_-_de_beauparc_hackney_final_draft_-_inc_appendices.pdf

[6] London Borough Hackney Clean Air Plan 2021-25, section 3.8 (p.35). Accessed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g2gQvKM71Fto95rw0rdYo8sPtJAM1kjo/view>

[7] See the Mayor of London's School Air Quality Audit documents on the importance of considering travel to and from school in the overall consideration of a site's pollution impact / potential for mitigation.

Accessed here:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/saq_report_-_de_beauparc_hackney_final_draft_-_inc_appendices.pdf

[8] Hackney Local Plan 2033, adopted July 2020, p.22. Accessed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HRu0A_fdoWUi3OBfzUT03TT4S9gYwHDq/view

[9] Press Release / Policy Announcement, Mayor of London, 1 November 2020. See:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-plans-to-reduce-toxic-air-at-schools>

[10] The link from <https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality> is a dead link and no other published monitoring data for PM2.5 from the London Borough of Hackney can currently be found.

[11] Even if, as is hoped, LTNs bring down overall traffic volumes in the borough, the relative positions of the two sites in regards to road infrastructure / traffic, the surrounding buildings, vegetation and use are so manifestly different that this stark difference in levels of pollution between the two sites is long set to remain.

[12] <https://hackney.gov.uk/school-streets>

[13] Confirmed by Cllr Woodley, Colvestone Primary School public consultation meeting, 24th April 2023

[14] Colvestone Crescent / 21st Century Street, London Borough of Hackney, November 2021. Accessed here: file:///Users/mc/Downloads/266_221129_CC_ConsultationPres.pdf

[15] Colvestone Crescent / 21st Century Street, London Borough of Hackney, November 2021. Accessed here: file:///Users/mc/Downloads/266_221129_CC_ConsultationPres.pdf

[16] Colvestone Crescent / 21st Century Street, London Borough of Hackney, November 2021. Accessed here: file:///Users/mc/Downloads/266_221129_CC_ConsultationPres.pdf

[17] Community Infrastructure Levies (Planning Act 2008) are due on local developments and here specifically the developments committed to in the Hackney Local Plan (LP33 / 'Dalston Plan', adopted July 2020). See Mayor of London School Air Quality Audit (2018), section 5.8.10. See also 'Financial Viability' and 'Historical Significance and Protections' (this document).

[18] Colvestone Crescent / 21st Century Street, London Borough of Hackney, November 2021. Accessed here: file:///Users/mc/Downloads/266_221129_CC_ConsultationPres.pdf

[19] Quoted in Press Release / Policy Announcement, Mayor of London, 1 November 2020. See:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-unveils-plans-to-reduce-toxic-air-at-schools>

[20] In addition to impeding brain function, 'primary school children are amongst the most vulnerable of the at-risk groups, as their lungs are still developing, and toxic air can stunt their growth, causing significant health problems in later life.' Mayor of London School Air Quality Audit (2018), accessed here:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/saq_report_-_de_beauparc_hackney_final_draft_-_inc_appendices.pdf

[21] Mayor Philip Glanville, quoted 2018, accessed here: <https://www.cleanair4schools.co.uk/about>

[22] It might also be assumed that the Princess May site also offers the Borough greater asset value for repurposing without the listing and local protections that apply to the Grade II listed / Asset of Community Value / potentially covenanted Colvestone Primary School site in Colvestone Crescent (see [Historical significance and protections](#)).

G. Historical significance and protections

This section details the history of the building, its continuous operation as a school for the past 161 years, the existing protections on the building and site, and research relating to a possible covenant(s) on the building stipulating its educational function.

Built in 1862, Colvestone Primary School is a Grade II listed building[1] designed by TE Knightley in a Gothic Revival Style, which is situated in the St Mark's Conservation Area and to which it forms a protected architectural gateway[2]. It was one of six Birkbeck Schools founded by businessman and educational philosopher and philanthropist William Ellis. The schools were named after George Birkbeck, founder of Birkbeck, University of London, and pioneer in adult education.

The Colvestone building (formerly known as the 'Kingsland Birkbeck School') was purpose-built to reflect Ellis' radical ideas about education. Richard Clarke (Birkbeck / University of Westminster) writes: 'The Birkbeck Schools were secular, often for girls as well as boys, emphasised teaching through dialogue, rejecting rote learning (as well as corporal punishment)' with an emphasis on "social economy" and "useful knowledge"[3]. Ellis' schools and social focus to learning were explicitly aimed at widening access to education.[4]

'Its premises, which today remain nearly intact as Colvestone Primary School, reflect in their architecture some of the most progressive elements of Ellis' philosophy', Clarke continues. 'Two aspects of the Kingsland School's design stand out...: the presence of individual classrooms and good lighting and ventilation' – here in contrast to the heavier, more overbearing and larger-scale architecture of the London Board schools which were built from 1870 onwards (for example, Princess May School, built 1899 and which is not a listed building). The small scale of the school building is particularly appealing to children – both in establishing a proximity with their peers in a school community in which familiarity is the rule, but also in the way that this nurturing environment is reflected through the architectural detailing – for instance, the low-level eaves and the decorative elements of the building. These features, combined with the overall layout of the school – including the main hall which is central to the plan form – is both comforting for SEN children and helps them to navigate the building.

The Council has recently invested in sensitive refurbishment works to the listed school building, undertaking long-awaited and significant repairs to the external envelope including to the brickwork and stonework, as well as to the tiled roof and leadwork. The separately Grade II listed front railings have been also been carefully restored. The works have noticeably enhanced the school's appearance as a landmark building in Colvestone Crescent, marking the western gateway to the conservation area. The children's internal learning environment has also been brightened up by the decoration of classrooms, communal teaching spaces and corridors.[5] Whilst the building was shrouded in scaffolding and subject to both internal and external renovation over the last year (sadly also through the Reception open days) the wonderful benefits of these sensitive works are now being enjoyed as they reach completion and manifestly improve Colvestone's offer to prospective parents and pupils.

In addition to the light, airy nature of the purpose-built teaching, study and recreation spaces, the school benefits from two separate playgrounds: one for the Nursery and Early Years provision and one for the main school. The larger of its two playgrounds is calm, well-landscaped and proportioned, and insulated further from the road network by the enclosing school buildings and surrounding houses, together with the drop in land levels away from Colvestone Crescent. **The smaller of the two playgrounds, appearing on Council-produced pollution 'heat maps'[6] as having one of the lowest levels of pollution in the local area, is an outdoor classroom for Nursery and Early Years pupils and as such is designated an Asset of Community Value (2021).**

Most significantly, the Heritage Statement prepared in 2020 for the school refurbishment works writes in glowing terms of the contemporary condition of Colvestone Primary School, noting that 'in heritage terms, the original use is synonymous with the optimum viable use.'^[7]

A note on ownership

The Kingsland Birkbeck / Colvestone Primary School building was independently financed by William Ellis to house the school he founded in 1852, the building being completed in 1862. Initially built on leasehold land, the freehold was acquired 20 years later.^[8] It remained unaffiliated with the School Board (founded 1870) but, in 1904, motivated by a shortage of secondary school provision in the area its foundational trust (The Birkbeck and William Ellis Schools Trust) entered into negotiations with the LCC initially for a grant to support the change to secondary use (and specifically the installation of a science laboratory).^[9] By early 1905 however LCC demand in Hackney was specifically for girls secondary provision, and the trustees of the Birkbeck and William Ellis Schools Trust were under financial pressure relating to a second school (the William Ellis School, then in Gospel Oak).

In January 1905 a proposal was made to sell the Kingsland Birkbeck School (and site) to the LCC directly.^[10] It was initially thought that the Trust could 'sell the freewill outright to the Council... free of all restrictions under the Endowed Schools or Charitable Trusts Acts'^[11] though subsequent legal advice received in July 1905 advised that the Trust was determined an 'educational (as opposed charitable) trust' and therefore could not sell off educational assets, without condition and agreement by the Charity Commission, unless the Trust was wound up.^[12] The Trust however continued to operate (not least with regards to the William Ellis School) and agreement of terms was not reached until November 1905^[13] and the purchase completed in 1906.^[14] Such was the pressure on provision the LCC committed to the conversion works on the site and the first new pupils began at the school in October 1905 prior to the LCC taking ownership.

Given the time taken to find an equitable solution for the Trust, LCC and Charities Commission it is suspected that a covenant exists on the building pertaining to its ongoing function as a school as a condition of its purchase. This is the subject of ongoing research, not limited to a request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the London Borough of Hackney (ref: 16591453), further research in the archived papers of the LCC (London Metropolitan Archive) including legal advice received around the purchase of the school buildings in 1906, the archives of the Charities Commission (held in the National Archives at Kew) and the Land Registry.

The Birkbeck and William Ellis Schools Trust is still extant as a charitable foundation (and still appoints governors to the William Ellis School, in Highgate Road, Kentish Town).

It is now established that Hackney Council took possession of the original deeds in 1990. Hackney Council, through the pursuit of an FOI request, have been supplied with the copy of this receipt and the relevant cataloguing details contained in that documentation. Hackney Council continue to refuse to locate the deeds (see Chapter 3, and following subsequent legal requests for them – see Chapter 4). Failure to establish the legal conditions on the building is a failure of due diligence identified in the Council's own Estate Strategy, and prohibits any participant in the consultation in engaging with the precise questions around the reuse of the building and therefore on the ramifications of closing the school (financial, legal, academic and otherwise).

Summary

Colvestone Primary School is the last remaining Birkbeck School building and has functioned as a school for 161 years. Its architectural design and scale explicitly reflects the socially-minded and community-focus ideals of its founders – ideals specifically focussed on increasing access to education. As a purpose-built grade II listed school building, its best use is its optimum viable use as a fully-operational school educating local children. Recent restoration works on the building and internal modifications manifestly improve the school's appeal and parental offer.

Closing it as a school would be a significant historical loss to Dalston, one named in its listing, but would also remove the social heart from the St Marks Conservation Area and the community of Dalston. The school carries multiple site protections: two separate Grade II listings; its position as integral and planning-protected 'gateway' to the St Marks Conservation Area; an outdoor classroom designated an Asset of Community Value; with a potential covenant on the site protecting its educational function the non-disclosure of which prohibits informed participation of stakeholders and elected officials in the Formal Consultation.

Footnotes – Historical significance and protections section

[1] 'Colvestone Primary School was added to the National Heritage List for England in February 1975 at Grade II and is of special heritage interest on account of its architectural and historical value.' Heritage Statement (prepared for London Borough of Hackney Planning), *Heritage Collective*, 2020, p.9. Listed building entry (Historic England): 1265832. Separate Grade 2 entry for railings: 1226422. Accessed: historicengland.org.uk

[2] For the identification of the Grade II listed Colvestone Primary School as a protected / locally important view see Draft Dalston Plan Supplementary Planning Document, May 2021, p.99, and recent planning applications on Colvestone Crescent. DDP SPD accessed here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JKYYxGAtynP0NsxumGUAq_tR70Lg90_a/view

[3] 'Self-Help and the London Mechanics' Institution – Birkbeck After (George) Birkbeck', Richard Clarke, Birkbeck College, University of London, 2009

[4] 'Social Economy in the Classroom: The London Birkbeck Schools', Richard Clarke, in *The London Journal*, 2023

[5] It is suggested that these and potential future (unforeseen) works that benefit the school (for example the expansion of the (funded) 21st Century Street) could be financed by the Community Infrastructure Levy (Planning Act 2008) due on local developments and specifically the developments committed to in the Hackney Local Plan (LP33 / 'Dalston Plan', adopted July 2020). The intention of CILs: 'a means of ensuring that a new development contributes to the cost of the infrastructure that the development will rely on, such as schools and roads.' See Mayor of London School Air Quality Audit (2018), section 5.8.10. See also 'Financial Viability' and 'Pollution' (this document).

[6] See 'Pollution', this document. Images: <https://map2.hackney.gov.uk/maps/air-quality-no2/index.html>

[7] Heritage Statement (prepared for Hackney Planning), *Heritage Collective*, 2020, p.39

[8] 'Social Economy in the Classroom: The London Birkbeck Schools', Richard Clarke, in *The London Journal*, 2023

[9] Educational Committee Report, 1st November 1904, LCC Minutes, London Metropolitan Archive, p.2363

[10] Higher Education and Scholarships Sub Committee: Agenda Papers, LCC Archive, London Metropolitan Archive, 27th Jan 1905

[11] Higher Education and Scholarships Sub Committee: Agenda Papers, LCC Archive, London Metropolitan Archive, 5th May 1905

[12] Higher Education and Scholarships Sub Committee: Agenda Papers, LCC Archive, London Metropolitan Archive, 21st July 1905

[13] Higher Education and Scholarships Sub Committee: Agenda Papers, LCC Archive, London Metropolitan Archive, 17th November 1905

[14] Educational Committee Report, 8th May 1906, LCC Minutes, London Metropolitan Archive, p.1169

9. Campaign summary

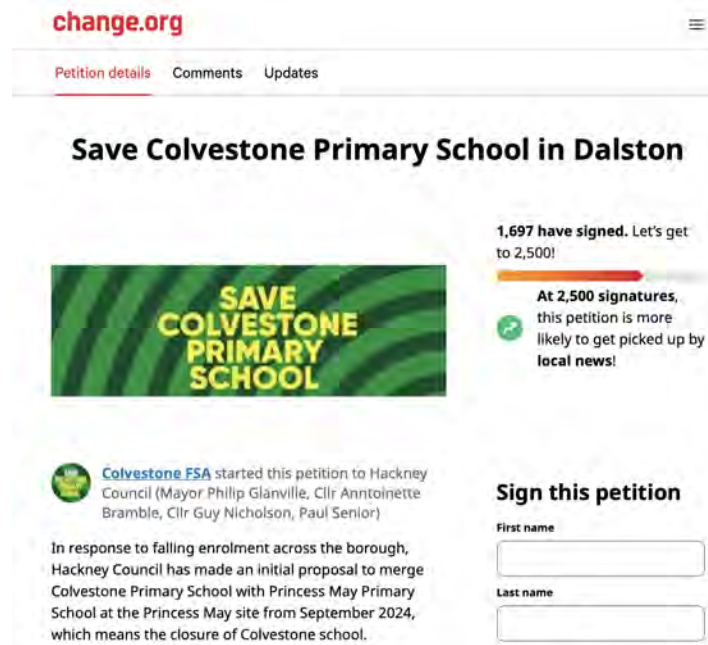
Colvestone Primary School's campaign to be taken off the list for merger has captured people's attention locally, regionally, nationally – and even internationally.

The strength of feeling across the Colvestone community has been remarkable.

In a short period of time, we have rallied support and endorsements from school families, ex-pupils, local residents and the wider Dalston community.

Petition

Since the launch of our petition at the start of April, we have amassed 1,701 signatures each putting their name to: *...remove Colvestone from the potential closure list, thereby ensuring security and stability for staff, pupils and parents.*



The screenshot shows a Change.org petition page. At the top, the Change.org logo is visible. Below it, there are navigation tabs for 'Petition details', 'Comments', and 'Updates'. The main heading of the petition is 'Save Colvestone Primary School in Dalston'. To the left of the main text is a green banner with the text 'SAVE COLVESTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL'. To the right, a progress bar shows that 1,697 signatures have been collected, with a goal of 2,500. A message states: 'At 2,500 signatures, this petition is more likely to get picked up by local news!'. Below the banner, the text reads: 'Colvestone FSA started this petition to Hackney Council (Mayor Phillip Glanville, Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Cllr Guy Nicholson, Paul Senior)'. A detailed description follows: 'In response to falling enrolment across the borough, Hackney Council has made an initial proposal to merge Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School at the Princess May site from September 2024, which means the closure of Colvestone school.' On the right side, there is a 'Sign this petition' section with input fields for 'First name' and 'Last name'.

The petition is still gaining signatures and supporters every day:

www.change.org/p/savecolvestone-fsa-colvestone

Some people who signed the petition also added their thoughts about the Council's proposal:

“This school is a vital part of Dalston’s community, as a parent of a child who attended Colvestone it was brilliantly placed with no other schools nearby. He went on to study chemistry at Oxford, as did another of his classmates. I cannot imagine this school no longer existing, it must not close.”

Former parent

“Colvestone Primary School is an essential part of the Ridley Road area community.”
Local resident

“Colvestone is a valuable part of the Dalston community, our children benefited from a fantastic educational experience that is as open and diverse as the local area. It is really important for future generations of children.”
Former parent

Local support

Our cause has caught the attention of Dalston’s local Councillor including Zoe Garbett – and the campaign made the neighbourhood update mailed to every household in the ward.



Hackney Council wants to close Colvestone Primary School, leaving parents and staff in shock. The council wants to move the school’s students to Princess May Primary School, due to falling pupil numbers across Hackney.

Colvestone is Dalston’s only non-denominational school. It is a tight-knit community with one-

form entry. The council has recently spent more than £200,000 to help the school improve.

Zoë Garbett, Dalston’s Green councillor, is backing local parents who want Colvestone to stay open. Parents are also worried about air pollution in the playground at Princess May.

Zoë said: “This announcement

has shaken parents, staff and the whole school community. Parents tell me that they want Colvestone to stay open and have time to keep improving.”

Want to help support Colvestone Primary? Visit: www.change.org/SaveColvestone or contact: zoe.garbett@hackney.gov.uk

Press coverage

Our story has been featured in the Hackney Gazette and Hackney Citizen multiple times:

www.hackneygazette.co.uk/news/23469925.author-michael-rosen-joins-bid-stop-hackney-school-merger/

<https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2023/04/20/parents-dalston-primary-school-merger-council-boosts-rethink/>

Hackney Gazette

Author Michael Rosen joins bid to stop Hackney school merger

20th April

HACKNEY COUNCIL

MICHAEL ROSEN

EDUCATION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PEOPLE

HACKNEY



By Julia Gregory

Children's author Michael Rosen has added his name to a campaign to save a Hackney primary school at risk of closure because of falling school rolls.

‘It’s not a commodity’: Parents from Dalston primary school at risk of a merger urge council bosses to rethink plans

By [Julia Gregory](#), Local Democracy Reporter | Thursday 20 April 2023 at 17:32



Protest outside Colvestone Primary School. Photograph: Julia Gregory

A group of Hackney parents have launched a campaign to save their children's primary school.

Colvestone is one of four primaries that could merge under plans that also include the potential closures of De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer schools in September 2024.



Parents Corine and Brandon Bishop at Colvestone Primary School, Hackney. Their child has special needs. Because of falling school rolls Colvestone primary could merge with Princess May School. Photo: Julia Gregory

We were also featured on ITV News:

<https://www.itv.com/news/london/2023-04-24/school-closing-as-young-families-are-driven-out-by-spiraling-london-costs>

itvX

School closing as young families are 'driven out' by spiraling London cost of living

LONDON | EDUCATION | POLITICS | ⌚ Monday 24 April 2023 at 6:27pm



And we are in conversation with German broadcaster ADR who would like to feature Colvestone's story in an extended report later in May "to look at the bigger picture and what these developments mean for a city like London and what possible solutions would be to keep a city attractive for families".

We have also featured in the Financial Times, The Guardian and BBC London:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-67275173>

BBC Sign in Home News Sport Weather iPlayer Sound

NEWS

Home | Israel-Gaza war | Cost of Living | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics | Culture

England | Local News | Regions | London

Hackney mayor candidate campaigns under way as by-election looms

9 hours ago



Colvestone Primary School parents Hendrik Elstein and Mike Cooter for whom school closures is an important issue

Social media

Our campaign on social media (Facebook and Twitter) has seen tweets, posts and the petition shared by our supporters to help us reach thousands of people, including previous Colvestone parent, the renowned poet and activist Michael Rosen.

Public meeting

On Monday 24th April, 135 people attended the public meeting at the school. The session ran for 1 hour and 45 minutes, as parents, teaching and support staff and the local community voiced their deep concern for the plans.

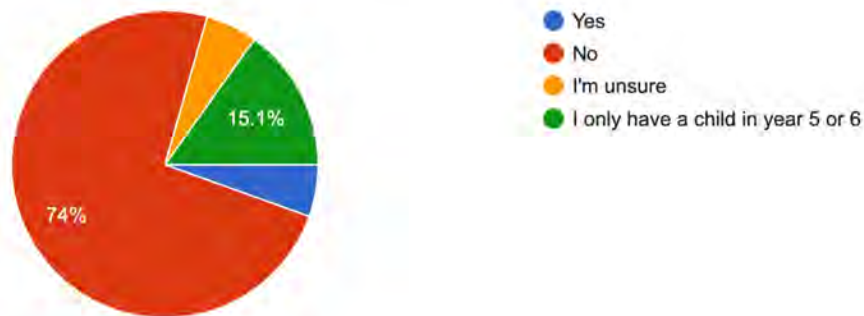
10. Appendix

Appendix 1: Full Results of survey conducted during 26 – 28th April, after the April 24th meeting.

Colvestone Parents Choice Factor Survey

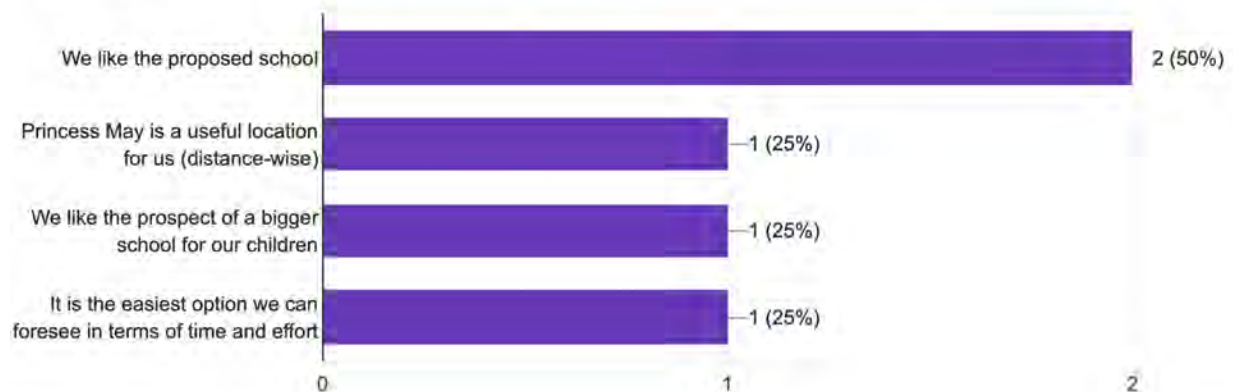
If the council were to go ahead with the proposed merger of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May in September 2024, will you agree to sen...tion only!) if you only have a child in year 5 or 6.

73 responses



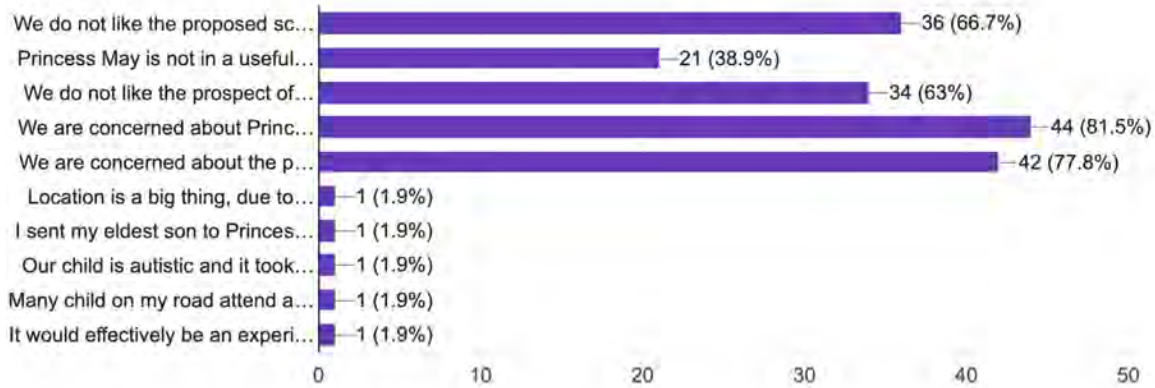
If you are happy to send your child to Princess May in September 2024, please help us understand the main reasons - please check all that apply

4 responses



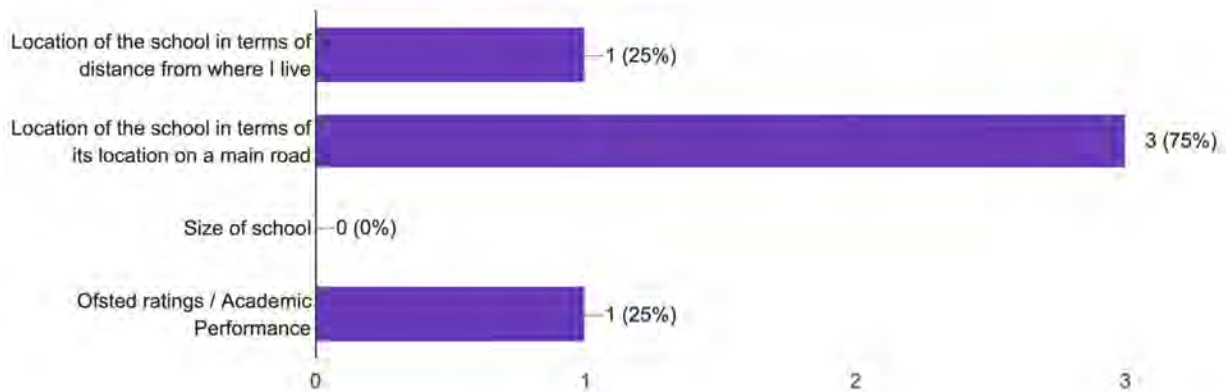
If you have no intention of sending your child to Princess May in September 2024, please help us understand the main reasons - please check all that apply

54 responses



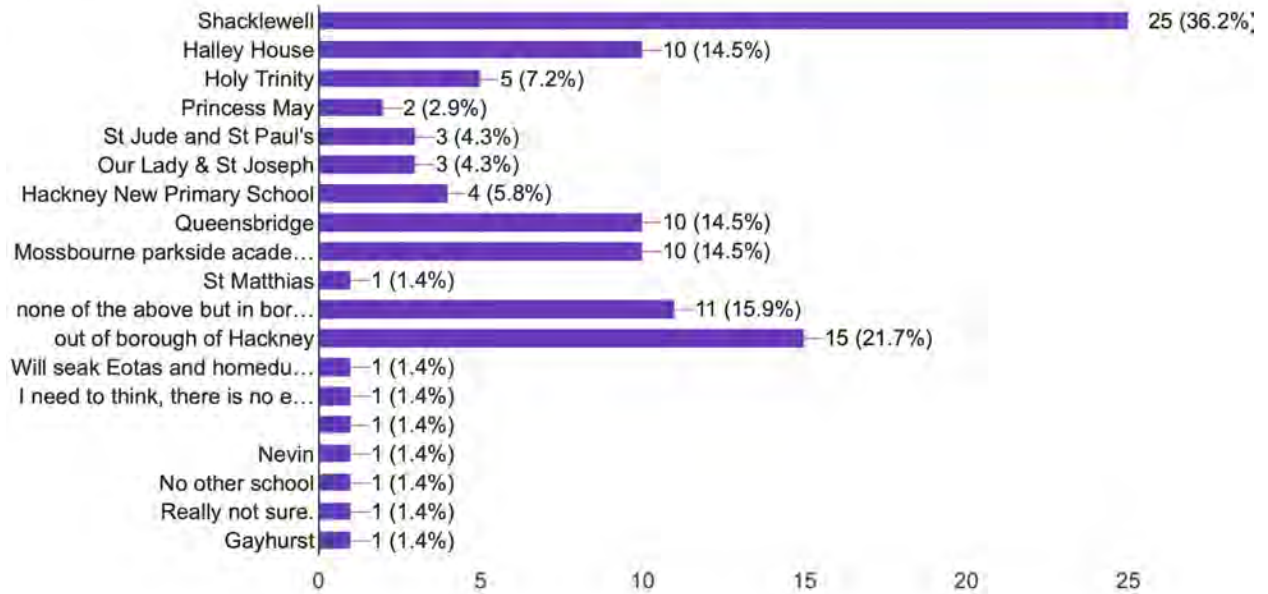
If you are unsure about whether you would send your child to Princess May, what factors will affect your decision? - please check all that apply

4 responses



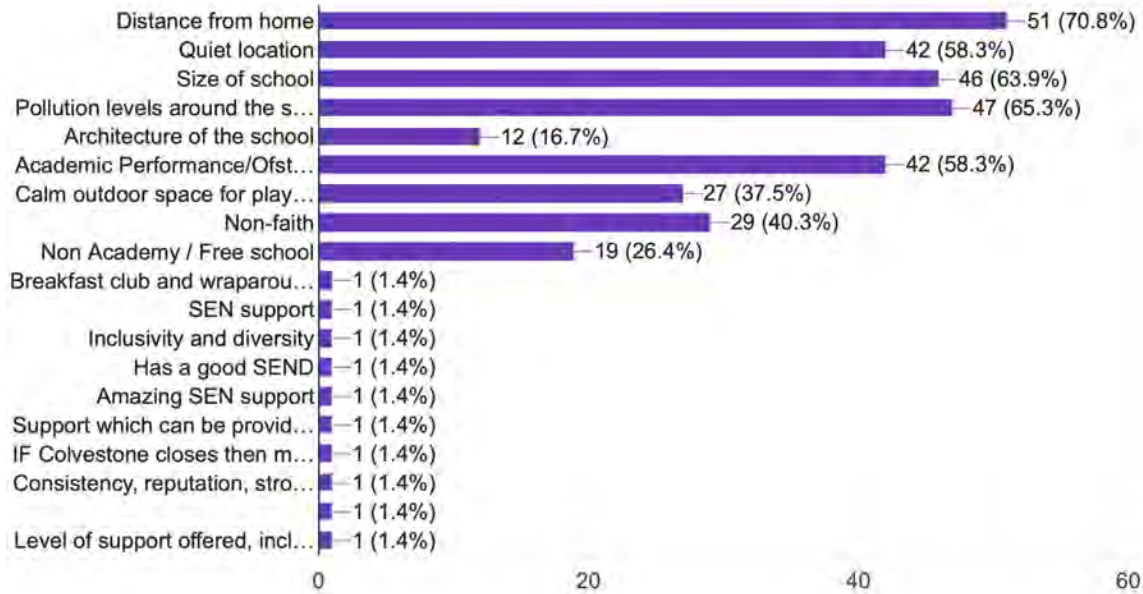
If Colvestone were to merge, what would be your preferred choices of school for your child - please answer this question whether or not you answered yes or no above (and please check all that apply)

69 responses



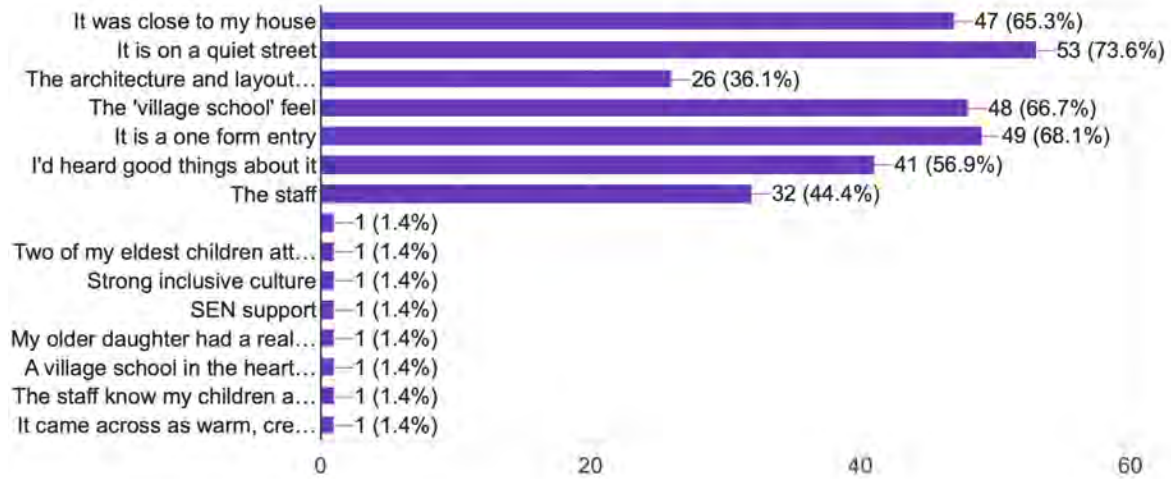
What are the main factors you take into account when choosing schools for your child(ren) - please check all that apply

72 responses



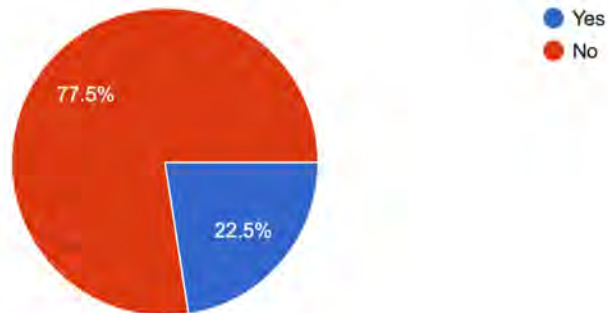
Why did you choose Colvestone - please check all that apply

72 responses



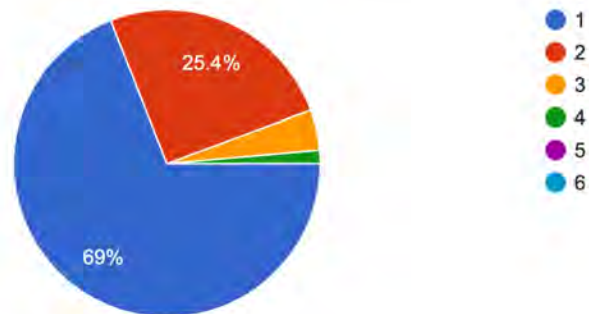
Does your child(ren) have Special Educational Needs

71 responses



How many children do you have /care for who attend this school?

71 responses



Final survey question: Anything else you think the Council should know:

“Our child is autistic and it took us a long time to settle her and be happy at Colvestone. It will be extremely difficult and impossible to move her to another school at this stage.”

“Many children on our road attend [Princess May] and both parents and children are not happy”

“I sent my eldest son to Princess May 8 years ago and had to change schools after a few months because we were really unhappy with the standards of the school. We visited the school again a couple of years ago, whilst going through the selection process for my youngest child, who currently attends Colvestone and we were disappointed to discover that Princess May is still not a viable option for us to send our children. We would not send our child to Princess May, our child is very happy at Colvestone and we’re it to close we would look at finding a similar school to Colvestone probably outside the borough”

Some powerful statements from families about Colvestone and the proposed merger:

“A village school in the heart of the city. A place the children could ‘own’ and know ALL their peers.”

“It came across as warm, creative, fostering community feel, inclusive of parents”

“The Staff take the ethos of the school very seriously”

“[Colvestone has a] Strong, inclusive culture”

“Closing Colvestone would push us as parents away from the centre of Dalston and potentially out of the Borough. It’s an academically strong and inclusive school with an excellent community whose non-faith, non-academy/free status, and single form intake gives it a village feel in the centre of bustling Dalston and is unique to the area.”

“A big school is not suited to every child's need and therefore the reason why Colvestone was chosen even though it was a bit of a distance.”

“The new leadership team have worked hard to create a viable school going forward – with a little support (and at least not being shot in the foot by our own education authority) I believe we are the model for Hackney’s future. A 21st century school on a 21st century street.”

“My daughter has additional needs and I would be looking for an out of borough move to find something similar to Colvestone”

“I don’t know a single parent that would consider sending their child to Princess May. I think it would be a shame for Hackney Council to have to close both schools as I’m almost certain that Princess May will close after Colvestone because it will not get the pupil numbers. I don’t see why Princess May couldn’t close if it was needed and pupils transfer to Colvestone. Colvestone is flourishing currently and I’m sure with the new management structure it will continue to do so.”

“No other school we looked at had the small, family feel that Colvestone had.”

“The emotional impact on children’s well-being will be the biggest issue if the merger happens, not the finance element.”

“I’d prefer to not go to a faith or free school; however I feel this is all I’ll be left unless I accept a school on the A10 that is twice the distance from my current school”

“We believe that Colvestone primary school is a unique offering in the area, we are adamant that we will not be sending our children to Princess May”

“Please save Colvestone for future generations. This school is unique.”

“[Please tell Hackney] That my daughter loves Colvestone Primary School and the teachers that teach there and closing a community primary school will send out a very negative and lasting message to young families looking to live in Hackney.”

“Colvestone and Princess May schools are the worst match for merger, they are completely different.”

“Princess May has been an unpopular school for a long time. For the Council to decide that a good plan/good offer would be to shut Colvestone and move all the children to Princess May shows a massive lack of understanding of the Dalston community and/or a flippant attitude to families at Colvestone.”

“If Colvestone Primary School closes the wider community will become impoverished.”

“This will not only affect school age children and their families but the wider community too. Don’t do it”

“I am very worried about the outcome of this proposal as there doesn't seem to be any real choice here – there is no nearby one form non religious option – other than keeping Colvestone open.”

“It is discrimination against non-religious people to only close non-faith schools in this proposal. I would like to speak with a legal team to understand if we have a discrimination case. The Councillors have a legal responsibility to provide quality education for our children so why is the Council not closing the academically worst performing schools and sending those pupils to better schools? If the worst academic schools have a chance to improve then Colvestone should be afforded equal rights to improve pupil numbers.”

“If The school was to close, this would have a knock on effect with my job and being able to get to work on time.”

Appendix 2: Emails sent by parent of children with special educational needs

Email from [parent A] sent 25.4.2023

Dear [councillor]

I hope you are well.

Thank you for attending the meeting at Colvestone on Monday, and thank you for giving me your email address so I could write.

My name is [parent A] and I delivered my rather emotional speech advocating for the SEN children and families of Colvestone.

I wished to write and further express to you what this school means for my [child] in particular.

[child] is a wonderful little [child].

[They are] pure joy and sunshine.

[They] owns any room he walks in.

[They are] creative and unique.

[Their] greatest superpower is that despite being autistic, [they] has and is able to show great empathy and a strong ability to express and discuss [their] emotions.

Despite all the struggles [they have] had to face due to [their] neurodiversity, [they remain] self-confident in all aspects of [their] life.

The biggest challenge [they are] facing is school and access to education, which is due to the fact [they] struggles with visual and auditory stimuli processing by [their] environment and has learning difficulties.

Attending a school even like Colvestone that is a one form entry is already a hard mission for my [child].

[Their] first year at reception (Sep 2020) was pretty much a write off, as [they] needed time to climatise and adapt to the new environment.

Despite the fact that [their] then teachers took things really slow with [them], [they] found the demands of school extremely challenging and cried every morning when I was dropping [them] off.

At the end of the reception year we could see that academically [they were] more than a year behind [their] peers, so we decided to have [them] repeat reception. This decision was taken in the August before the school year started and the school supported us fully in our decision to keep [child] back. There was no argument or discussion, they just listened to what [our child] needed and what [their] parents advocated for [them] and gave [our child] that.

My husband and I have no words for how grateful we are that [their] needs were respected in such an immediate and supportive way.

Reception the second time round (Sep 2021) was hard again, [they] cried a lot at drop offs, but gradually became more accustomed to the school environment.

[Their] writing improved and [child] started writing [their] name and being able to copy letters. [Their] recognition of letters was much slower, and by the end of the second year at reception [they] still had not mastered the letters or numbers, however [they] seemed more comfortable with the school setting and started to make friends.

Forming friendships is one of the things we always worried about, so to see [them] play with other children, request their company and to be included was a wonderful development.

When we started year one in (Sep 2022) [our child] was almost fully adapted to the school environment and would only have the occasional cry in the mornings.

However the educational challenges of year 1 were too much for [them].

[They] became withdrawn and anxious, [their] sleep got affected and overall [they] seemed lacklustre and sad.

When we spoke to [them] about [their] sadness, [our child] would say things like

“I hate my brain”

“ I want to kill my brain”

“ I don’t understand and I don’t want to go to school”

“numbers and letters are moving in my head, I don’t know what to do with this mama”

As you can imagine it was heart breaking for myself and my husband to realise that [our child] has these feelings of sadness, frustration and unworthiness.

So we discussed this with the school, who listened to our concerns, and adapted [our child]’s learning environment and curriculum so that [they] would learn **in [their] way and [their] pace.**

Moving forward to this week, I can tell you that with the love and investment of his teacher, [name removed], his TA, [name removed], [name removed] our Headteacher and the school Senco [name removed], [they are] able to count to multiples of 10! And [our child] has started to be able to read a few words!

This week [our child] is also **receiving an achievement award** from [the] school for all the progress [they have] made.

[Our child] gave me the letter inviting me to the ceremony with such pride.

[Our child] now skips to school most mornings and only ever asks to stay at home towards the end of the week when [they are] tired.

[Our child] is finally able to access education in [their] terms in an environment [they are] happy in

Both my husband and I are amazed by the progress and the happiness we see in our little [child]. We believe that moving [them] to a different setting would devastate [them] and settling [our child] will most likely take another two years, by which time we will be looking at the end of Primary.

We will most likely have to apply for EOTAS and homeeducate.

You must understand after our meeting this evening the significance of Colvestone for the SEN families of Dalston.

All be it emotional, I believe I made my point loud and clear.

Colvestone is not an accident, it is not a postcode lottery, it is our choice, our **ONLY CHOICE**.

There is no other school in the area that can ensure that our SEN children get the **access to education they have a right to.**

Closing this setting would mean the removal of **that right to access education for 35 SEN kids** that are currently on the register for Colvestone.

Another point that I would like to visit that I did not have time to elaborate on during my speech was the recent announcement that Hackney will be investing FIVE MILLION pounds across the borough to support SEN kids and services.

What about these 35 kids that will loose their school?

Their little family in which they feel **comfortable to access education?**

Might I ask what does it take so that the Council will consider making Colvestone an autism provision school?

Or an autism and SEND friendly school?

I mean it is well on its way there, as 24% of the children that attend have some sort of special education needs.

Double the national average which is 13.2%.

Please do note that the only two schools in the area that have autism provision are both two form, and they only have 10 places each in their units.

So not only they are two form and therefore **tragically unsuitable for autistics** due to the overwhelming and noisy environment, but they also **only offer 10 places**.

It is my understanding that there is to be additional autism provision units established in more schools in Hackney, however all the proposed schools like Nightingale, are two form schools.

I implore you to consider Colvestone as the perfect school to create an autism friendly environment.

Below, I am including the main points of my speech from Monday the 24th of April.

The Cull de sac nature of Colvestone facilitates a safe access to school.

SEN children get overwhelmed when they are walking through busy streets and can often run into traffic. This has happened to us a few times when walking the Dalston high street. You can imagine how scary this is for us but also for [our child], first to be overwhelmed and then to have [their] parents grab [them] to save [them] from traffic. Once a week when we go shopping on the high street is bad enough, but to have to deal with this twice a day on our school run, would bring so much danger and anxiety in our daily routine.

The neutral tones of this grade 2 listed building are ideal for SEN children as they offer a calm and unintrusive environment in which to play, so rather than being overwhelmed, autistic children can be free and comfortable and able to access PLAY.

Being a one form entry Colvestone is naturally a calmer and less overwhelming environment. A busy assembly in the morning stays with SEN children for the whole day, and that overwhelm makes their access to education impossible.

SEN children thrive in caring and loving environments that are willing to listen and really “SEE” them and their additional needs.

A home from home family that is willing to support them in ways that allow them to access education and realise their potential.

The Colvestone team operating as a close knit and caring family, achieves just that.

This school is a rare gem because of the wonderful humans that work there.

The small community of Colvestone gives SEN children much needed access to friendship and inclusivity. Attending a school with a smaller community provides fertile ground for **inclusive friendships to grow**. It is often the case that neurodiverse children struggle to create relationships as a rule and that becomes even harder in large, two form settings.

Finally, please do take note that for my [child], and for most of the SEN children of our school, adapting to new environments and routines is a herculean task and a big change such as their school environment will be detrimental to their education, well being and happiness.

Please listen and take note to the Sen parents and the School community, please show us that our choice matters. That we have the right for a non faith, local **one form** school.

And that our children will be given the **fair and suitable access to education they have a right to**.

Note that the majority of the families WILL NOT BE SENDING THEIR CHILDREN TO PRINCESS MAY.

So that will continue to be an empty school as it will not be brought to capacity by Colvestone students. If we wished for our kids to attend that school, we would have made it so already.

I do hope that during the Monday evening meeting you could see the passion demonstrated by the parents and wider community, but also that you have taken note of how organised and clearheaded we are.

This is not going to be another school closure that will go unnoticed.

In the three weeks since this proposal has been announced, we have come together to fight for our school.

We have researched and pulled together our historical, scientific and personal evidence and created a website for our cause :

<https://www.savecolvestone.com>

We have run a very successful petition that keeps gaining traction:
<https://www.change.org/p/savecolvestone-fsa-colvestone>

Our cause has attracted local press:

<https://www.hackneygazette.co.uk/news/23469925.author-michael-rosen-joins-bid-stop-hackney-school-merger/>

We were also featured in ITV news:

<https://www.itv.com/news/london/2023-04-24/school-closing-as-young-families-are-driven-out-by-spiraling-london-costs>

And we have attracted international press, from a German TV channel, as they are working on a documentary about London and how “friendly” it is for families.

And we are only three weeks in.

We will keep fighting this, until the Council realises how important this ONE FORM ENTRY school is.

We have the strength of parents fighting for their children and the support of the local community.

Please take note, please fight alongside us.

Thank you for your time

With Respect

[parent A]

A SEN parents representative for Colvestone Primary School

Email from [parent B] and [parent C] sent 26.4.2023

Dear [councillor],

We are writing to express our disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Dalston (Hackney) by Hackney Council.

We are very disheartened by this proposal and in the worst case scenario that this is going ahead, in total honesty, this will have a tremendous effect on [our child]'s education and subsequently in [their] future academic life.

We believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children especially for our SEN children, parents and carers and the community in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.

We live [very local to the school] and have been part of the Dalston community for a long time, we love our diverse community. We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [child], who is [age removed] years-old and autistic because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([our child] has a experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [our child] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [our child] to be happy and settled in [their] school (3 years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredible difficult impact on [them] and it will be practically impossible for [our child] to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on [their] mental health.

Let me give you a brief history of [our child]'s life so that you have an insight of where [they are] coming from:

[Our child] was diagnosed at 2.5 years' old with Autism by Hackney Ark (with severe delays in communications, severe delays in social interactions and severe repetitive behaviour). [Our child] regressed from age 18 months, she was prior to that stage able to say 5 words: Maman, Daddy, cheese, hello and bye (I am [redacted] and Daddy [redacted] – I only spoke [redacted] to [our child] from note to 2) and literally became non-verbal and lost [their] sounds capacity A, E, I, O, U, [our child] was now only screaming, lost eyes contact and only presented with repetitive behaviours. With tremendous tenacity we managed to access straight away hackney services of Speech Therapy (once a week where Specs was implemented) and Portage ([our child] attended the later services for one year, at home and at the Guarden (in pre-school) once a week alternatively).

At this point when I thought I would get back to my career I realised that [our child] needed so much support and decided to stopped my career to support [our child] full time and at this point I went on a mission and to become my child's therapist and a nucleus that would utilise all services offered and my own therapies. I taught myself an american therapy which is called ESDM (Eearly Start Denver Model), taking my child everyday to Gymboree (a pre-school private center) and implementing ESDM at the same time, helped also [our child] to support [their] physical mobility as at this stage [our child's] upper-body and hands were going inwards (I used

daily a home a school bench at home, making [our child] copying me standing on one leg and other leg and also using a climbing wall we had at home). With all these combination of supports from hackney services and my own therapies, [our child] progressed, we retrieved her eye contacts and [their] body posture developed now to a straight posture.

At the end of the year, when [our child] turned 3, Portage Coordinator asked me what we foresee for [our child] academically and I expressed at this point that [our child] could go mainstream to a nursery, which was 7mns from home, Portage facilitated transition to nursery and [our child] entered nursery with an EHCP and worked hard at making sure [our child] has all support needed so that [they] attend nursery. The setting kept on using pecs for promoting speech and in 2019, when [our child] started to make the sound A, I, O, I found the Gemiini therapy programme and within a month [our child]'s perceptive communications improved tremendously. We have used this programme since then and [our child] is now talking more, single words and understand everything we are saying to her. [Our child] attended nursery for two years 3 days a week with allocated one to one.

We then chose Colvestone Primary School because it is a one form small school and just 5 mns from home. [Our child] remained in one corner of the Reception class for a term and half and by the end of that year [they] had ventured in all corners of the school with a phenomenal support of [their] allocated TA. [They] attended Reception (with of course the pandemic, and attended school during the second lock-down).

When [our child] was in year 1, after a week at school (Sept. 22) [they] refused to go to school and leave the house, it took us 7 months to bridge [our child] back to school and as you can imagine, it was a real isolated work for us as [our child] didn't want to go out anymore but with great effort, determination and tedious work we thankfully managed for [our child] to be happy going out and then managed to bridge [our child] back to school, with the School Senco we worked very hard collaboratively to get [our child] back and [they] did for the end of year one. [Teacher, name removed] has done a tremendous work. Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support which as you may have heard from other families is not a given, [our child] has an EHCP and now a level 5 in funding which goes towards [their] SEN and [their] needs to be cared by someone all the time.

But even thought, we have all in place on paper, the tremendous work we have had to do with the school in order to secure [our child]'s support has been a real effort, as well as working hard to make sure that [our child] is happy attending Colvestone and this in view to attend [their] years at Colvestone to year 6.

To be honest I can't believe we have to write this and the idea of this plan going ahead is very difficult for us and we are trying not to think about it!

We know our child feels safe and happy at Colvestone, [our child] receives a wonderful SEN support with a fantastic experienced SEN one to one [name removed] and a brilliant teacher/senco [name removed]. Moving our child to another school will be strongly difficult and

disruptive in our child's education and have consequences on [them] achieving long term education goals. And it will take us years to get to where we are and by then, it will be the end of primary school. This will literally damage all the hard work we have put together for the past 5 years. I hope you realise the difficulty of what we have to do on a daily basis to get to where we are. We are working hard at [our child]'s school foundation so that [our child] can thrive in the future and become the astronaut [they] want to be (I asked lately [our child] what she wanted to be and [they] astonishingly responded to me: "Astronaut" and repeatedly saying: "Captain [our child], to the rescue").

I have added few pictures below so that you can see how amazing [our child] is doing at Colvestone. In January, [our child] was awarded a Colvestone's Achiever for: "[Our child] enjoys the creative aspects of the curriculum. In art lessons and in Music, [child] shows good level of engagement. [Child] takes part in daily phonics lessons where [they are] exploring environmental sounds with [their] peers. [Child] enjoys drawing and will often draw pictures that are detailed in design. [Child] has drawn pictures linked to [their] favourite stories, such as "Class Two at the Zoo". Which [they enjoy] listening to and reading alongside the adult, some of the known phrases. [Child] takes part in PE lessons and will join the class line when [they] knows that it is time for PE. Well done [child]! – [our child] went to receive her award in front for Y1/Y2 assemliee.

Last Friday [our child] was awarded 100% attendance Award, there again [our child] during full school assemble stood up when [their] name was called and went to receive [their] award and came back to sit with everyone else aside [teacher's name removed]. Yes 100% attendance! Incredible! What a journey, what an amazing achievement! And this done to the wonderful work of the school, one to one, Senco, staffs and the Leadership team, [Head of School], [Executive Headteacher] and team.

I also included a picture showing how [our child] is happy at school with [teacher's name removed] during Easter parade.

Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, which we strongly beleive in and is required. We strongly hope that our wonderful Colvestone Primary School can stay open and all is done to support our school and for our [our child] to keep accessing education as well as all the SEN children and all the children.

Yours sincerely,

[parent B] & [parent C]

Parent of [name / year removed] at Colvestone Primary School

Appendix 3: Excerpt from an email sent by a local historic and town planning specialist

Uncertain Future of the School Building and Site

Our foremost concern is the potential loss of Colvestone Primary School, but we also wish to stress the negative impacts its closure would have on the school building and the surrounding area. I write here in my capacity as a historic buildings and town planning specialist.

The school building dates from 1862, and was designed by architect Thomas Knightly in a Gothic Revival style. As such, it is one of Hackney's oldest surviving school buildings. It is a grade II listed building, which means that there is a duty under the Planning Acts to preserve its special interest as a building of outstanding historic and architectural significance for future generations. The optimum use for a listed building is its original use, which in this case is as a school. It is also possible that there is a deed of covenant on the site stipulating that the building should be used solely for educational purposes. If the school is to close, the building will lose the vital use for which it was designed and built – most likely forever.

Closure will also see the building become redundant. There are suggestions locally that the Council intends to keep the building vacant for the foreseeable future. As such, it will be sealed up and rendered lifeless within the community. The recently completed refurbishment works will be wasted, as the building will become a target for vandalism and unlawful entry. Disused buildings deteriorate at a rapid rate, as they are more prone to water ingress, damp and a lack of ventilation. Only recently, thieves stole lead from the school roof, an unwelcome act which inevitably will increase if the building falls empty. If the school use ceases, the building is likely to feature on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register, which identifies those historic sites that have an uncertain future and are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development.

There are fears locally that the Council will sell the school site to a private developer, preventing it from ever returning to use as a Hackney-run primary school. Although the school is not currently an opportunity site in the Council's draft Dalston Plan, it lies midway between sites D6 (Ridley Road) and D7 (Birkbeck Mews). Undoubtedly it will be attractive to housing developers as it is located on the western side of St Mark's Conservation Area, a leafy sought-after Dalston residential neighbourhood made up of houses dating from the same period as the school building. The site is adjacent to Dalston Town Centre and excellent transport links, including two Overground stations and numerous bus routes; a Crossrail 2 station entrance is also proposed within metres of the site boundary.

The redevelopment of the site at minimum will require a change of use for the listed building, resulting in internal and external alterations detracting from its special historic and architectural interest. But the pressure for development and the developer's profit margins will inevitably result in the large-scale redevelopment of the site, which at best will harm the setting of the listed building and at worst destroy it.

There will also be a negative impact on the character and appearance of the St Mark's Conservation Area. Firstly, the character of the area will be severely affected by the loss to the community of an important primary school attended by many local children. The hustle and bustle of school life will disappear forever, including the noise of children in the playground, children walking to and from school, children singing and playing musical instruments, performing in plays and partaking in sport. There will be no more school fetes, no more Christmas concerts, jumble sales or sports days – activities shared with the wider community.

Secondly, the physical changes to the site, whether simply the deadening effect of closing up the school building or the more drastic visual harm arising from a major redevelopment, will have a negative impact on the appearance of the conservation area. This is particularly pertinent as Colvestone Primary School is not only a landmark building at the western entrance to the conservation area, but it is also one of a handful of buildings in the neighbourhood which have a community use, the loss of which would have an homogenizing effect on the conservation area and a reduction in the quality of life of its residents.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, please review and reconsider the Council's plans to close Colvestone Primary School and merge it with Princess May Primary School in 2024. Nobody in the school or in the wider community wants to lose this very special school just to balance the Council's books. Nobody wants it to be subsumed into another much larger school with very different values, with which it has nothing in common. **To close Colvestone would be untimely, misguided and short-sighted. Please let Colvestone rise again, above all for the children of Dalston.**

Appendix 4: Hackney National Education Union letter of support

Hackney NEU comments on the closure of Colvestone school

We have been asked by parents and NEU members of Colvestone school to briefly outline some of our concerns regarding the potential merger with Princess May.

Colvestone school is a small one form entry school that has served the local community in the heart of Hackney for over 170 years. It has historic significance as the last remaining of William Ellis's "Birkbeck" schools and is currently a Grade II listed building.

The proposal to close Colvestone school and merge it with Princess May is based on financial considerations rather than any social or educational benefit.

Hackney NEU believes that there are significant benefits in retaining small one form entry primary schools wherever possible. Whilst we understand the financial difficulties presented by years of government underfunding we believe that smaller schools and smaller class sizes are a desirable aim for our students.

As the recent Sutton Trust report has stated the UK has the largest class sizes in Europe* and all efforts should be made to arrest this trend. Research by the Education Endowment Federation suggests that *"The average impact for reducing class size is around 2 months additional progress over the course of an academic year."*

As well as improved academic progress we would argue that smaller schools and smaller class sizes have the following benefits.

Tailored learning

With small classes, teachers can more easily monitor every pupil's progress and tailor learning to each pupil. Teachers get to spend more individual time with each child, so they have a better idea of what they may need some extra support with. Pupils will also feel more confident talking to their teacher about any issues they are facing or areas of work they need some help with.

More social confidence

In smaller classes, pupils will usually feel more confident talking in front of a group. You also find with small schools, there is a greater sense of community and less cliques. The community spirit between pupils helps children to socially interact better and feel safe to try new things and discover new interests.

Teaching staff know their pupils better

At a school with a smaller community, teachers know more about their pupils, across their academic, emotional and even medical needs. Sometimes at larger schools, problems impacting a child's mental health or other aspects of their life can be missed.

More inclusive

At smaller schools, unique characteristics are embraced more, and students who are less outgoing can feel more relaxed about being around peers and have a better chance of enjoying their school experience.

Parents have a better relationship with the school

It is also easier for parents to be more involved in the school community, whether that is having a quick chat with their child's teacher about their progress or getting involved with school events and social events. Many parents make friends with other parents or getting involved with events related to their hobbies.

Colvestone school has consistently performed above the national and local average at both KS1 and KS2 with the last published SATs results showing 76% of children reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (compared with a 65% national average)

This speaks to the value of having a small local community school.

The transition to a new school, especially a larger one located further away (and the other side of one of the busiest roads in Hackney) would be very traumatic to the current pupils and the Council need to give serious consideration to this.

Chapter 3. Failure to consult in adherence to Hackney Council's Constitution: bases for Calling In any adverse decision on Colvestone Primary School.

Grounds for calling-in the adverse decisions in CE S247 (School Estates Strategy) are set out below:

1.1 The decision-maker did not take the decision in accordance with the principles set out in Article 1.2;

1.2 All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:

1.2 (d) – the decision maker failed to consider relevant evidence when making the decision

- Information was circulated to Cabinet on the day of the meeting with analysis of current vacancy place data, published by LB Hackney on 19th September. A copy of the full report is attached and further analysis is provided as Appendix C. It shows that the projected consequences of the proposals made in the Briefing Report are contradicted by actual place data calling into question key suppositions and the achievability of stated aims of the proposals. Schools are responding to falling rolls and the need to avoid deficit budgets, so have requested temporary caps on their Published Admission Numbers thereby reducing the overall vacancy rate.
- The Briefing Report refers to over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (based on Jan 23 census) and this is a 21% surplus of places. The latest school vacancy place data shows 391 empty places in Reception classes so the vacancy rate has reduced to 14.5%. Across all year groups (and all school types) the vacancy rate has reduced to 12.7%, which is approaching the target of 5 – 10% vacancy rates.
- The analysis also shows that projected (systemic) place reductions in the Briefing Report will not be achieved by the proposals. The target was a reduction of 135 places in Reception but some of these reductions have ALREADY been achieved through voluntary caps on PAN at De Beauvoir (30 to 15) and Princess May (60 to 30). If the proposals to close these four schools goes ahead, it will only lead to a further reduction of 60 places. It was always incorrect to suggest that a merger of Baden Powell and Nightingale would reduce PAN.
- The analysis of current place data highlights the challenges the Council faces in achieving their target of 5 – 10% vacancy rates as faith schools have some of the highest rates but have not been in scope under the current proposals. For Reception, the faith schools have 136 empty places which is over 30% of all vacancies in just 14

schools. Across all year groups, the vacancy rate in faith schools is 24% which is twice as high as the overall Hackney figure of 12.7%. If the faith schools are excluded from the data, then overall vacancies across other school types reduces to 11!

- The analysis of current place data shows that there are insufficient local places to accommodate pupils from the schools in scope aside from faith schools and schools outside the borough.
- The failure to account for actual, up to date pupil movement invalidates many of the suppositions in the Briefing Report and calls into question the capacity of the proposals to address / reduce falling rolls.

1.2 (a) – clarity of aims and desired outcomes

- Informal Consultation. There has been a failure to provide clear and unambiguous expectations of information required from stakeholders to inform the Informal stage of the Consultation, details of the process of analysis of opinions, information and challenges received, and specifically how information received would inform the next stage of the consultation. (See also pt. 1, p.3 of the CYP Scrutiny Report submitted to the Informal Consultation).
- Formal consultation. No response was received at Cabinet when the Cllr was asked how stakeholders would be engaged for the next stage of the consultation given the lack of change to proposals after representations in the Informal stage of the Consultation or the failure to engage stakeholders (or the elected representatives) from the majority of schools in scope.
- Outcomes. If the merger of Baden Powell and Nightingale will not contribute to the overall outcome to reduce surplus places then why has this been included. Are there other outcomes that the Council seeks that are less clear?
- The focus on single outcome metric and two primary criteria for being in scope (falling rolls and financial unsustainability) means that the Council fails to account for any context-specific issues; such as the location, building types (affordances and efficiencies), staff costs, proportion of SEN provision, ideal class sizes / surplus places and how that might affect SEN provision success and access to integrated provision, operating expenditure (and capacity to identify savings) etc.
- The failure to provide school by school analysis (as requested but denied without grounds at Cabinet) fails to allow decision makers and the Council at large the capacity to scrutinise the underlying basis for each of the proposals.

1.2 (a) – consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions

i. The local interventions were not fully considered prior to being included in these proposals.

- The Briefing Report suggests that local interventions to help the schools in frame had been exhausted prior to the public announcement of the Consultation, although no evidence to the nature of interventions, timescale, cost or efficacy are offered. This was specifically challenged by parent/carer representatives from Colvestone Primary School at Cabinet. Details of the ongoing, recent and positive interventions at this school are detailed in Appendix B below.
- Without reporting on claimed interventions at all schools it is impossible to ascertain what has been done by the Council to protect schools in frame prior to the consultation, whether due support was given proportionally to all schools, the efficacy of these interventions, and how future LA policy might be informed through an evaluation of the efficacy (or otherwise) of these or alternative (untested) interventions.
- The Briefing Report suggests that the impact of these interventions have been tested and evaluated – however an analysis of their success or insufficiencies on a school by school basis is omitted from the report.
- The CYP Scrutiny Report also notes the lack of evidence of the impact of any claimed interventions across the schools in scope – which were positive and ongoing in the case of Colvestone, and in their infancy (pt. 4, p.4, CYP Scrutiny Report).
- These evaluations should have been carried out and made available to decision makers for all schools in scope to inform current and future proposals. The Save Colvestone campaign, public submissions to the consultations and representations to Cabinet have consistently questioned why these successful interventions have not been allowed to run their course given their recent, highly positive impacts.

ii. The consultation did not engage with parents properly to really understand their preferences, despite parental choice being a key factor that the Council cannot control.

- The process of consultation could have been understood as an opportunity to understand what stakeholders might do or prefer when offered a number of options, to potentially order those options in order of preference, with the goal of allowing the LA to make informed decisions.
- Understanding parent / carer preference is key to evaluate potential impacts of the proposals, and the failure to account for preference – evidenced by the failure to consult on a broader range of options – fails to inform decision makers of the potential consequences of their actions.

iii. No information about to suggest alternatives

- From the outset of the consultation (the 'pre-informal' phase), schools and families have been presented with a closed set of proposals with no alternatives offered. If there are no alternatives suggested (or subsequently consulted upon) other than 'no action' (also discounted) then the Council has failed to consult in a real or effective way.
- A failure to consult on a range of options from the outset is problematic for a number of reasons: the appearance of democratic process is undermined by decisions already being made; a failure to consult on a wider range of options results in a situation where the intentions of families should the proposals be adopted is unknown, and therefore there is no way of accurately understanding if the proposals as framed will have the desired effect (here: of pupils moving to other local LA schools resulting in reduction of surplus in the Local Authority system / way that guarantees the financial stability of the destination school(s)); it is impossible to understand if this is the best possible set of proposals for the communities that will be effected to address the identified problem; the framing of the consultation (pre-determined plans to close four specific schools as opposed to a range of *possible* options) makes the consultation far more damaging to schools in frame – and fundamentally affect the capacity of those schools to address one of the key criteria used to put schools in scope of the consultation: to attract more pupils; the failure to consult at a formative stage exposes the consultation (and the Council) to legal jeopardy: the responsibility to consult at a 'formative stage' is the first of the Gunning / Sedley principles for public consultation as reflected in the Cabinet Office's 'Consultation Principles' 2018.
- The Briefing Report briefly addresses alternative options identified through the 'pre-' and 'informal' consultation periods. By dismissing these requests for consultation out of hand the Council deny further engagement by stakeholders, and foreclose any possibility of creatively addressing a problem that might better reflect stakeholders desires and intentions. It is unclear therefore what the Council proposes to learn from the process of consultation.
- By failing to offer a range of scenarios to stakeholders, pupils are at risk of enduring successive closures at a vital formative stage of their education. This risk is even greater when the high proportion of pupils with SEN / EHCPlans or as members of more vulnerable communities at the schools in scope is considered.
- That consulting at a formative stage has effectively been discounted from the outset of the process is addressed in 5.9 (Briefing Report, p.18 – reason: staffing – though this erroneously suggests that a wider consultation would require more mergers or closures) and Responses to the Consultation (p.770, pt. 18) on the basis of time – though this overlooks the extremely long period over which the consultation is being considered, and the potential problems that would be avoided by better informing the

proposals, the resources available to decision makers, and the consultation's capacity to achieve its aims.

- Despite talking about 'thinking creatively' there has never been any engagement with alternative ideas or help on how these could genuinely be considered as part of the process. Alternate merger possibilities have not been consulted on even when requested in Council-run school engagement meetings.

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Iv. Specific SEND options

- The Cllr at Cabinet was asked about the specific, repeated, requests to consider expanding the already successful SEND provision at the schools in frame to accommodate demand in the borough – and in the awareness that most of the schools in frame have higher than borough average levels of pupils with EHCP or SEN support.
- The potential for expanded SEN provision at Colvestone was discounted in the Briefing Report presented to Cabinet (repeated in responses given at Cabinet, 25th Sept) by a claim that expanded provision would require the school to be completely decanted for works to take place (5.16, p. 19). This was erroneous and misguided. Full background for this claim and specific rebuttals can be found in Appendix B (notes to **1.2 (a) – consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions**).
- The use of vacant buildings to aid schools financially and the expansion of SEN provision to meet borough need are both identified as warranting Council support in the Estates Strategy (pp.7, 10-14). The CYP Scrutiny Report also advocates for the promotion of 'inclusive schools and education to ensure that more children are supported in mainstream local educational settings' (pt 8, p. 6). The positive potential to exploit surplus space / buildings on school estates, as identified as a potential revenue stream in the Estate Strategy, is not addressed in the Briefing Report presented to Cabinet and is detrimental to schools in scope (and Colvestone specifically) by its omission ('Schools with Excess Physical Space...' (Briefing Report, 4.27-29, p.12).
- Similarly the considerable additional savings to the borough of reducing out of borough SEN provision (currently between £35-70,000 per pupil per year) are not reflected here either. These points are reiterated in the consultation responses that quote expert testimony from an Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team, a CAMHS social worker and an Inclusion Expert all specifically in relation to protecting and expanding Colvestone's SEN provision

(Supplementary Papers, Appendix P – Kwest Report on the Informal Consultation, p. 26 / PDF p.345). The Equality Impact Assessment appears to acknowledge the particularly high impact of the proposals on the SEND pupils at Colvestone, but fails to incorporate any of the above mitigation / arguments in favour of retaining and expanding provision and the relevant benefits to pupils at Colvestone, the borough in general, and to the financial advantage of the school – because of the erroneous discounting of these proposals through a misrepresentation of the site / buildings and required works.

1.2 (e) – the decision would not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted

The detailed analysis of the vacancies for each of the proposed school closures shows that these proposals are forcing parents to make very difficult decisions. There may be too many vacancies across the whole borough but in south west Hackney and Dalston;

- The popular schools have very few vacancies which make it very difficult for a family with children in different year groups to move to.
- Many of vacancies are at faith schools which families do not want (evidenced by falling demand and Council own survey).
- Some of the closest schools with vacancies are out of borough – in Islington or Tower Hamlets.

The analysis of these unforeseen consequences and the material effects for the aims of the proposals as outlined in the consultation is included in **Appendix D – 1.2 (e) – the decision would not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted** below.

- Assess each proposal. The Cabinet report does not look at the specific circumstances for each for the proposed school closures. They are different and it is important that each proposal is assessed individually – as requested by public questions and through individual representations to the Pre-and Informal Consultation – in terms of the impact it will have on the Council target of reducing Reception places and the effect on school options/ parental choice in that part of the borough.
- Out of Borough. It is hard to see how losing pupils from rolls to other boroughs helps the outcomes. The response in Cabinet from the Cllr that ‘I can’t change geography’ appears to misconstrue the challenge: it is precisely in the power of the LA to chose which schools to put in scope of the consultation and to consider relative proximity in that process. The CYP Scrutiny Report (submitted to informal consultation) comments on the necessity to act in a way ‘that minimises the loss of pupils through cross-border flows where neighbouring authorities may have a comparatively better borough wide offers’ (pt8, p.6).

- Faith Schools. Given that 84% of Hackney residents want non-denominational schools in the borough it is unclear why the Council appears to be treating faith and non-faith schools as interchangeable forms of provision, or to produce localised parts of the borough where parents are left with only a choice of faith school for local education provision.
- Repeat Closures. More broadly, the Cabinet Briefing Report fails to address, or propose mitigations, for the potential for pupils to be caught in a cycle of repeated closures, an issue of particular importance as many of the children affected fall within the most vulnerable in the community: as identified in the Report, the proposals disproportionately affect communities with above-average prevalence of free school meal eligibility, ethnic diversity, and SEND / EHCP provision.
- Financially Unsustainable. Cabinet has failed to respond to the clear jeopardy presented to one of the schools in scope (Princess May) were it to be forced to expand, as a consequence of LA commitments within these proposals to families from Colvestone, from (near full) single form to a two-form entry school with substantial surplus places. Such a move would clearly undermine Princess May's current financial model by burdening the school with additional staffing costs but with insufficient pupil numbers to avoid instability and potential subsequent closure – a disastrous outcome for the school and pupils both current and recently transferred as part of the proposals. The budgetary consequences of necessary protections for Princess May are not identified in budget considerations.
- Alternative Merger Option. The rejection (5.15, p.19) of a potential merger / accommodation of De Beauvoir families on the Colvestone site because of the 'financial position' of the school is nonsensical: more pupils, as has been stressed throughout the consultation process, would radically improve the financial position of any of the schools in frame – potentially pulling them out of scope of the consultation and enable them to pay off the historic deficit.

1.2 (a) – a presumption of openness

- As detailed in [1.2 (a) – due regard for the statutory framework, guidance and code of conduct] below, the LA has consistently refused to release information related to the deeds of one of the schools in frame – denying both FOI requests and legal representations. As detailed below, this information is of clear material importance to the evaluation of the proposals outlined in the consultation as protective covenants would manifestly affect the range of alternate uses of the site in question (Colvestone Primary School) which are discussed only in general, asset use/disposal terms in the Briefing Report.

- The refusal to detail possible land use due diligence (as demanded by the Estates Strategy) in this instance suggests that this due diligence has not been conducted for any of the sites in frame.
- Additional requests (made both as casework and under legal representations) to disclose the allocation data for schools in south west Hackney prevents an assessment as to whether schools (and particularly schools in scope of the consultation due to roll numbers – a key criteria used by the LA to identify schools in scope) have been fairly treated over recent years in this allocation process, or whether any of the schools in scope have suffered from an artificial suppression of pupil numbers through this process.
- High level (non-postcode-based) analysis appears to suggest disproportionate allocations to free schools in the years 20/21 and 21/22 (with 22/23 data as yet unanalysed), for example.
- Questions raised at Cabinet challenged the selective representation of financial modelling for one of the schools in frame in the Briefing Report and the conclusions reached in the LA's summary of its resources, underlying data and analysis. It is unclear how these differences can be dismissed by the Cllr without full disclosure of the documents that underpin the conclusions of the LA, disputed by members of the public with access to the same documents, such that decision makers, Council and the public can inform their own evaluation of the situation. The bases of these challenges to the LA's conclusions are outlined below in **Appendix A – misrepresentation of financial data – 1.2 (a) – a presumption of openness**
- Without greater clarity it is unclear how Cabinet (and the general public / stakeholders in the further consultation) might be expected to make financially-based decisions on the proposals. Note that the Briefing Report identifies 'financial sustainability' as a key metric for both determining schools in scope and for the evaluation of the proposals outlined in the consultation.

1.2 (a) – due regard for the statutory framework, guidance and code of conduct

- School Building Titles. Due diligence has not been conducted on the status of school buildings as demanded by the Estate Strategy (p.14) with regards to building deeds / titles, particularly with regards to restrictive covenants, and specifically with regards to restrictive covenants believed to be included in the transfer deeds (1906) of the Colvestone school buildings when they were acquired by the LCC in 1906 from an educational charity (still extant). These deeds have been subject to an unfulfilled FOI request currently under Internal Review (Ref: 16591453, originally submitted 14th April 2023), requests made in each of the reports prepared by Save Colvestone for each stage of the consultation, and legal requests made (11th September, 2023) on behalf of the parent's organisation of the school in a pre-action letter. The Council

has been provided with a copy of the receipt from Hackney Council for the deeds from the London Residuary Body dated Dec 1990. These documents and consideration of them are of clear relevance to the consultation and the choices to proceed on proposals relating to Colvestone as:

1. If restricted by covenants standard disposal of the buildings would not be possible and so consideration of the buildings as an asset in the general Council holdings (and therefore potential source of revenue) as described in the briefing reports / consultation meetings etc. / Cabinet would have been in error.
 2. The buildings might potentially be forfeited to the (still extant) educational charity who sold them under restriction should the educational use cease – a clear source of jeopardy for the pursuit of the current proposals, of which public / Cabinet have not been made aware.
 3. Should such a covenant be contained within the deeds it limits the reuse of the buildings significantly and would likely force the Council to reopen a school on the site – having paid hundreds of thousands of pounds in retention contracts, redundancies of staff, building protection, and associated costs of transferring pupils (potentially out of Borough at great expense) for SEN provision currently being provided by the school. It would also jeopardise student numbers in the new school as the current pupils would have relocated elsewhere. (N.B. as repeatedly insisted upon by the Council, there is no academic attainment argument for closing the school – it is performing very well). This path would be an egregious waste of public funds. There is recent precedent in Hackney for this wastage – the closure of Hackney Downs School / discovery of covenanted deeds / establishment of Mossbourne Academy.
 4. The Estates Strategy is clear about the jeopardy posed by ‘free school presumption’. Closing the school and reopening it would result in a free school where control of the school and land would be forfeit to a private enterprise. This would be a direct consequence of the covenant – and manifestly changes the consequences of the proposals on which decisions are being made.
- Dalston Local Plan. Failure to account for long term demand produced specifically for Colvestone (as opposed to the borough in general) and role of school as infrastructure for Dalston Plan homebuilding (see also below, 1.2(d)). Consideration of the relevance of the Dalston Plan continues to fail to account for the proximity of all of the main sites specifically to Colvestone and the more general relevance to south west Hackney that has been disproportionately targeted for closures and for which there is now a shortage of non-faith provision. Colvestone School would be the nearest primary school provision for all of the major Dalston Plan sites. By failing to address the specific relevance of the Dalston Plan to Colvestone (as opposed to all the schools in frame in general) the Report deliberately obscures its relevance and potential impact. Further, no depositions are included from Hackney Planning that discuss the primary school provision for these homebuilding projects (Colvestone was identified as key infrastructure for the project in recent Dalston Plan public events) or any analysis as to the chilling effect removing local primary school

provision would have on the Council's stated aims to attract / retain families in Dalston (Estates Strategy pp. 12-13, target housing mix) and reiterated by the CYP Scrutiny Report, p.6, re: conditions for 'retention of families in borough'. (Further: although the wording in the Report has been changed, there still remains a lack of evidenced long term planning (in addition to consideration of long-term place demand) more generally – an oversight reiterated by responses at Cabinet that children won't come into schools 'early enough').

1.2 (c) – the decision-maker did not act in accordance with the budget

- The Briefing Report lacks even high-level cost benefit analyses that weigh the considerable expense of closures against the potential financial advantages of proceeding with proposals. No modelling for these comparative costs / budget effects are contained in the Briefing Report, even when this must be the key driver of the proposals (it is repeatedly noted that the quality of education is high (rated Good / Ofsted) at all schools in scope and that all schools with vacancies in the borough are rated Good or below).
- No costings of alternate proposals (alternate mergers / closures / wider consultation) are included in the Briefing Report nor are they weighed against one-another (a point also noted in the CYP Scrutiny Report pt.7, p.5). Similarly there are no details given of potential savings to the borough of alternate proposals (for example, increased SEN provision at Colvestone to reduce the huge expense of out-of-borough SEN provision – see 1.2 (a) above).
- Part 1.10 of the Cabinet Report states that “where we might merge schools, we will have to work with those schools to ensure they have the right facilities and investment on the new sites to meet the aspirations of their respective schools and communities.” No reference to these potential costs (or their size) is made in the very brief comments in the Report by the Interim Finance Director.
- There is a lack of short or long-term budgetary considerations to support a school compelled to expand by these proposals (Princess May) but likely to have considerable surplus at new scale and therefore to rapidly fall into deficit as a result. Given the LA's role in this potential destabilisation it would seem beholden that the school be given some guarantees in this regard, and estimations of shortfalls budgeted for.
- Additional costs for SEND provision for pupils currently being cared for schools in scope are absent from the Interim Financial Director's brief survey of potential costs for the proposals. It is noted that, due to in-borough shortfalls in provision, out of borough SEND provision currently costs the LA between £35-70,000 p.a. per pupil. As noted in the Briefing Report, a number of the schools in scope have high levels of

SEN pupils that currently access provision in those settings (and education itself more broadly). No costs are outlined to support transfers, access, additional support provision and possible out of borough resources. The general outline of support offered at Cabinet (the use of picture stories etc.) failed to address the extent and complexity of enabling large numbers of vulnerable children with SEN / EHCPs to access education in new settings, or to estimate the level of funding required to achieve these aims.

- The responses given at Cabinet failed to engage with these substantive points (identification of revenue streams, overlooked budgetary consequences of the proposals, etc.) or challenges to the LA's interpretation of underlying financial data. The assertion that the deficit of a school should be written off to limit further growth of that debt is undermined by figures that suggest a capacity of the school to pay it down over time. Understanding the basis of this difference of interpretation is key to evaluating the proposals upon which Cabinet are asked to make a decision.

Appendix A – misrepresentation of financial data – 1.2 (a) – a presumption of openness

The Briefing Report, Responses to the Consultation (Appendix S, pp. 775-6) and subsequent references to its conclusions at Cabinet, misrepresent the content of the independent SRMA report on Colvestone by omission, and the overall financial analysis on the school presented in the Report – the analysis that concludes with the stark claim that Colvestone is “particularly financially unsustainable” (Briefing Report, 4.22, pp.11/12) – fails to accurately represent the data on which it is based: the school's own conservative budget projections and the savings (and conclusions) of the independent SMRA report “proactively requested” by the school's Senior Business Manager “to support him in improving the financial outlook of CPS (Colvestone Primary School)” (SRMA Report on Colvestone School, p.4). Viewed in combination, the two sources of modelling data the Council are using suggest “highly achievable” savings (SRMA Report) leading to budget surpluses and debt repayment, albeit over a longer period than that modelled in the SRMA report. This is achievable on lower pupil numbers than those used in the SRMA report – lower pupil numbers reflected in Colvestone's own financial modelling.

By referencing a table in the Briefing Report of school deficits as evidence of “financial unsustainability” the Briefing Report conflates debt and financial sustainability. The SRMA Report claims that the rapid running down of the school's deficit in 3-4 years would be “extremely challenging” – a comment the Briefing Report extracts – *but not impossible*. What the SRMA report does not do is suggest that a longer term of deficit reduction would not be viable, or that the running of surpluses be achieved and sustained through the identification of “highly

achievable” savings as the deficit is run down over time and pupil numbers improve. The SRMA lists a number of reasons for this recent drop in pupils, many of which have been reversed (see 1.2(a) above). The specific points of misrepresentation are outlined below:

‘High achievability’ of surplus and longer-term deficit reduction

The Colvestone Senior Business Leader produced a 3-year budget projection for the Council, the headline figures of which are included in the Briefing Report for Cabinet (p.11/12). Omitted from the reporting of this highly conservative budget projection produced by the school are a series of caveats to these budget figures that suggest sources of additional funding that would improve the financial projections (as has been the case in 22/23 when the school ran a surplus – see ‘Notes / Assumptions’ in the 3-year budget produced by the Colvestone SLT). Further, when this highly conservative budget projection (that relies on far fewer numbers of pupils joining the school than the SRMA report – see below) is viewed in the context of the SRMA report commissioned by, and to support, the school’s Senior Business Leader, a huge volume of additional savings are identified: £614,000 in ‘high achievability’ efficiency savings (and a further £167,000 in ‘medium achievability’ savings) over the next three years. (Note: only £30,000 p.a. is speculative in the form of grant targets). This suggests a ‘high achievability’ of in-year surplus and progressive deficit reduction over time. The Briefing Report prepared for Cabinet fails to reflect the savings identified in a report that is their best financial modelling and on which it signed off, and therefore fails to disclose the positive financial outlook that results from viewing these two documents together (as the Briefing Report purports to do).

Pupil projections

The Briefing Report (4.22, p.11) disputes rising pupil forecasts contained within the SRMA report in which it is quoted “the SRMA and school have discussed the pupil number forecasts with the LA, who advised that these numbers are not unrealistic.” The report states: “The local authority is firmly of the view that the projected number of children joining the school, on which the budget is based, are unrealistic.” It is unclear on what grounds this claim is made as it obscures the Local Authority’s role in producing the SRMA report, including during the pre-publishing review phase of its production, and signing off on its conclusions (without challenging this specific point) in April/May 2023. The relevant section of the Briefing Report for Cabinet (4.22) also fails to disclose that the financial projections produced by the school are not based on such steep rises in enrollment, as projected by the SRMA report, and are therefore far more conservative on this point – in line with what appears to be Hackney Council’s current position.

That the school, as is subsequently pointed out, had 14 new enrollments in Reception in 2023 whilst the school had been under the public threat of closure for several months, and Hackney Education had advised at least one parent (that we are aware of and have signed dispositions from) looking to apply to the school that the school was to be closed and not to transfer, is, frankly, remarkable. The true extent of pupil number suppression due to the consultation will be hard to gauge, but is likely to be considerable – p. 32 of the Briefing Report documents the considerable damage done by the consultation to many of the schools in frame. Further, the

allocations data for previous years has been requested (both as casework and through the Pre-Action legal correspondence) but not produced by the Council. By failing to disclose this information it is impossible to ascertain whether pupil numbers enrolling at Colvestone may already have been artificially suppressed through the allocations process over preceding years. (We understand that there is precedent for this mode of artificial suppression by the LA in the borough from education campaigners in the 1990s).

Deficit Reduction

By focussing on a rapid paydown of the deficit the Report fails to model for a more manageable deficit reduction plan that could be sustained by the school. It is unclear from the Report, and from responses received in Cabinet, why this would not be more desirable for the overall Council budgets – a budget that would have to absorb the whole of the deficit were the school to be closed. Indeed, in its responses, the Council appear to focus purely on attempting to produce additional arguments as to why the school should be closed, rather than on possible alternatives (advocated for in the Estates Strategy, p.7) that might enable the protection of a single-form intake LA school.

The comment in the Briefing Report that Colvestone ran a surplus in 22/23 because of ‘a mid year additional cash injection’ suggests that Colvestone was only in surplus in the last financial year because of emergency Council intervention. This insinuation was repeated at Cabinet (25th September). The school received funding from the Schools Contingency Fund, the de-delegated fund to which all schools contribute and to which all are eligible to apply. This money was applied for to help improve the school building and in particular ensure that it was statutorily safe and compliant. The school had a right to apply and were eligible for this funding which is why it is there. One might suggest that the Management Team would have been remiss not to have applied for it – as is the case for all monies that the school applies for and receives from the Council and other funds. To imply that this an emergency intervention by the Council, or the only reason for running a surplus, is highly subjective and contestable at best. Many schools (both in frame of this consultation and outside) apply for and receive this funding, as they are entitled to do. To suggest that it was a vital intervention fails to disclose the nature of the Council funding and its purpose, and thereby misrepresents it as emergency funding.

Appendix B – specific supporting materials relating to challenges posed at Cabinet that underpin challenges to the grounds for Decision CE S247 School Estates Strategy.

1.2 (a) – consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions

- It has been stated at Cabinet that positive interventions (with the engagement of the LA) at Colvestone were in their infancy and having a positive effect – on both the school community, parental satisfaction, finances and improving the attractiveness of

- the school after a period of turbulence. They include: an entirely new Senior Leadership Team, new rolling Federation partnership with associated benefits, new Senior Business Manager and fiscal acumen, expanded social media and communications capacities, rising parental and staff satisfaction with the school under new Federation, improved financial situation (including running surplus and Federation benefits) and thorough financial planning, improved building conditions with extensive restoration works on the listed buildings now complete etc. No clear answer was given as to why these successful but relatively recent interventions (including LA investment) had not been given time to prove themselves.
- The Save Colvestone campaign has consistently asked, at the last two stages of consultation and at Cabinet, that the vacant caretaker's house on the school site be considered for either ARP or behavioral / SEN resource as the building is already converted into teaching spaces, is of appropriate size, and would complement the excellent integrated SEN teaching already being practiced by the school. It was also stated that the expansion of this capacity at Colvestone would help the borough address the huge shortfall in provision in borough, build on the school's current good practice and successes in that provision and financially benefit the school. The use, for this purpose, of the vacant space on the school site and specifically the caretaker's house, was subject of conversations during the Mayor and Paul Senior's scoping visits in early 2023. Heads of schools have been invited to make expressions of interest in advance of a likely new round of applications for ARP provision, to which the school would be eligible to apply. Previous dismissal of this idea on the basis that the call was in 21/22 (as the school was undergoing its change in leadership) and now closed also no longer holds. The caretaker's house has its own self-contained perimeter, street access and parking / works space, and it was here in this outdoor space separate to the playground where building materials and site equipment were stored for the major building works completed over the last year and a half – all completed without closing the school.

Appendix C – Analysis of current place data (Sept 2023) – 1.2 (d) – the decision maker failed to consider relevant evidence when making the decision

1. Latest Data: The September Cabinet report is not based on the latest information about school vacancy data.
2. Proposed Outcomes will not be achieved: The proposals will lead to a further reduction in school places (from current vacancy data) of 60 places rather than the 135 places quoted in the May report.
3. Vacancies in faith schools: A large proportion of the vacancies are in faith schools and the target of 5 – 10% cannot and should not be reached without addressing vacancies in

these schools. The Council may not be fully responsible for them, like the community schools, but it has to encourage the relevant faith bodies to take action.

4. Not sufficient places: Analysis of vacancies at schools closest to the four proposed for closure demonstrates that there are insufficient places

1. Latest Data

The Schools Estates Strategy reports seeks viable sustainable solutions to address falling rolls. The May Cabinet report highlighted that in January 2023 Reception vacancies were 21% and were projected to rise to 25% over the next few years (without taking any action). It stated that the aim is to operate vacancy rates across all year groups at about 5 – 10%. The May Cabinet report states that the proposal to close four schools (close two and merge four into two) will lead to a total reduction of 135 Reception places per year:

- De Beauvoir close 30 places
- Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate 30 places
- Baden Powel and Nightingale amalgamate 30 places
- Randal Cremer closure 45 places

The September Cabinet report still refers to over 600 empty places in Reception classes alone (21% surplus). I think this is based on the School Organisation Plan (SOP) which is reviewed annually. However this is a dynamic situation and school vacancy data is rapidly changing as;

- Pupils move in and out of the borough
- Pupils move between schools
- School review budgets and change their structure and number of forms*

*There seems to be a discrepancy between the official PAN and an unofficial PAN where schools are requesting that their pupil numbers are capped at a certain level.

The latest school vacancy data (circulated by LB Hackney Education on 19th September) shows very different figures! It has 391 empty places in Reception classes which has reduced the vacancy rate to 14.5%. Across all year groups, the vacancy rate has reduced to 12.7%.

2. Achieving the proposed outcomes

If you look at the proposals again, based on the latest school vacancy data then they are not as effective at reducing school places as initially anticipated, with a reduction of only 60 places rather than 135 places.

a) De Beauvoir closure

SOP states that the PAN here is 30 for 2022-23 and 2023-24 but the school is actually operating with an unofficial PAN of 15 per year – this is reflected in the latest vacancy rates. Therefore the proposed closure will only lead to a further reduction of 15 places.

b) Colvestone and Princess May amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Colvestone and 60 for Princess May so that closing Colvestone would reduce PAN by 30 places. However Princess May has already undertaken an unofficial reduction in its PAN from 60 to 30. If two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places!**

c) Baden Powell and Nightingale amalgamate

SOP states that the PAN is 30 for Baden Powell and 30 for Nightingale. The May Cabinet report states that the amalgamation of these two schools would reduce PAN by 30 places. However as stated above, if two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then **there is NO reduction in overall places**. This is acknowledged in the September Cabinet report as the PAN for Nightingale increases from 30 – 60 so no overall reduction.

Therefore this proposal seems to be about the better utilisation of school premises.

d) Randall Cremer closure

SOP states that the PAN for Randall Cremer is 45 and this is reflected in the latest school vacancy data. This proposal will lead to a reduction of 45 places.

3. Vacancies in Faith Schools

The latest school vacancy figures show that the vacancy rates in faith schools are significantly higher than in other schools. Across the borough there are 391 empty Reception places across all schools, and the vacancy rate of 14.5%. In the 14 faith schools, there are 136 empty Reception places – over $\frac{1}{3}$ of places in only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the schools. The vacancy rate for Reception in faith schools is 30%!

For all year groups, the vacancy rate across the whole borough is 12.7%. When considering just faith schools, the vacancy rate for all year groups doubles to 24%.

The Cabinet report acknowledges that the faith schools have responded to the crisis by reducing their Published Admissions Numbers (as other schools have done). It also highlights that the Council has limited powers in relation to the faith schools – they can suggest reductions in PAN but cannot enforce any stronger measures such as closure or merger (as they have done with the community schools).

Looking at the above figures, the Council will not achieve its stated aim of 5 – 10% vacancy rate across the borough unless further action is taken in faith schools. It is neither sufficient nor appropriate to only take action in community schools. They must encourage the relevant faith bodies to have these conversations and make difficult decisions about their school in Hackney as well, but there is no evidence of this in the Cabinet report.

4. Not sufficient places

The Cabinet report Appendix H presents useful information about the nearest schools and vacancies for each of the four schools proposed for closure. Appendix I to O presents a heat

map of the families addresses against school vacancies for each year group. It concludes that across the borough there are sufficient vacancies for all children who need places.

A key issue is distance and the Cabinet report is inconsistent in its application of an appropriate distance to travel to school. It acknowledges that the statutory distance is 2 miles – on that basis a family should be able to travel to almost any school in the borough and there are times when the report seems to expect that. It is a difficult issue because families do generally want to go to a school nearby but quite often they will travel longer distances to keep a child at a familiar school if they had to move away.

When they undertook the options appraisal around potential amalgamation, it is clear that they considered a much smaller distance. So schools selected for merger were generally less than 0.5 miles apart so that the total distance was approx 1 mile.

The latest vacancy data shows that both Princess May and Holy Trinity school have restructured into one-form throughout all year groups and have minimal vacancies, which would be a significant change to Appendices H – O.

We have prepared a report looking at the vacancies at the nearby schools for all of the schools proposed for closure. If both De Beauvoir and Colvestone school close then there are not sufficient places at local schools to accommodate all the pupils. Many of the vacancies are in faith schools or schools across the border in Islington. Please see full analysis and figures in the separate report.

Appendix D – 1.2 (e) – the decision would not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted

- Current pupil / place data suggests that parents in south west Hackney are being forced to choose either a faith school (because it is the closest school with vacancies) or a school out of borough for local provision.
- This is a choice created by the focus of closures in too small a geographic area and is a direct consequence of the consultation. Challenged at Cabinet it appears that no consideration has been made as to the possible (and now actual) consequences of over-targeting a specific area in this manner.
- The Cabinet report does not look at the specific circumstances for each of the proposed school closures. They are different and it is important that each proposal is assessed individually – as requested by public questions and through individual representations to the Pre- and Informal Consultation – in terms of the impact it will have on the Council target of reducing Reception places and the affect on school options/ parental choice in that part of the borough.

In the south west area of the borough, a lot of pupils have already moved away from Randal Cremer and this has already affected the vacancy rates at local schools. There are more details in the full report submitted to Cabinet (Sept 2023) but a few figures are highlighted below. There are still 118 pupils (YR – Y5) looking for new school places. In the top ten closest schools, there are JUST enough places to accommodate them all. Year 3 is particularly tight because St John the Baptist has restructured this year to one-form entry and has limited vacancies.

If you exclude the vacancies at the three church schools, then there are NO vacancies at other schools in Year 2 and insufficient places for children in Year R, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4. So families either choose the faith schools or look further afield but the options are limited;

- More faith schools but with limited vacancies
- Popular community schools with limited vacancies
- Tower Hamlets/Islington community schools have plenty of vacancies
- A school that is rated by Ofsted as Requires Improvement

The circumstances suggest that there is a lack of local vacancies in non-faith schools. The September Cabinet report explained the alternative options that had been considered for Randall Cremer. It concluded there was no merger options as no schools nearby were large enough to accommodate all the pupils but there were vacancies at nearby schools.. However there are now approx 20 children per year group that need spaces and are struggling to find them so are there alternative options?

- i) Keep Randall Cremer open as one-form entry
- ii) Merge Randall Cremer with another local school (increase PAN in nearby school by half-form per year group if necessary)
- iii) Close Thomas Fairchild instead (this school has been rated as Requires Improvement since 2017 Ofsted visit. It is also struggling from falling roll as the PAN was capped at 30 (from 60) in 2020-21 and officially reduced in 2021-22).

In Dalston, Holy Trinity and Princess May schools have restructured with a temporary cap on their admissions number at 30 rather than 60 for all year groups. There are significantly less vacancies and there are NOT sufficient places at the neighbouring schools for all children at De Beauvoir and Colvestone schools, particularly in Year 3. It is a similar picture to the south west – the community schools are largely full and the vacancies are in faith schools or two Islington schools. If you exclude the vacancies at the faith schools, then there are a shortage of places in Reception, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4.

It is not in resident's interests to force families into faith schools that they do not want or a school out of borough.

Are there alternatives in Dalston?

The September Cabinet report explained the alternative that it had considered for De Beauvoir – either merger with Randall Cremer or Princess May but it was felt that both schools were too far away and that a merger with Princess May would not stabilise numbers.

Pupils from Colvestone are guaranteed a place at Princess May but;

- Families at Colvestone have consistently said during consultation that they do not want to move to this school
- The restructure at Princess May means they have capped places and have limited vacancies. They could be forced to take more pupils but this is unlikely to be sustainable financially and may not stabilise numbers.

The considered alternatives for Colvestone school were to;

- Merge with Princess May at Colvestone site but there is insufficient capacity
- Merger Colvestone with other schools in Blossom Federation but there are too far away
- Merge De Beauvoir with Colvestone at Colvestone but this was not feasible initially based on pupil numbers. It acknowledges that due to drop in pupil numbers this is now a feasible option but is not preferred due to Colvestone's financial position.

Whilst the overall objective is to reduce vacancy rates, this has been achieved in Dalston through temporary capping of number at two local schools and it is no longer appropriate to close both one-form community schools in the area and force families towards faith school or out of borough. These options need to be looked at again.

Colvestone has a historic deficit of nearly £0.5m from 3 – 4 years ago from the previous leadership. It has addressed these challenges and has achieved an in-year budget surplus in 2021-22 and in 2022-23 and is projecting a small in-year deficit for 2023-24 due to the new leadership and financial management with Blossom Federation. If the school closes then the Council will be liable for the deficit.

There is some dispute between the Council and the Save Colvestone campaign about the future pupil and financial projections for the school. The Council argues that the figures are unrealistic and Colvestone is particularly unsustainable, though this was disputed at Cabinet without satisfactory response (see: failure to fully disclose financial data). However an immediate increase in pupil numbers (by merging Colvestone with De Beauvoir) would clearly improve the financial position and create a sustainable school with a stable roll.

The dismissal of the merger (adding more pupils) due to the financial position (which is created by low pupil numbers) is a circular argument.

4. Failure to conduct a legal consultation:

Included here is the Pre-Action Protocol Letter for Judicial Review prepared for the Save Colvestone campaign group by our legal representation and sent to Hackney Council during the Informal Consultation.

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11 September 2023

**PRE-ACTION PROTOCOL LETTER FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW
LETTER BEFORE CLAIM
THIS LETTER REQUIRES YOUR URGENT ATTENTION**

Dear Madams and Sirs

Potential legal challenge to the decision to put forward Colvestone Primary School for a statutory process for closure and “amalgamation” with Princess May School

1. This is a letter before action sent in accordance with the pre-action protocol for judicial review.

Claimant

2. Colvestone Family and Staff Association, a legally registered charity, acting on behalf of Save Colvestone Primary School (“**Save Colvestone**”), a group of Colvestone parents and carers (“**the Proposed Claimant**”).

Proposed Defendant

3. Hackney Council (“the Potential Defendant”).

Decision(s) to be Challenged

4. The ongoing decisions to put forward Colvestone Primary School for the statutory process for closure and “amalgamation” with Princess May School, including but not limited to informal consultation carried out from 5 June – 16 July 2023 and the decisions made subsequent to the informal consultation to progress the statutory process.

Interested Parties

5. (1) Colvestone Primary School; (2) The Governing Body of Colvestone Primary School (3) the Blossom Federation.
6. Should you consider that there are other third parties with a distinct interest who should be served as an Interested Party in the proposed proceedings, please provide us with their details and an explanation of their interest.

Factual background

7. There is a long and complex factual background, but the salient points are these. Colvestone Primary School experienced a period of instability in 2021-2022, but from the Summer term of 2022, the School was working intensively with the Council to stabilise matters. There were a number of meetings from June 2022 – January 2023. Steps taken included the School deciding to partner with the Blossom Foundation (note that partnership with Princess May was rejected as an option) and a school resource management advisers (“SRMA”) audit of the School’s financial position. At no point during this period did the Council mention the potential for Colvestone Primary School to be closed or amalgamated.
8. On 30 January 2023, the Council’s School Estates met with the senior leadership of the School, unminuted, to have an initial conversation about possible steps being taken by the Council in relation to school closures, with an indication that Colvestone Primary met some of the criteria for consideration. A further meeting was held on 22 February, where “amalgamation” with Princess May School was proposed.

9. It should be clear that what was, and is, being proposed is the closure of Colvestone. The terms “merger” or “amalgamation” with Princess May only mean that parents/families are offered a place at that school. There is no actual merger, nor any amalgamation of staff or quality of education or ethos etc.
10. The selection criteria¹ identified by the Council for schools to be considered for closure were:
- (1) Schools most financially at-risk;
 - (2) Number of vacant places
 - (3) Physical size of schools and suitability of sites to host a merger
 - (4) Geographic partnership options (such as the existence of other schools within walking distance)
 - (5) Whether new neighbourhoods and new-build estates will create significantly more need for school places in the future
 - (6) Current Ofsted grading and projected outcomes for pupils
 - (7) Community impact
11. In March 2023, the governors and leadership team of Colvestone Primary School opposed the school being considered for amalgamation or closure even at the initial stages of an informal proposal, on the basis that the school was in a unique position, different from the other schools under consideration. In particular they drew attention to the financial stability of the School and stabilising roll, and that the partnership with the Blossom Federation, which had contributed to that stability, was in its early stages. It also drew attention to the high proportion of children at Colvestone on the SEND register.
12. Despite this the Council moved to a pre-informal consultation. Save Colvestone prepared a detailed submission, in particular setting out how Colvestone Primary had delivered a surplus school budget for the year ending 2022/23 and projected an in-year surplus for the years ending 2023/24 and 2024/25; and that a survey of 73 households with children at the School indicated that 87% would not agree to their children going to Princess May School. The Council (through Paul Senior) agreed that any representations made by 1 May would be considered in the preparation of the Briefing Report for the Cabinet meeting on 22 May on whether to go to the next stage. Save Colvestone’s detailed 63-page dossier was submitted

¹ <https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/primary-schools-potential-changes>

on Monday 1 May. The Council then erroneously suggested the material was submitted too late for inclusion. The Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy – falling rolls Open Report (CE S190) (“**the Report to Cabinet**”), published on 12 May for consideration by the Council’s Cabinet, appended Save Colvestone’s representations. Initially the representations withheld from publication, but they were published on 19 May after challenge by Save Colvestone. However, the substance of the Report failed to address the majority of Save Colvestone’s points, failing either to challenge them, to adjust the proposals in light of them, or even to acknowledge them in any substantive form.

13. On 22 May, the Council’s Cabinet agreed to move on to the informal consultation stage. The parts of the Report to Cabinet concerning Colvestone Primary School proceeded on the basis of a projection that 120 children from the School would move to Princess May, but without having carried out any survey of parents at the School. It contained a table purporting to set out the financial position at Colvestone, showing it to be in deficit, but did not provide any information from the three-year projected budget produced by the new Senior Leadership Team (provided to the Council in November 2022) or the independent school resource management advisers (“**SMRA**”) report, which affirmed the projections and identified further highly achievable savings on operating costs. These two reports confirmed both the financial viability of the school and its capacity to pay down the deficit.
14. The Report to Cabinet considered expected demand for school places, but focused on the short to medium term, including when considering whether planned new housing or regeneration would impact the demand.
15. The Report to Cabinet provided information about an air quality review which, when it went before the Cabinet, showed the 2021 NO₂ annual concentration at Colvestone Primary School as 23µg/m³, and at Princess May 1 as 23µg/m³, and Princess May 2 as 32µg/m³. However, this second figure was recorded in the Cabinet’s Decision Document as 20µg/m³, causing concern that the Cabinet had not appreciated the true air quality impact on children moving to Princess May School. When Save Colvestone pointed out the error, the Cabinet Decision Document was amended.

16. The informal consultation ran from 2 June to 16 July 2023. The consultation document described the consultation as considering “a proposal to amalgamate (‘merge’) Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School. If agreed, the amalgamation will result in a single primary school being established on one site for 60 pupils in each year group.” (emphasis added). It should be noted that this suggests the establishment of a new school, which is not possible as any new school is automatically a free school under ‘free school presumption’, as warned in the Strategic Plan; Princess May School is already “established”.
17. The document did explain that “amalgamation” meant closing Colvestone on 31 August 2024 and Princess May school “providing spaces for displaced children”, “if that is what the parents prefer for their children”. It did not explain that, if fewer than the 120 projected children moved from Colvestone to Princess May, then Princess May is also at risk of closure, or that, even if 120 children did transfer, there would still be approximately a 23% vacancy at Princess May.
18. The consultation document provided general information about the financing of schools, stating that “[s]chools with unfilled places lose £6,484 per place every year”, but did not provide, even in high-level form, any of the financial information verified by the SMRA report showing Colvestone School to be financially viable. It did not address SEND at all.
19. Save Colvestone provided a detailed submission on 16 July 2023. This referred again to two surveys of parents at Colvestone, which showed that 95.7% of parents surveyed did not include Princess May in any of their six preferences when selecting a school, and that 87% would not send their children to Princess May, with a further 6% undecided.
20. Save Colvestone’s consultation response identified both the key benefits and the key risks of closing Colvestone and included information on:
 - (1) the financial position of Colvestone Primary School;
 - (2) future demand, including in light of the adopted Local Plan, the draft Dalston Plan and the fully-funded 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent;
 - (3) the air quality impact of closing the school and offering provision at Princess May School; and

(4) the high number of children with SEND at Colvestone and the risk of significant cost if children have to be sent out of the borough to private schools.

21. It should be noted that the process of pre-informal consultation and informal consultation has already harmed Colvestone Primary School. The threat of closure is enough to cause pupils to move or to change parental school preferences. Save Colvestone is aware of at least one parent who applied for a place at Colvestone, only to be advised by Council officials that the school was closing. The extent of artificial suppression of pupil numbers is difficult to gauge. Save Colvestone considers that moving Colvestone School forward in the process and issuing a formal statutory notice would be even more damaging to the School.

Proposed Grounds of Challenge

22. Save Colvestone considers that the Council's decision-making regarding the proposed "amalgamation" of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May School is unlawful for the following reasons:
- (1) Failure to take into account the relevant statutory guidance;
 - (2) Failure to comply with the public sector equality duty;
 - (3) Failure to take material considerations into account;
 - (4) Failure to conduct a lawful informal consultation.

Proposed Ground 1 – Statutory Guidance

23. When making decisions about closing Colvestone Primary School, the Council is required to have regard to the relevant statutory guidance – "Opening and closing maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers" (January 2023) ("the Statutory Guidance"). Where there is such a duty, the decision-maker must proceed on a proper understanding of what the guidance requires. The decision-maker is also obliged to take the guidance into account and to act in accordance with the guidance, unless clear and cogent reasons are given for departing from the guidance: see, eg, *R(Britwell Parish Council) v Slough Borough Council* [2019] EWHC 988 (Admn) at §§ 27 and 33; *R(TG) v Lambeth LBC* [2011] EWCA Civ 526; [2012] PTSR 364 at §17 per Wilson LJ.
24. The Council proposes to close the School because of the fall in predicted demand and there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate the displaced pupils. This reason is addressed explicitly in the Statutory Guidance,

which requires the Council to consider whether there is predicted demand “in the medium to long term”. It is understood that is the reason on which the Council is relying.²

25. The Council has consistently considered predicted demand on the basis of short to medium term, rather than medium to long term. This is particularly apparent when the Council considered the demand from planned new housing in the borough (addressed further below). The Report to Cabinet explicitly considers this in relation to “demand in the short to medium term”.
26. While there is no definition in the Guidance of what “medium term” and “long term” mean, the Council’s other relevant documents³ define medium term as 5-10 years and long term as 10-15 years.
27. The Council has either failed to understand the Statutory Guidance, or is departing from the Guidance but without giving clear and cogent reasons for that departure.

Proposed Ground 2 – Public Sector Equality Duty

28. The public sector equality duty (“PSED”) is laid down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty is to have “due regard” to the relevant matters, and although this does not require the achievement of particular outcomes, it is not “a question of “ticking boxes: Aikens LJ, giving the judgment of the Divisional Court, in *R(Brown) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* [2008] EWHC 3158 (Admin). The duty must be “exercised in substance, with rigour, and with an open mind. There is no duty to make express reference to the regard paid to the relevant duty, but reference to it and to the relevant criteria reduces the scope for argument. The duty must be fulfilled before and at the time when a particular policy is being considered. It must also be fulfilled by the actual decision-maker; knowledge of the duty by another officer is not sufficient: see *R(Danning) v Sedgemore DC* [2021] EWHC 1649 (Admin) at §55.
29. An important evidential element in the demonstration of the discharge of the duty is the recording of the steps taken by the decision maker in seeking to meet the

² See section 3.5.2 of the Report to Cabinet. The Council has not identified any other reason, for example, that the School is not considered viable. If the Council is not relying on the reason stated in the Guidance, but on some other reason, that should be made clear when responding to this letter.

³ <https://hackney.gov.uk/dalston-spd#happen>;
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JKYYxGAtynP0NsxumGUAq_tR70Lg90_a/view eg pg 146.

statutory requirements: *R (BAPIO Action Ltd) v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2007] EWHC 199 (QB) (Stanley Burnton J (as he then was), confirmed by McCombe LJ in *Bracking v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* [2013] EWCA Civ 1345, [2014] EqLR 60 at §25.

30. The importance of the PSED was emphasised by the Court of Appeal in *R(Bridges) v Chief Constable of South Wales* [2020] EWCA Civ 1058 at §176ff. The Court held that the duty includes a public body taking reasonable steps to obtain information about whether the decision-making would result in direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics.
31. The duty to comply with the PSED is a continuing one.
32. The Council carried out an undated Equalities Impact Assessment (“EIA”), which was provided as Appendix L to the Report to Cabinet. This demonstrates that the Council failed to comply with the PSED in at least two regards relating to Colvestone School.
33. First, although the EIA addressed children with special educational needs and disabilities (“SEND”) in general, it failed to consider the specific position at Colvestone School, which has a high percentage of children with SEND: 17.31% of pupils have special educational needs (the national average is 13.2%) and 8% of pupils have an education, health and care plan (“EHCP”), meaning that 25% of children have SEND. The 25% figure was confirmed to the Council by the School in March 2023. The EIA only lists the pupils with an EHCP, indicating that the Council failed to consider the true extent of the impact.
34. Furthermore, the EIA suggested that the outcome for pupils with EHCPs “may be improved”, because “the educational quality of any school they move to is graded either ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted”, which ignores the fact that Colvestone is already graded ‘Good’.
35. Second, the Council has wholly failed to factor air quality impact into the PSED analysis. Negative air quality impacts are known to harm those who are more vulnerable, in particular, children. Hackney’s own Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2025 identifies school communities as amongst the most susceptible groups to the

serious health impacts of air pollution within its strategy to improve air quality throughout the borough.

36. Air pollution levels are significantly higher at Princess May than at Colvestone. Princess May is on a main road (the A10); Colvestone is on a quiet back street, part of a fully-funded re-greening project which will further improve air quality, meaning that closing Colvestone will inevitably expose children to poorer air quality.

Proposed Ground 3 – Material Considerations

37. There are a number of considerations which are obviously material to the Council's decisions which do not appear to have been taken into account.
38. First, the relevant financial information does not support Colvestone's inclusion, even at pre-consultation stage. The only financial information that the Council has in relation to the financial position at Colvestone is the three-year projected budget produced by the new Senior Leadership Team (provided to the Council in November 2022) and the SMRA report, which affirmed the projections and identified further highly achievable savings on operating costs. Given that these two reports confirm both the financial viability of the School and its capacity to pay down the deficit, it is unclear on what basis the Council has concluded that Colvestone is one of the schools most financially at risk, or has "a budget deficit in top 10 schools raising the most financial concern" (per pg 42 of the Report to Cabinet).
39. Second, planning-related considerations. As the Report to Cabinet tacitly acknowledges, planned future housing and regeneration is obviously material to the predicted demand for the School. The Council has dismissed any short to medium term planning matters that weigh against the proposed school closures, but in so doing has failed to take into account the Colvestone 21st Century Street, which is a fully-funded, short-term (ie 1-2 year) initiative focused on Colvestone Crescent. The adoption of the street on which Colvestone Primary School sits as the Borough's first permanent play street plainly has the potential to increase the number of families drawn to the area, requiring a proper medium to long term analysis of the expected child yield from the development. The Council has not undertaken any such analysis.



40. As set out above, the Council has only considered the impact of proposed new housing in the short to medium term (and has not even done that lawfully). The Council does not appear to have taken any account of the fact that the Local Plan LP33 focusses growth in Hackney predominantly in the two designated town centres of Dalston and Hackney Central. The Council plans to deliver a minimum of 1,330 homes a year up to 2033 across the Borough, maximising the supply of genuinely affordable housing with up to 2,000 homes for Dalston. In Dalston, the majority of the allocated sites are clustered around Colvestone Crescent, some in very close proximity to Colvestone Primary School.
41. The draft Dalston Supplementary Planning Document (May 2021), to which weight must be given as an emerging plan in late stages of preparation, makes clear that there is a particularly high need for 3 bedroom (family) housing and that key to the vision for Dalston is child-friendly planning. Approximately 200 affordable family homes (plus others at market rates) are planned in close proximity to the School. All of this is plainly relevant to the medium and long term predicted demand for Colvestone Primary School; none of it appears to have been taken into account. Instead, the Council has undertaken a generic consideration of planning matters, which ignores the specific considerations relevant to Colvestone.
42. Furthermore, the Council does not appear to have taken into account the potential negative impact of the closure of Colvestone on proposed future housing provision and regeneration in Dalston. The School is key infrastructure, the ramifications of the removal of which are not addressed by generic reference to the need for developer contributions when infrastructure is not present. The whole point of concentrating development in Dalston is that some of the requisite the infrastructure is already there.
43. Third, SEND-related considerations. As set out above in relation to the failure to comply with the PSED, the Council has failed to take into consideration in relation to Colvestone specifically, the high proportion of children with SEND. The school has implemented a SEND strategy which has excellent feedback from parents/carers and staff. Parents chose a 1 form entry school for their children with SEND needs as this is shown to support children's emotional and wellbeing needs. This is relevant both to the medium to long term demand for places at Colvestone and to the likelihood that Colvestone parents will not choose to take up places at Princess May.

44. Colvestone's integrated provision and current surplus capacity also has the potential to save the council money otherwise spent sending children with SEND to independent / private schools outside of the borough at a cost of between £35-70,000 per pupil per year. Given that potential financial losses appear to be driving the Council's decision-making, this is further material consideration weighing against the closure: keeping Colvestone open has clear financial benefits; closing Colvestone risks the Council having to find yet more expensive out-of-borough SEND provision.
45. Fourth, community impact. Colvestone is the last surviving Birkbeck school - a historical and socially important part of London and Hackney's past. It is also by Ridley Road market, one of the most historic markets in London. It is also a key part of the Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street. The Council does not appear to have researched or obtained any information about the potential negative community impact of the closure of Colvestone School, nor does it appear to have taken these matters properly into account.

Proposed Ground 4 - Consultation

46. If a public body chooses to consult, it must do so lawfully. The basic requirements for a lawful consultation process were established in the case of *R v Brent London Borough Council, Ex p Gunning* (1985) 84 LGR 168 and are known as either the *Gunning* Principles, or the Sedley Principles, as Hodgson J set out and accepted the submissions of Mr Sedley (as he was then):
1. Consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage.
 2. The proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response.
 3. Adequate time must be given for consideration and response.
 4. The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals.
47. The Supreme Court in *Moseley* stated at §25 that it is "hard to see how any of [Sedley's] four suggested requirements could be rejected or indeed improved".

48. The *Gunning* Principles are reflected in the Cabinet Office's 'Consultation Principles 2018',⁴ to which the Court referred in *R(British Blind and Shutter Association) v SSHCLG* [2019] EWHC 3162 (Admin) at §31.
49. There is considerable case law on each of the four requirements. The focus of this proposed challenge is on the first and second requirements
- (1) formative stage: it is not a formative stage where an option of central significance has already been excluded⁵ or where a definite solution has evolved;⁶
 - (2) sufficient reasons: a consultation document must present the issues in a way that facilitates an effective response;⁷ the scope of the consultation must be clear⁸ and non-disclosure of information can, depending on the circumstances, make the consultation unlawful.⁹
50. The informal consultation failed to comply with these requirements in a number of ways. First, the consultation did not take place at a formative stage, but at a time when a "definite solution" had evolved. This is evidenced by the following:
- (1) The Report to Cabinet set out efficiencies and innovations which could be implemented to manage and balance budgets (pg 37), then claimed a far more limited set of options has been tried (pg 38), stating that further details would be in the school specific section. These measures are not addressed in the school specific section (pgs 46-51), nor are they addressed in the 'Details of Alternative Options Considered and Rejected' section (pgs 57-58), where 'doing nothing' or 'alternate mergers' are the only other options on the table;
 - (2) The fact that the consultation only concerned school closures and did not invite consideration of alternative models and options to reduce vacancies in the local school system; and
 - (3) Officials on the Hackney Council Admissions and Pupil Benefits Team Helpline told a parent explicitly that Colvestone School was closing.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>.

⁵ *R(Montpeliers & Trevors Association) v City of Westminster* [2005] EWHC 16 (Admin) at §§25-29.

⁶ *R v North East Devon Health Authority; ex p Pow* (1998) 1 CCLR 280.

⁷ *R(Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust) v Joint Committee of Primary Care Trusts* [2012] EWCA Civ 472 §9. See also *Holborn Studios Ltd v Hackney LBC* [2020] EWHC 1509 (Admin) at §71.

⁸ *R(Jones) v Denbeighshire CC* [2016] EWHC 2074 (Admin) at §§70-74.

⁹ See the considerations set out in *R(Law Society) v Lord Chancellor* [2019] 1 WLR 1649 at §73.



51. Second, the consultation was in breach of the second *Gunning* principle, for the following reasons:

- (1) The consultation documentation and surrounding information did not present the issues in a way that facilitated an effective response, as they caused confusion about the “amalgamation” of the schools and failed to make clear (a) that both Colvestone and Princess May schools could close, depending on parental choice, and (b) Colvestone staff would not be “merged” into Princess May; they would have to re-apply, only if there are vacancies. This confusion arguably meant the scope of the consultation was unclear;
- (2) The consultation document also did not facilitate an effective response simply providing an open-ended invitation to comment on the proposals, rather than giving guidance as to the information that would be helpful or needed to develop proposals for the next stage of the process. This failure has recently been highlighted by the Council’s own Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission;¹⁰
- (3) The scope of the consultation was also unclear as regards the timeframe that consultees should be considering. As set out above, in light of the Statutory Guidance, that is a medium to long term timeframe (ie 5-10 yrs to 10-15 yrs). No indication was given of this at all;
- (4) Crucial information about the true financial position of Colvestone was withheld, meaning that consultees could not properly engage with the question whether Colvestone was financially viable. Instead, the consultation focused on alleged revenue lost to the Council. These failures prejudiced consultees. They were criticised by the Council’s Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission. Both the provision of proper financial information and giving consultees a proper understanding of the financial questions on which they were being asked to provide views were crucial to the Council being able to take a decision in line with the criteria it identified for determining which schools to close;
- (5) The consultation documentation was not provided in languages other than English, despite the Council being aware that support was needed in multiple languages and platforms; and

¹⁰ <https://hackney.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s84677/Final%20Cllr%20Bramble%20-%20School%20Estates%20Strategy%20-%20Google%20Docs.pdf>

- (6) The Report to Cabinet identified that a wide range of stakeholders would be included in the consultation, including “all residents”, but that group was excluded from the stakeholders to whom the consultation document was sent.
52. Accordingly, the consultation was legally flawed and does not provide a lawful basis for the Council to move to the next stage as regards Colvestone School.

Details of Information Sought

53. The Council is required to make full and frank disclosure in judicial review proceedings. Save Colvestone has already made a freedom of information request to the Council which has not been answered satisfactorily. The Council is asked to disclose the information sought, namely the original, amended 1906 and subsequent Deeds of the Colvestone Primary School building, receipt of which was taken by the Council in 1990.
54. On 27 July 2023, Save Colvestone made a request to Councillor Garbett for information about reception intake and allocations. The Council is asked to provide the information sought, details of which are annexed to this letter.

Details of the Action the Council is Expected to Take

55. In light of the above apparent errors of law, Save Colvestone asks that the Council removes Colvestone Primary School from the proposal to close schools.
56. The Council is asked to respond to this letter in writing within 14 days (ie by 25 September 2023) so that Save Colvestone may consider whether further legal action is necessary.

ADR Proposals

57. We would welcome any proposals to engage on the substantive issues raised by the draft legislation so as to resolve or narrow the dispute.

Other applications

58. If the claim proceeds the Proposed Claimant will apply for a protective costs order (PCO) pursuant to CPR 45.43 on the basis that the claim is an environmental matter in light of the air quality and human health impacts raised: *Venn v Sec State*



CLG [2015] 1 WLR 2328. If you disagree that this is an Aarhus matter or with the making of a PCO please give your reasons.

59. If it is not accepted that the Proposed Claimant is entitled to Aarhus costs protection, then the Proposed Claimant will invite the Court to make an order capping the parties' costs liability in accordance with its power at section 88(6) of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015.

Details of Legal Advisors Dealing with this Claim

60. **Counsel**

[Faint, illegible text, likely representing contact information for legal advisors]

Address for Reply and Service of Court Documents

61. You are requested to respond by email to ensure we have your response in a timely manner. Please send your response to all the following e-mail addresses:

- *[Faint email address]*
- *[Faint email address]*
- *[Faint email address]*

Yours sincerely

[Handwritten signature]

[Faint text, likely name of the signatory]

[Faint text, likely address or contact details for the organization]



Annex: Reception Intake and Allocations Information Sought

1. For the 2023 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant:
 - a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed
 - b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
2. For the 2022 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant:
 - a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed
 - b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
3. For the 2021 Reception intake, for each of the individual applications that included Colvestone on their list of preferences, please inform the Proposed Claimant:
 - a. at which place (number) on the preference list Colvestone was placed
 - b. which preference (number) was the school offered by Hackney Education to the applicant.
4. Also, please provide the full postcodes of each of the allocations made to the following schools for Reception intake in the years 2021 and 2022 (and 2023 if available):

Halley House
Mossbourne Parkside
Princess May
St Matthias
De Beauvoir
Holy Trinity CofE
Our Lady and St Josephs



5. Annex A: Informal Consultation responses including expert testimony, Briefing Report – Informal Consultation'

Annex of Informal Consultation responses including expert testimony

Owing to the failure to respond in detail to many of the responses to the Informal Consultation they are included here for re-submission. Included is the submission to the Informal Consultation by the Governing Body of Colvestone Primary School. Attention should be drawn to the expert testimony (flagged in the official summary of the Consultation Responses produced by Kwest, also included here - Chapter 6).

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Excludes comments submitted by respondent(s) who requested that their comments not be shared in public domain.

Comments On Proposals - Consultation Questionnaire

- closing a school is very expensive (the Council estimate well over a million pounds, plus £250-300,000 each year to maintain closed buildings). The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus - how can closing it make financial sense?

- Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.
- Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community.
- Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense

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- the Council say that it can re-open the school if demand increases in the future, but if it does this under current legislation all new schools are automatically Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land (and will have spent a huge amount of money in the process).

- the site has multiple protections - two Grade 2 listings and an outdoor classroom / playground that is an Asset of Community Value - it is not a building easily repurposed but it is an excellent building purpose-built as a school. We also strongly suspect that it has protected educational use and are searching for the deeds.

- with the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site.

- small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities (the school is particularly strong in integrating children with SEN - special educational needs or learning support plans - into the wider community to the advantage all pupils). The small community context is key to this. A single form school enables kids to be supported by their peers across age groups and produces a real sense of belonging and pride in their community.

- Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites (200 of which will be affordable family housing). As a small school it only needs a small number of kids per year to be full - closing it would be incredibly shortsighted (the council should consider demand for places in the mid- to long-term, as per statutory guidance, but it is not factoring long-term demand at all).

- Colvestone is central to the 21st Century Street - the play street and re-greening project that joins Colvestone Crescent to the market. Removing the school will rip the heart out of this project and the neighbourhood.

- closing a school is very expensive (the Council estimate well over a million pounds, plus £250-300,000 each year to maintain closed buildings). The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus - how can closing it make financial sense?

- the Council say that it can re-open the school if demand increases in the future, but if it does this under current legislation all new schools are automatically Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land (and will have spent a huge amount of money in the process).

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- Colvestone is central to the 21st Century Street - the play street and re-greening project that joins Colvestone Crescent to the market. Removing the school will rip the heart out of this project and the neighbourhood.

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

- I will not send my child to Princess May, it was never on my list of chosen schools. The council has not given us any other options, which does not feel like a consultation but a done deal. 98% of parents i have spoken to have no intention in sending their children to princess May for different reasons.

- Princess May is on a major road and has high pollution levels (which every study has demonstrated particularly affect young people). It is also a really big (double form) school.

- The council has not actually consulted the parents, meaning the "consultation sessions" were just about telling us how much money schools are loosing. We have not been given the overall figure for the budget you are measuring this "loss" from. We have not been presented with data on financial viability, we have not been shown financial modelling (except one that is several years old made by the school itself) that takes all aspects of the proposed closure into account, there is a clear lack of long term thinking, including the refusal to assess mid to long term impacts while that is your policy. No one has spoken to the community, to the market traders, to local parents. Your "consultation team" has not been interested in hearing about our concerns.

- Colvestone is a very diverse school with high number of SEND as well as kids with free school meals, and all the school children whose lives you are proposing to disrupt are in such schools. There is a fundamentally unequal treatment as none of the schools in the more wealthy parts of hackney are in danger.

- Colvestone has a really strong community, and is really important for the wider community of Dalston. Which is why we chose it. Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.

- Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes the commitment to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. This is part of an important move to try and get families to stay in the borough and keeping this local school is a huge part of that.

- the closures planned are unfairly hitting dalston, with too many community schools close together being affected. You have not put any faith schools in this plan, which means there is nowhere left to go for pupils who do not want to go to faith schools. Leaving the one school with a strong community to continue, as a single form school, would be a fair way to rectify this problem.

I don't have an issue with the Council adjusting school numbers for falling birth rates in the Borough. That seems sensible, but there are 2 concerns I have over the proposed closure of Colvestone/ merging them with Princess May.

The first is pollution. Why move a school set back from the main road, to one that must be far more polluted? Princess May's right on the main road. Air quality matters.

The second is over the reasons for the fall in the numbers at Colvestone over recent years. A lot of the reason for the decline in numbers there is that parents were unhappy, so a lot have moved their children - mostly to Shacklewell. It seems now that that the statistical fall in numbers is being used as a justification to close the school. That seems unfair as it's a hidden factor in the debate.

BP school is over 30 year old, staff are very friendly and dedicated to their jobs and pupils. They take responsibilities really seriously: looking after the kids, helping them with classwork and encourage to achieve the best grades of education. Teachers gives regularly updates to the parents how their kids where been in the classroom that day. At this moment school has a few amazing young pianists, few tallented chess players, 2 wonderful violinists and etc.

Moving to new school would be really stressful for everyone: teachers, parents, pupils. Some teachers would loss the job, some pupils would development anxiety and stress, friendship between kids would be broken and all school structure would be shattered.

- Colverstone is a well loved school, and one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.
- Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.
- Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - will negatively impact the community. This school is needed where it is.
- Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.
- Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.

Princess May 01

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

PRINCESS MAY 03

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a badly thought-out and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Currently Colvestone is the only local school with such a high number of SEND children because many of them cannot go anywhere else, cannot go to a bigger school, and have found at Colvestone the only nurturing environment that means they can remain in school. Otherwise it means for many of these kids staying at home as there is no SEND provision of this level anywhere else locally. The council knows this and will spend 70k/year per child sending them somewhere really far away to get the care they are getting at colvestone right now.
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Closing Colvestone would have a devastating impact on Dalston and the community. As a single form entry non faith school it offers a uniquely attractive option to parents wishing to move INTO the area. 2) It’s a much needed source of customers for Ridley Road market. 3) The Dalston plan includes housing for 200 families and colvestone is the nearest primary school to those. 4) Colvestone has a covenant attached to the deeds since it was gifted to the Borough which stipulates that the building can’t be used for anything other than education. So it can’t be turned into flats (unlike princess May and De Beauvoir) 5) colvestone IS financially viable. It’s already in surplus this academic year, and needs only a handful of children to be at capacity numbers wise. 6) the air pollution at Princess May is higher than at Colvestone. As per hackneys own records. Does the Borough really want to put children at an increased health risk from air pollution and be responsible for that? 7) over 90% of colvestone parents polled stated that princess may was not in their original 6 schools applied for. It’s not an option to send Colvestone kids there. In addition Paul senior confirmed that Princess May is probably in the list of 10/12 schools to be considered for consultation next year. Fundamentally immoral of the LEA to expect Colvestone pupils and families to go through this process more than once; surely? 8) the school sits at the heat of the plans for Hackneys first 21st century street in colvestone crescent. 9) SEN children often manage better in a small school and environment, as seen by the increase in average no of SEN kids at Colvestone. Why remove that option for Dalston parents?

Objections to the Informal Consultation by Hackney Council to ‘merge’ Colvestone Primary School on the Princess May site, authored by the Governing Body of Colvestone Primary School, July 2023

Below are the objections and concerns over the proposed closure of Colvestone. It is referred to as a closure because that is what is happening. The ‘merger’/‘amalgamation’ of Colvestone to Princess May only means that parents/families are offered a place there. There is no merger/amalgamation of staff/quality of education etc. The governors feel that the use of the terms “merger”/‘amalgamation’ are purely used so that the metrics of closing 2 schools instead of 4 look better for the council.

Part 1 is the objections and concerns against the ‘factors considered by the council’

Part 2 is a response to the statement relating to the benefits of merging schools stated on the website.

Part 1: The objections are taken point by point from the website <https://education.hackney.gov.uk/content/primary-schools-potential-changes> and the Councils: *Factors considered by the Council when considering possible alternatives and solutions include:*

- *Schools most financially at-risk*
- *Number of vacant places*
- *Physical size of schools and suitability of sites to host a merger*
- *Geographic partnership options (such as the existence of other schools within walking distance)*
- *Whether new neighbourhoods and new-build estates will create significantly more need for school places in the future*
- *Current Ofsted grading and projected outcomes for pupils*
- *Community impact*

Point	Objections	Concerns
School at financial risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school has indicated that it would be financially viable for the next academic year and pre the decision to close would be financially viable for 23/24 ● The school has been proactive in making decision to ensure financial viability ● The partnership means that there is shared resourcing in both staff and resources making financial savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The SMRA data was in draft form and the final report seems not to have been taken into account, which indicated huge cost savings . ● The schools commissioned the SMRA report in good faith to explore and take all avenues available to get

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This partnership is continuing for the next academic year and has the potential to continue - meaning that cost savings would continue • There is an in year surplus this year and also the financial management of the school is accurate meaning the any projections are also accurate - this was not the case at the end of 21/22 • There has been a surplus for 2 years running. • The last financial year has seen significant investment in capital costs: building repairs and refurbishment, security and IT investment. These costs will not be required for future years. 	<p>a more accurate picture and to make cost saving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By using this data as a way of supporting the argument to close Colvestone, which would not have been available otherwise and also was not available for all schools in Hackney, is unfair. • Financial viability of schools is addressed in regards to a school's capacity to deal with repair and maintenance costs (3.4.3). Colvestone has made substantial capital investments over the last year to ensure that its site is fit for purpose and resilient for future years This future-proofing is not accounted for.
Number of vacant places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the initial conversation the projections for Colvestone Reception were 7. After questioning at the meetings the SLT and governing body was told that this projection was unlikely to change. However when we received the Reception offers (the first time) the number was 12. We believe that with one of the nearest schools (Shacklewell at 0.4 miles, the same distance as Princess May), being oversubscribed and with the proposed closure of Debeauvoir, (0.5 miles distance from Colvestone) Colvestone would have had more children attending the initial offers. In fact there has been a parent who was not on the list who has subsequently applied to come. • Having 40 parents tours indicates that there is interest. The context of Colvestone's change in leadership, state of the building (there was scaffolding around it, lack of care and a 	<p>The projections were changed from 7 to an actual figure of 12 indicating that modelling data was not accurate There seems to be no account taken of changing circumstances for other schools such as the other proposed closures and also how this would affect nearby schools - this was modelling that the governors asked for at the initial meetings with HackneyEd. (minuted by Hackney Ed)</p>

	<p>hall that was out of action due to Hackney’s errors) and resourcing of the school meant it was less desirable than the nearby school. This situation has been remedied and the stability of the partnership would have meant that this year it would have been a preferred choice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is also ‘easier’ to fill a 1 form entry school than a 2 form entry school. Other schools in the local area (Princess May being one of them) are operating as a 1 form entry school even though the capacity is for 2 or 3 form entry. ● There have been in year admissions this year and less movement compared to the pandemic years. ● The fact that there is not a mass exodus after the announcement shows the desire for a 1-form community school with Colvestone’s uniqueness is needed. 	
<p>Physical size of school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Colvestone is a 1-form entry school which would not be able to grow into a 2 form entry school. However, Colvestone uses all the space creatively. As a 1-form entry school it has a dedicated art, music and computing space and has more than enough capacity to be a full 1-form entry school with additional space to provide high quality of education. In Colvestone’s case the concern around having large schools that are a financial drain does not apply as it is an appropriately sized site. In the cabinet meeting 22nd May: <i>‘Schools with excess physical space and large sites Reduced budgets impact on schools’ ability to set aside sufficient budget to deal with day to day repair and maintenance issues as resources must be prioritised to deal with staffing and delivery of education. This can have a significant impact on larger school buildings and sites with fewer pupils which will have higher premises costs. Underinvestment in the premises will create longer term issues and increased need for capital funding to deal with a lack of maintenance.</i> As pointed out in previous objections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been no risk assessment or costs of the size of schools and ongoing costs done in any financial modelling. Comparisons of schools and cost have not been made.

	<p>this was not the case for Colvestone which is a 1-form entry school with appropriate physical space. It is not a 3 or 4 storey Victorian building. Currently all parts of the school are utilised and used. There are no larger areas not in use yet still having to be heated and maintained. In addition investment into capital works such as the school hall, the roof etc. mean that the school premises are in a manageable state for the near future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition there is a school keeper's house that could be used more creatively to support children at Colvestone and across the borough as an ARP at a future date as Hackney have secured more SEND funding. Historically at other schools, school keeper's houses were looked at and developed to provide such places. There is precedent. In addition, in the Estates Strategy doc it states that schools should be supported to repurpose school property to support them economically (1) and specifically to expand SEND provision (2). 	
Geographic partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing Princess May as the 'merger/amalgamation' school was done on distance. There seems to have been no other consideration that Debeauvoir, which is also less than a mile away (0.5miles) would be closing. Their nearest schools are church schools (1 RC) and the closest non-denominational schools would be Queensbridge - a large 2-form entry school with limited space and a full ARP) and Colvestone - a 1-form entry school with space and a good reputation for supporting children with SEND. It seems logical that Colvestone would have been a choice for some of those families. • No planning of the overlap of schools closing and their proximity to each other. With De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer closing there is more movement to other local schools, which then are full (apparently the case now). By 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been no pollution consideration of commuting to school in scope. • There have been no surveys done for parents/carers about what type of school they would like their children to attend. The ratio of community schools to faith schools and their proximity to other schools has not been analysed.

	<p>closing Colvestone - the next nearest non-denominational school near De Beauvoir (0.5 miles) - further diminishes local provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Princess May is geographically near Colvestone (0.4 miles), however travelling there involves a walk along the A10, which is a large and busy road. For young families, children with SEND and older children who cycle/scoot/walk to school, this is an additional concern. (In addition the playground is on the A10) There are no ways of walking to Princess May without a walk along this road compared to the walk from De Beauvoir to Colvestone, for which families can walk alongside it and then come out at the pedestrian crossing to Ridley Road market. Currently children living nearby to Colvestone can walk on a school street and quiet roads avoiding heavily congested and polluted areas like the A10. ● Geographical distance is a factor, however for many families who live on the east side of Colvestone, Princess May would not be geographically closer and will have a longer commute. 	
<p>New neighbourhoods and new builds will create significantly more need for school places in the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are plans for 600 new homes in Dalston, of which there are family homes. Colvestone would be their nearest school. ● There has been no strategy between Education and Planning. It was apparently clear in the council's Dalston Plan walk yesterday that those working for the planning department view Colvestone as key infrastructure / provision for the project yet this has not been considered by the school estates strategy. ● Colvestone Crescent, as part of the Dalston plan, is to be a 21st century street which has been agreed. The school is an integral part of the plan. According to the councils website: <i>As a part of our broad vision for this scheme, we</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been no discussion of the centrality of Colvestone Primary School to the Dalston Plan in any of the conversations or information put to cabinet. It is only mentioned through objections by the families of Colvestone. Again the decisions seem to not have looked at all factors involved and there is a failure to consider other plans developed by other council departments. Further, the council's committed spending on Colvestone

	<p><i>intend to deliver a new, green space, cycle parking, electric vehicle charging, a School Street, and an increase of tree canopy cover to 40% along Colvestone Crescent. How is this street going to work with no school on it?!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In addition part of the aim of the 21st Century street would be to attract people to live there. This again brings families in and Colvestone is their nearest school. 	<p>Crescent's 21st Century Street has not been considered when choosing to consult on closing Colvestone.</p>
<p>Current OFSTED grades and predicted outcomes for children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Colvestone is a 'good' school and all indications from SIP visits and one day reviews indicate that it will continue to be a good school. ● Outcomes are good and there has been a significant improvement in EYFS data this year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This as a metric is irrelevant as we keep being told that there are hardly any schools in Hackney that are not good or outstanding and Hackney is one of the top performing boroughs in KS1 and KS2 data in England.
<p>Community Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Colvestone is by Ridley Road market - one of the most historic markets in London. The impact of a school being mothballed to this historic area is unimaginable (and also under researched by Hackney) ● It is the last surviving Birkbeck school - a historical and socially important part of London and Hackney's past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been no consultation done on community impact by Hackney. ● There is no detail about what that even means! ● Again no consideration of the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Street which have been formed with the community.

Part 2: The points below demonstrate why the 'merger/amalgamation' with Princess May in terms of benefits to Colvestone are null and void - even though as Colvestone would be closed all of these points stated by the consultation documents are irrelevant such as school improvement, resourcing etc.

Merging schools that have seen large decreases in pupil numbers brings significant benefits, including:

- ***Creation of one new, stronger school community, maximising the funding available to it***
- ***Increased specialist expertise from a wider teaching and pupil support team***

- **Stronger finances, with consistent resources and stable staff workforce**
- **Increased potential for school improvement and targeted support in response to local needs**

Context:

The Blossom federation has only been supporting Colvestone since September 2022. Hackney Education insisted on a partnership for the academic year 22-23 after the resignation of both the exec head and head of school after May half term. This left only the assistant head as a SLT member in place. Hackney Education organised applications and interviews and were adamant with the governing body that this was the only solution. The governing body interviewed 2 potential partners and chose Blossom federation for the following reasons:

- Strong, secure and a wealth of experience in financial management. They had a federation business manager who would be able to support the school. The other applicant had no business manager for their own school and therefore no capacity to take on a school with the financial. An understanding of the situation and the difficult restructuring of support staff. The school emphasised creative ways and more understanding of how the school could make cost savings and explore other avenues as well.
- A potential head of school who had experience with EYFS and wellbeing - ensuring that staff and children would feel safe, secure and be able to achieve their potential. The wellbeing of staff and children was a concern as there had been the defederation, restructuring of support staff and the Executive head leaving at short notice with the resignation of the head of school.
- An experienced executive head who led 3 other schools which also continued to thrive with their own unique identity.
- The potential to receive support through resourcing and expertise from a wider group of schools in all areas e.g. premises, finance, resourcing and teaching and learning.
- The federation had identified areas for development which would attract new families including a better website, more social media output and also cosmetic and infrastructure changes. These have all been actioned without time to see the impact.

The partnership was agreed to be extended for the academic year 23/24 by the Colvestone governing body in December. This was going to be put to all stakeholders in the first half of the Spring term and to the Blossom Federation governing body. There were preliminary discussions of federation although it was felt that the school needed to continue with the partnership before any discussions for this would take place. After the Soaring Skies federation, which did not bring many of the above benefits of school partnership stated in the consultation benefits, there was an understandable objection to partnership and federation. The deficit, the restructuring of support staff and the lack of infrastructure in the school to support teaching learning was a direct result of the previous federation. The partnership with Blossom has been positive and impactful in all areas. This is seen not only through SIP visits, ODR and Tags meetings with Hackney Ed but also through the SMRA report.

	<p>In preliminary meetings the SLT and chair of governors asked for partnership to be given time to build on the short successes that had been achieved within a term of the partnership. The successes and achievement of being with Blossom Federation can be seen below:</p>	
Point	Objection	Concern
<p>Creation of one new, stronger school community, maximising the funding available to it</p>	<p>With the Blossom partnership a stronger school community has been built. In parents, staff and childrens surveys taken 100% surveyed said that the Blossom partnership has had a positive impact. The Blossom partnership has also led to a larger and more stable governing body with 3 new governors recruited with a wider base of knowledge resulting in wider and more targeted scrutiny.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been no consideration of this when putting forward the proposal to Cabinet even though there has been extremely positive feedback through Hackney Education scrutiny. • In addition the governors were told that if it wasn't for the Blossom Federation then the school would be considered for closure rather than amalgamation. When asked why this would be the case there was no answer.

<p>Increased specialist expertise from a wider teaching and pupil support team</p> <p>Increased potential for school improvement and targeted support in response to local needs</p>	<p>This is already in place through the Blossom Federation. There have been leadership visits in the key school development priorities to other schools in the federation: phonics, science, maths, literacy, art and SEND. This has resulted in an improved teaching profile moving from good to outstanding and progress in core areas. Phonics provision has been identified as a strength within a term due to the support and development in place from the Blossom federation.</p> <p>Staffing structure: The development of middle leaders has meant that there has been an improvement in teaching and learning. This has been supported by an experienced exec head and a dedicated head of school. Support from leaders across the federation has also supported this development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In thinking about school support there has been no consideration of the partnership in place. The council does not seem to have taken in consideration any of the reports by Hackney Education on the successful impact on teaching and learning of the partnership. ● Hackney Education's processes and structure to ensure that a school does not have a deficit of this level is called into question. The fact that a remote audit was carried out and did not flag that there were no systems in place for purchase ordering, HR files were not up to date and other key areas were missing is a concern.
<p>Stronger finances, with consistent resources and stable staff workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An in-year surplus has been identified this year. When speaking to the C of G at a governors conference it was stated by the director of education that many schools would go into deficit. Colevstone has done this with the strong and secure financial stability brought in by the federation business manager and a dedicated 1x week finance officer from another federated school. ● There have been suggestions made at meetings that the surplus has been down to investment by Hackney Education. The school received funding from the Schools Contingency Fund, the de-delegated fund to which all schools contribute and to which all are eligible to apply. This money was applied to help improve the school building and in particular ensure that it was statutorily safe and compliant. The school had a right to apply and were eligible for this funding and are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There has been a comparison on schools budgets for this year - have any schools gone into deficit within a year and if so by how much? Colevstone has - even in difficult circumstances and with money being spent on the schools infrastructure and teaching and learning have been in surplus. ●

	<p>entitled to the finding. The fact that the school had not accessed this fund previous to this leadership could be attributed to the deficiencies in the state of the building and resourcing. One might suggest that the Management Team would have been remiss not to have applied for it - as in the case for all monies that the school applies for and receives from the Council and other funds - and to imply that this an emergency intervention by the Council, or the only reason for running a surplus, is highly subjective and contestable at best. Many schools (both in frame of this consultation and outside) apply for and receive this funding, as they are entitled to do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Financial accuracy: budgets set are achievable and reflective of the situation Colvestone is in. There are systems in place to ensure that spending can be carefully monitored through secure purchase ordering systems. There has been an SMRA process which has identified key ways the school can make cost cuts when contracts end e.g. catering/energy. There are clear systems in place to chase debts which have historically been allowed to grow.● The school has achieved a surplus even though there have been debts/invoices that should have been paid or accrued from the previous year. The in year surplus would have been considerably higher had these been properly accrued. The lack of oversight by Hackney Education and the fact that an audit - which was done remotely - did not pick up on these financial discrepancies raises questions.● Computing and IT support is delivered through the federation● PE support is delivered through links with the federation	
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	<p>1. A crucial part of the community in Dalston and Hackney. 2. Proving the community a place for their children to be educated which is close by to their residents 3. Will have a detrimental effect on the education of so many important younger members of the community 4. A historic school that will probably now be converted into another block of flats 5. A local community school and should not be closed 6. Good ofsted reports and will have a detrimental impact on all the current and future children who will be given a crucial educational 7. A decision based on cost saving and not the requirements of the community</p>
	<p>An absolutely outrage. 1. Save funding/ resources through amalgamation of schools 2. Enable Provision for social housing 3. Enable Provision for specialist schools</p>
	<p>1. The economics are nonsense. The enormous cost of closing followed by the maintenance of empty buildings, and the certain need to reopen in the long-term will mean the council will lose the building and land under current law, and that after the huge cost to the tax-payer already incurred. Plus Colvestone being small is full and runs a surplus budget! 2. Closure would render current council homebuilding plans - e.g.the Dalston Plan and the21st Century Street - unfeasible. 3. Colvestone is a protected site - 2 Grade 2 listings & it's playground is an Asset of Community Value. Plus the building is specifically built as a school and the deeds forbid other use, so not suitable or available for any other purpose. 4. It is an excellent school, with outstanding results in diverse community needs.</p>
	<p>A small school that caters for all abilities and has a significant number of SEN pupils should be cherished. Their pupils flourish, are happy and feel cherished in such a caring environment. Colvestone is sited in a residential area, away from main roads and with no heavy traffic nearby. It is an established part of the local community. I have experienced working at a merged school. Despite every effort, the atmosphere of both schools changed significantly and affected many of the pupils and the staff - a point that would be dangerous to ignore as the school ethos disappears. It would be tragic to destroy an absolute gem of a school by a merger which would remove all the characteristics chosen by parents and loved by the children.</p>
	<p>Agreed to merge both school due to low number of children for the benefit of our children continuing their education.</p>
	<p>What I will suggest is that the leadership of Princess May school should be changed as we want a leadership that embrace the community as the school was previously a community and a lot of parents were happy to stay in the school even when moved out of Hackney as the leadership was welcoming and recognised parents needs.</p>
	<p>All I can do is continue to strongly object to this 'merge' proposal. The schools have NOTHING in common and I have NEVER considered sending my child to Princess May. It feels as though you want to call it a merger so that Colvestone parents feel like they have no choice but to send their children to Princess May but this is ill-thought through. I, along with many other parents, will simply not send my child there and LOVE what Colvestone has to offer. Give Colvestone the chance to thrive as it undoubtedly will once 21st century plans come into place. Do NOT PROCEED PLEASE.</p>
	<p>Although I understand the financial reasons for the closures in general, Covestone should not be treated as just a "head count" to be saved. As a single form entry school, largely on one level, it is an essential option for our SEN and disabled children. As great as many other Hackney schools are, they are generally huge and overwhelming for children with sensory issues. I cannot imagine how the autistic and ADHD children happily settled at Covestone will transition to the much larger Princess May, however great it may be as a school.</p>
	<p>Surely if you are closing De Beauvoir (which, unlike Covestone, had been troubled for all of the years I've lived here), Colvestone could easily be filled with De Beauvoir pupils, who otherwise might have to travel much further, as many of the other schools in South Hackney are oversubscribed?</p>
	<p>Also, if Covestone were closed, what would happen to the site? While many of the other sites considered for closure seem valuable for residential development, and therefore of some alternative (financial) value to Hackney, it is hard to see how else Colvestone can be used? Leaving it as an empty decaying hole in the heart of the Ridley Road community and the broader Dalston Plan (including the Colvestone Play Street) would be terrible for the market and wider community.</p>

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Parent 15

<p>am writing to express my disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Hackney.</p> <p>I believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p> <p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone Primary School, I know my child feels safe, happy and secure at Colvestone. We have been part of the school community for over *** years. *** of my children have attended the school. Moving my child to another school will be extremely traumatic and disruptive.</p> <p>The new leadership team, through the Blossom Federation partnership, has made a positive impact on the school – and with the extra funding from Hackney Council – we have seen great improvements to the facilities, redecoration of internal spaces and a renewed energy at the school.</p> <p>Colvestone is a unique primary school that has offered my children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p> <p>My older [child] with [SEND] went to *** schools in Hackney, including outstanding schools. * was facing being out of mainstream education and Colveston showed * love, acceptance and support which totally changed things around and * is now at a mainstream secondary. The fact that Colveston accommodates for so many children with additional needs and keeps them in mainstream schools saves Hackney a lot of money. My younger [child], like so many other children, is on a 2-3 year wait list for a diagnosis with CAMHS and therefore is not part of the SEN stats we were discussing at the meeting today which were already higher than other schools in the area.</p> <p>I believe the education department are cherry picking the figures to suit their agenda and are not looking at the bigger picture or the cost of cleaning up the mess that will be left by traumatising the SEN children who will have their fragile world torn apart, including providing for many children who will be left outside of the school system.</p> <p>Our children have been through so much from being scared that they will die due to a terrifying virus, mask wearing whereby they can't read people's facial expressions and emotions accurately, being locked down in their homes without socialising with their peers or teacher's, too returning to school and losing their TA's and headteachers and now just as things were beginning to become "normal" again the council are taking away their normality. This is horrendous for children's social and emotional well-being.</p> <p>Putting Colvestone up for closure has sabotaged our chance to bring up numbers, who will send their kids now? The council's policies that have reduced affordable housing for families has had a direct result on these dwindling numbers. Proposing to spend millions to make Colveston Crescent into a 21st century Show road while closing the school is a ludicrous proposal that shows how inverse the council's priorities are in this.</p> <p>Please support us and oppose these short sighted proposals that will have detrimental effects on the most vulnerable young people in our community.</p> <p>Signed ***</p> <p>Parent at Colvestone Primary School</p>
<p>An historic building probably being sold out to a Developer for flats at over inflated prices. All the efforts of the Head and her Staff have made over the years thrown out the window. Not to mention the vulnerable local children being farmed off. I am against this Social cleansing. The future should be for all not just the privileged few.</p>
<p>Areas go in cycles, while they may not be sufficient children to fill the school now, there will be again. This is a short term move which is emblematic of agreement that London can be a city without children. The closure must not go ahead.</p>
<p>As a buildings and Heritage Conservator I am well aware of the fragility of graded buildings which are unoccupied.</p> <p>I am also aware of the cultural importance of this fine example of a purpose built Victorian school.</p> <p>From a heritage point of view I would be interested to know what alternative plans for the buildings on this site and the footprint of the school have been put forward if the school were indeed closed to intake.</p> <p>We are all aware that protecting and maintaining an unoccupied listed building,(Colvestone School is Grade II listed) is costly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will Hackney Council justify this cost to preserve this valuable and important cultural addition to the history of the borough? 2. Do Hackney Council intend to sell the site? 3. Do Hackney Council have a plan to re-utilise the site for future public or council use?
<p>Colvestone School is a rare example of continuation of purpose in that it was built as a primary school and has continually served that community purpose.</p> <p>Credit to Hackney Council for it's continuous use to date and I hope this building,ongoing, continues to be a building of importance on Hackney Councils register.</p>
<p>As a former teacher in a one form entry primary school in the east end of London, I feel I have some understanding of the value of a school like Colvestone to its community.</p> <p>Part of its ethos, care and commitment to individual children is enhanced by its one form entry nature. I would want to support Colvestone continuing to offer quality education to it's present and future pupils.</p>
<p>As a local resident and parent in Hackney for over two decades I am shocked by the proposals to close or amalgamate schools in Hackney. With classrooms already packed, schools need more funding rather than closures.</p> <p>We need our local community schools and I cannot foresee where this heading ?</p> <p>Many thanks</p>
<p>As a local resident I would be very unhappy to see the school left empty (if that is the plan). I am concerned that the listed building, which has had recent renovations, be allowed to deteriorate.</p>
<p>The school is appreciated and enjoyed by a wide range of children and parents.</p>

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<p>As a parent I don't understand why the last school in Hackney was completed in 2019 and now they are wanting to close a school that has been around for years and years. It has affected so many families and the community. So many schools are situated around De Beauvoir because the council has built them. It is not fair for the families of the children in the school.</p>
<p>As a parent of a child at Colvestone I think there are many reasons to keep our school open. It is the only single form entry school in the area - which is very beneficial for children with special needs. It is the only non faith council run school in the area. It is the only one of the Birkbeck schools still in existence and a key part in your proposal to make Colvestone Crescent a 21st Century Street.</p>
<p>Furthermore I have found your consultation very unsatisfactory. It says on the previous page that the proposal is a merger of Colvestone with Princess May. This statement is completely misleading; as far as I know there has been no suggestion that any of the Colvestone teachers will go to Princess May. As I understand it, you are closing Colverstone and we can send our children to Princess May (which no-one wants to do). This is not a merger at all. I am afraid to say that this sums up my experience of the consultation; disingenuous. Not at all how I would expect a Labour council to do things.</p>
<p>As a parent, I don't want these two schools to merge. Preferably, I would like my child to finish at this school like their sibling, but whatever we say, nothing will happen because Hackney education has already come to a decision. I believe there will be a lot of problems at the schools when they come together. Current students will be in groups and how will the kids handle this situation. What help will Hackney give kids and parents?</p>
<p>As an ex-student and one of several generations of fortunate people who have attended Colvestone Primary School, I am extremely disappointed and angry about the proposals to close the school's site and merge it with Princess May School.</p>
<p>Not only would this permanently deprive the residents of Dalston (and broader Hackney) of extremely rare and valuable access to a single-form entry state-funded primary school, it would also precipitate a significant reduction in the quality of education received by those communities and existing students. I know from my experiences and that of my sibling who later attended Colvestone that the single form entry and therefore smaller schooling environment created a far more hospitable environment for children with SEND, as for many of these kids the enormity of a school with 400+ children would have been unmanageable. If the pupils currently at Colvestone are forced to move to Princess May, I feel the care afforded to children and the educational options available to their parents will suffer a serious deterioration, as they would likely be forced to disturb their childrens' education and transfer them to a school exclusively for SEND children.</p>
<p>Removing a single-form entry primary school from Dalston would also have the effect of more broadly undermining the educational provision available to local residents unable to afford to privately educate their children and desiring a local education for their children.</p>
<p>Closing the Colvestone site would have a deleterious influence on Dalston's broader community, and would likely enable more extensive anti-social behaviour on Colvestone Crescent and its environs as there would be few or no regular use of the building. Furthermore, the empty building site would comprise a significant disused space in an area desirous of better resourced, more accessible and multi-purposable community spaces.</p>
<p>As one of the parents and carers that has contributed to the extensive submission prepared for this 'informal consultation' under the name Save Colvestone Primary School I do not feel it necessary to reiterate all those points here. I stand by them all. What I will do here is to implore you to read them closely, to allow your assumptions to be challenged, to engage finally in the consultation.</p>
<p>Too often in this process I have witnessed elected Labour councillors (some of whom I may have canvassed for) and others with oversight for this process adopting highly confrontational positions, refusing to meet or to discuss the proposals, to allow any challenge to the Council's starting position. I have got the impression that these officials are affronted to have a member of the public challenging arguments that claim that Colvestone, a local community primary school, must be closed – even if these arguments appear on weak foundations or deserving of scrutiny. Why would someone who is elected to serve a community be so resistant to hearing arguments that suggest a school that has been at the heart of Dalston life for over 161 years could be saved? That it actually is financially viable, and that they had the figures all along? That these hugely damaging proposals can be stopped? That they don't have to be the Councillors and Cabinet members, Mayor and Deputy Mayor who closed a school that didn't need to be closed, that scarred the lives of many children, parents, carers, teachers and support staff whose lives didn't need to be scarred. Who wouldn't want to hear a compelling argument for that?</p>
<p>I and many members of the Colvestone community have persistently tried to engage with the officials charged with running this process. We have been refused all meetings. We have been met with an unwillingness to discuss the proposals in even the broadest terms if the questions challenge the assumptions already made in the briefing documents produced by the council. We have been told repeatedly though that you are listening, that Hackney Labour is a council that listens to its residents. Well, this is the time to listen – and to respond. It should not require stating in a consultation that proposes to close four schools that making sure you are making the correct decision is of high importance: given the lives that will be affected it might be the most important set of decisions you make in your political career.</p>
<p>We believe we have built a compelling argument as to why Colvestone Primary School should be saved. It is your responsibility now to scrutinise those arguments – because if we are right then you get to preserve one more local authority school in Dalston and allow it to thrive. A genuine consultation compels you to respond to the information that you receive in it. Please allow yourself to see that changing your received ideas here might actually lead to something amazing: the realisation that yes, this school is viable, it has value, it doesn't have to be closed, and that it is integrally important to the community around it and that that too is important. Because to act to close it on weak data or inertia or an ill-thought through proposal would be an act of gross dereliction of duty, of harm on a community that will echo through generations and that will not be forgotten.</p>
<p>I implore you to finally engage with this consultation and listen to what your community, your electorate, has to tell you. The news might be good.</p>
<p>As someone who lives between colvestone and de Beauvoir I was wondering about merging these two schools. Both have lovely building and communities and it would be a shame not to have a secular school in the area.</p>
<p>As stated above: some children need smaller, quieter spaces. Colvestone School is at the top of a non through less polluting road, the building is attractive and not overpowering. It's close to a wonderfully diverse market where excursions for recognising fruit and the country it's grown in, working out prices is great for maths and the former general knowledge. My daughter loved her class outings along the market being told where certain fabric designs are from plus the above teachings. Small is more.</p>
<p>Bad to move children, this school, community run, non religious non free school is a valuable part of the community & it's loss will upset & disrupt parents & children alike. It's loss is just another deprivation forced on vulnerable people already struggling to sustain a supportive environment for their children</p>
<p>Baden Powell is nearest to my home and also easy for my job. They have grown up in this school from nursery until now. Also, the teachers of Baden Powell are very helpful and kind. They are like friends and family to the children and are happy and interested to go to Baden Powell School. My children are not interested in going to Nightingale School.</p>

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Baden Powell is nearest to my house and easy for my job. Also they have grown in this school from nursery up until now. Also, the teachers at Baden Powell are very helpful, like friends and family. The children are happy and they are interested in going to Baden Powell school. My children don't want to go to Nightingale School.
Baden Powell Primary School is 30 years old, staff are very friendly and dedicated to their job and pupils. They take responsibilities really seriously: looking after the kids, helping them with classwork and encouraging them to achieve the best grades of education. Teachers regularly give updates to the parents about where their kids are in the classroom that day. Moving to a new school, some pupils will develop anxiety and stress, friendships between kids would be broken, some teachers would lose their jobs and all Baden Powell Primary School structure would be shattered.
Birth rates and population rates rise and fall. What evidence does the council have that birth rates and population of Hackney will continue to decline? History says this is unlikely to be the case as dips in birth rates often follow a rise.
Whilst the private sector values smaller class sizes due to the educational advantage it distills on pupils, what other ways have been explored to share resources more equitably between Hackney schools?
Parents needs local schools that are convenient and walking to school is encouraged by the council. What are the implications for local traffic flows and ease of movement if parents are potentially travelling further?
Both De Beauvoir and Colvestone Primary Schools provide high-quality education rooted in local communities and this should be allowed to continue.
As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, Colvestone should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.
De Beauvoir School has a large amount of safe outdoor space for education and exercise, compared to nearby Hackney New Primary, which has virtually none and where pupils have to leave the school for exercise.
*** my children have been educated at Colvestone Primary School. The school is special for a number of reasons but probably the most important aspect has been the single form entry. The playground too is both contained and ideally suited for parents picking up their children to get to know each other. This is essentially a village school at the heart of Dalston. It is hard to describe how these two aspects come together to create a school community around which children can thrive but it does.
I think closing Colvestone Primary School is a huge mistake because this kind of school is exactly what local authorities need right now to tackle a number of growing problems in our student population. probably the single biggest problem to affect children across the country is Emotionally Based School Avoidance.
As a *** for another borough I work a lot with children who have been unable to return to school since the pandemic lock down or who have simply developed anxiety attending a large two form primary school. The numbers of such referrals have increased enormously and I imagine the same is true for Hackney. The solution is rarely in my experience therapy but a period of individual tuition followed by re-integration into a smaller single form school.
Another trend since the pandemic, that has affected children in the London borough for whom i work, is the growing number of Primary School children permanently excluded for emotionally dysregulated and often aggressive behaviour. These children go on to receive an EHC plan and are then eventually (after months of being out of school) placed in a spot purchased alternative provision in the private sector. What makes the difference for them is that the school they attend are small and so less overwhelming.
If the same is true in Hackney then Colvestone Primary School offers the opportunity for many of these children to find a way back into an education without having to spend months failing to face a large primary school they are never likely to re-integrate into or wait for an EHC plan to come through so they can access an independent school outside of the borough. Colvestone Primary School is a HUGE resource precisely because it is small and nurturing.
Closing it would be an absolute waste of a precious and valuable resource already up and running, improving every day under a new leadership team and capable of serving children who have been unable to manage in a larger two form entry school. Surely we could be using money from the SEN budget that is spent on out of borough alternative provision and work creatively to enable Colvestone Primary to continue doing what it does best.
*** of my children attended Colverstone and because of the nature of a single form entry have done extremely well. Without Colverstone their early years needs would not have been recognised. I fear that children of Hackney will not have the same opportunity as my children have. Everyone at Colvestone is valued and everyone is included. Colvestone is a special place which as a parent who no longer has children at the school does want to take away the opportunity to other children that my children had.
Both of my children have attended this school and we would like to see it remain open as it is a convenient and well orchestrated school.
Calverton school serves the community in and around the Dalston area the only primary school that have been serving the local community for years. I've had children attending the school and found it to be a very good school with dedicated staff all the families and children that attend love the school and object to the closure
Change is not good for children. They like their place. They get used to the building, classes and playground. They know where everything is. They don't want to change school. It will be stressful for children, they don't understand why school will be closed and why there is no money for their school. Please do not close this school.
Closing a school means that school and nits identity is lost forever. Amalgamation is not an even merger. One school disappears, absorbed into the other, usually larger one. Teachers are lost to the borough, and don't come back. If pupil numbers increase in the future it is too late to change course. A far better strategy would be to put pressure on the government to increase per-pupil funding for schools with falling rolls.
Closing Academy/Free Schools in the neighbourhood reduces the options for us all to keep a diverse and socially intersectional community.
Closing and amalgamating primary schools in this area will have a huge be detrimental effect on the community and the children and parents of the schools.
The smaller school, create a local focus for the area, crating a better more engaging community. It is better for the children of primary age as it makes for a more nurturing and safe feeling environment for them. Closing them has a detrimental effect on the community at large in almost every way possible.
It better for working parents as they are usually easier to get to too.

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<p>Closing Colvestone and moving the school to princess May would have an extremely negative impact on the community. Colvestone is the beating heart of Dalston. It creates natural surveillance in the area and makes Dalston the vibrant , diverse , friendly community that it is. Without it I believe we would soon see a rise in the levels of anti social behaviour.</p>
<p>Closing Colvestone would cause a deterioration of the surrounding area, making it unattractive for young parents to move into the area. Geographically it connects different parts of Dalston, which is integral for a functioning community. Former students have excelled academically in their respective secondary thus providing a good standing for the school's pupils in future application processes.</p>
<p>Closing De Beauvoir Primary School would cause so much upset to a lot of students.</p>
<p>To close Colvestone would cause disruption to parents and students. To find a new school would also cause a set back as students will struggle to fit in as they are so close to the teachers and the friends they have made along the way.</p>
<p>Closing school removes parent choice RE SEN schools/ one form entry, non religious, local schools. Princess May is an unsuitable option. No real consultation has so far happened.</p>
<p>Closing schools is not the answer. The community will suffer. Children need a sense of belonging. Amalgamation is not the solution as it will uproot the children with no guarantee that the alternative will be any better.</p>
<p>Closing schools like these one kills even more the sense of community that's so much needed nowadays</p>
<p>Closing the local small school has a negative impact on the pupils' education and the entire community and nothing positive.</p>
<p>From my social circle and professional experience in the field/system of education, merging two schools into one is one of the worst things the council could do to the community. For example, large schools are well known for being unable to solve inside problems such as bullying or unprofessional teachers' behaviour for years. These issues in small and calmer schools are easier to detect and solve. In a small school is a stronger sense of connection between the staff and pupils. This means staff have an in-depth knowledge of every child. In that case, a student who needs extra support will unlikely be ignored and slip through the cracks.</p>
<p>"Research tells us that belonging to a close-knit community is vitally important in developing a child's resilience. It is also a protective factor for mental health and bullying issues. Smaller schools allow for more freedom, collaborative work between school and pupils, encouraging fun activities which bring education to life."</p>
<p>The benefits of a small school education by Oonagh Turner. Fri 20th Aug 2021. https://www.independentschoolparent.com/school/the-benefits-of-a-small-school/</p>
<p>If Hackney Council needs space for upcoming projects - closing a small school is beyond the ridiculous idea. Some areas need extra attention from the council - for example, a small square of the ship containers between ***. This square is an epicentre of antisocial behaviour!</p>
<p>Closing the school is disrespectful to the community. Colvestone has always been part of the community and closing it would have a huge impact on Ridley Road</p>
<p>Closure of Colvestone School will lessen the footfall and diversity of Dalston and Ridley Road, especially the market as the community (Parent/Teachers/other workers) shop and pass through Ridley Road very frequently, which would be a great shame as real efforts were made to take over the shopping village to encourage local people and businesses.</p>
<p>It also opens the way to further development which is incompatible with Ridley Road Market for example the "concrete triangle" (area adjacent to Colvestone School) which is detrimental to the Market as it will end up being the source of many complaints if and when it is approved.</p>
<p>Closing of the school is very short sighted and the area has a growing population and it is highly likely more places will be needed in future so short term it will destroy a long established community. Around the borough and in Dalston there are plans for more homes which will require more primary places, so why close a well established and liked school with a good reputation.</p>
<p>It will be hugely disruptive of all children/parents etc attending or anyone involved in the school. What appear to be a small step of moving all pupils and closing Colvestone will have much larger consequences as Colvestone School is very much embedded in the local area.</p>
<p>More effort should be made in the short term to attract more pupils as it is a long established school in pleasant green surroundings. The adjoining street is a 21st century street and closure will heavily impact the street and area. Long Term as mentioned it will likely cause overcrowding in other schools and a new community will have to be build possibly around a new school, so very short term thinking.</p>
<p>As a resident of Hackney who has lived in Hackney and worked around Dalston my whole life I am very disappointed by the suggestion that there is a proposal to close Colvestone Primary. I hope that this objection to the proposal and the others will be properly considered unlike some of the other decisions which were made even though there was widespread opposition, otherwise it just confirms a large number of views which I hear saying these are exercises to give the appearance of a consultation even though the decisions have already been taken and erodes the faith democratic process.</p>
<p>Colverstone have a number of SeNCO children. Parents have chosen this school due to the size and expertise of the staff. It will be unfair to move these children to a large school. This will cause emotional distress. Opposite to what we should be doing for the well being of all children.</p>
<p>Colverstone is a fantastic community resource. It was key in the campaign to keep *** and her *** children in the U.K. and stop their deportation to India in the 80s.</p>
<p>More recently staff from 2015 when I was a solicitor at Hackney Law Centre have supported children whose mothers are Persons Subject to Immigration Control and unable to access public funds whilst working .</p>
<p>Rolls are falling due to gentrification , the opening of free schools in the borough and accommodating homeless families out of Borough. The Council should take effective action against these changes not penalise local children by closing the school they love.</p>
<p>Colverstone is a small family community school, that serves the immediate area</p>

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Colvestone offers choice to parents who want a small community school that is not part of a large academy. It offers the caring environment needed to help children thrive.
Colvestone Primary School is at the heart of Dalston community. It's a very different school to Princess May. Merging two completely different schools needs more thought.
Colveston Primary School forms the heart of the Dalston community, Ridley Road and the new Green streets.
Colvestone provides the cleanest air, and safest amenity space for play over and above other Hackney primary schools.
Several dissability children travel from *** London to Colvestone because it is the ONLY school in London where their children learn anything despite having tried numerous other schools across london. This is because it is single form entry and in its design is a calm place to learn.
In no other school have I heard of all the kids in each year organising games for themselves that involve all of their year in the same playground activity. This extends to care and cross-play between reception and year 6's playing together too.
Colvestone Primary school is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.
Proposed new development of Ridley Road and flats on shopping centre land will require school infrastructure. The many new homes should be using this tailor made legacy school.
Colvestone Crescent is becoming the first 21st Century street in Hackney. The school and children are very much at the heart of this project.
Colvestone has a long and significant history, having been part of the original Birkbeck Schools founded by William Ellis. The building is in fact the last remaining original school as the only other surviving Birkbeck schoo, William Ellis Secondary School in Camden, moved to new premises in the 1930s. It would be tragic if it wasn't retained for educational purposes and in particular to support the type of ethos and curriculum promoted by William Ellis. From what I can understand the school does this and also has a key role in the local community. Its closure would reduce parent choice, be bad for the environment and deprive parents of a thriving small institution with strong historic roots. Please think again.
Colvestone has served as the primary school for many parents in this area. It is well regarded and I was hoping to send my 2 year old son there when he is old enough. It's close by and means we can stay local.
Colvestone is a close knit, small community school. Closing it will negatively affect the children at the school.
Colvestone is a gem in the community. With 1 form entry and strong sense of community and care for the children, every child flourishes - where some would not in mainstream larger schools. Not every child suits a larger school so stop the consultation and fill the spaces at Colvestone. Keep the school where it is, with one form entry. Not every decision should be based on money and numbers. Create solutions to enable those children who thrive in smaller school environments and reconsider merging Colvestone. Humanity is more important than money.
Colvestone is a good inclusive school in a unique place in a Dalston ensuring a safe place for children to grow and learn with a beautiful historic building from the Birkbeck foundation of education . It dwarves to be a Hackney flagship and let off the regeneration of a Dalston not to be closed . Its proximity to Shacklewell Primary an outstanding school that is oversubscribed suggests they should merge since they need the overspill . Princess May is in Shacklewell a different part of the Kingsland Road and ward.
Colvestone is a Grade 2 listed building, built in 1852 as a pioneering co-ed school. Closing it would mean losing a well designed dedicated school building, and an unreplacable publicly owned resource.
Without Colvestone and de Beauvoir schools the dalston area would be left with no non-faith, one-form entry local authority schools - only religious schools, free schools and academies, which are not being considered regardless of numbers.
7% of Colvestone students have an Education Health and Care Plan, well above average in the borough. Many of these children and many others would find the transition very challenging. Closing a school with such a high proportion of vulnerable children is unfair and wrong.
Also, the playground at Princess May is right next to the A10 and had 40% higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide than Colvestone (according to the Council's own monitoring system, 2021). Adding more students to a school with much higher pollution levels is obviously damaging to children's health.
Colvestone is a huge part of the community of Dalston and Ridley Road. It is a community hub and serves as a real small local school amidst hundreds of larger, less intimate and welcoming places of education.
Colvestone is a key school very valued in the local community.
Additionally you should consider that closing a school is very expensive and given that this school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus, how can closing it make financial sense?
+ with the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site!!
- small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities
- Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites
Colvestone is a rare gem in Hackney's primary provision as a non denominational school. I am aware that as a single form entry school it is discriminated against innterms of funding, but this small scale is also one of its great strengths. Children feel safe here. They are known by all the staff, and by all the other children. That is one of the (many) reasons children with SEN thrive in this mainstream setting. My children loved this school, and the strength of the friendships they made here endure many years later despite all going to different secondary schools, their Colvestone connections have remained strong, enriching and protective. This will be lost if this special place is engulfed by a much larger school.
Colvestone has a history of providing great quality, creative and lively teaching. It holds strong values and builds strong self esteem, equipping its students very well, not just for the next stage of education, but for life.

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<p>Colvestone is a small community school of the road in secluded safe area. The children get individual attention. The children are happy and content in Colvestone. I strongly disagree with Colvestone joining Princess May.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a small school which is inclusive and has a unique character. My son attended more than 30 years ago and got a great deal from it. 10 years before he attended ILEA Division 4 had tried to close it and had manufactured low admissions. I hope this is not happening again! I recognise there is a problem of falling rolls, but we should hold onto our schools and diversify them Colvestone because of its family atmosphere has been very good at including disabled children especially diverse and those with Social Emotional and Mental Health issues. I propose that the school keepers house currently vacant should be made into resourced provision with children who have SEMH and Neurodiversity. The Resopurece base should have 2 specialist teachers and 6 specialist TAs who work to support the children in mainstream class and the resource base. In addition the AWPU should be adjusted so that classes of 20 rather than 30 should be the norm. With this support and good marketing of the excellent practice at the school parents will be encouraged to enroll in the school and it will have a future.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique LEA-run community school in the heart of Dalston. Its single-form status makes it very close-knit and children thrive there. Children and families with SEND particularly benefit from this smaller, nurturing environment. The Dalston area has a Plan to build more housing very nearby. The proposed closure feels extremely short-sighted in light of this - will families have the choice they deserve? Or will families even choose to live there if there is no community school nearby? The Dalston community deserves to retain this wonderful school.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique small community school cherished by its families and staff. The head knows everyone's name and we must keep a place for this type of school in Hackney. Also, it is an eco school and on a quiet school street serving the community. It has great potential for growth if given another chance.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique, caring and academically strong school. It is vital to the local community.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a unique, caring and academically strong, one-form entry school. It is a vital part of Dalston and should NOT be closed.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a vibrant SMALL school with a very happy parent teacher and student community. To merge it into a super school would be a great disservice to the public and go completely against any notion of school choice</p>
<p>Colvestone is a wonderful school and one of the only single-form, non-religious schools in the area. It's accepting, creative and nurturing. It must be protected. Whilst pupil numbers have dropped, the local area has huge plans for residential development so I strongly believe this to be a temporary issue. The school is under new management and even in these difficult times it is at the beginning of a change and it must be allowed to continue. We do not want our children to go to Princess May and we will not send our children (x2) there.</p>
<p>Colvestone is an amazingly friendly, welcoming single form entry community school, and one of the only non-faith, non-academy, non-free schools in the area. The plan to merge with Princess May seems completely ill thought out, and is not talking to the community into consideration at all. The plans for the re-development of dalston, plus the new 21st century street plan all require a thriving school to be up and running on the colvestone site. The fact that only state primary schools are being considered for closures / amalgamations is completely unbalanced when looking at the range of different schools in the area, all which which are suffering from low pupil roll numbers</p>
<p>Colvestone is an asset to our local community. I live on ***, in ***, overlooking the playground of the school. The school is part of our daily life and we are planning to send our three children aged 2 and 6 months respectively to Colvestone. We love that it is a community school, not a faith or free school. We also love that it is single form of entry and that teachers and students all really know each other. The school building is also of special architectural interest. It is an important building in the street scape of Colvestone Crescent and Ridley road market. The plan of turning Colvestone Crescent into Hackney's first 21st century street goes hand in hand with the use of this beautiful building and an empty building would be detrimental to the character of the area.</p>
<p>Colvestone is an excellent school that is close to my house and I get excellent support for my children here. They are very happy at the school and in the school community. It is very important to have the school in the area. There are no other small schools like it.</p>
<p>Colvestone is an excellent school. Being one form entry gives us a much more accessible culture which is particularly important for children with special needs. If it didn't exist they'd have to invent it. It has been disappointing to be patronised by officials from Hackney who have clearly made the decision to close the school. When confronted by counter-arguments from parents who have done their research they simply ignore them. Their approach makes people cynical and ambivalent about democracy in general and Hackney council in particular.</p>
<p>Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. • Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. • Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.

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<p>Colvestone is great with SEND. It's help so many kids.</p>
<p>Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community.</p>
<p>Colvestone is one of a few primary schools that provides a community setting which is able to nurture and support children with SEND, and is only able to do this due to its long-standing experience and direct involvement of local parents. A friend of mine with a child with SEND at the school is now in a hugely stressful situation, as she knows her child could do really well in a mainstream setting, but will suffer from this change to a much larger school. Amalgamation of the school moving it to different space, further away, in a much bigger setting, will remove this close contact and necessary more personal and direct support currently provided.</p>
<p>Colvestone is one of the only non-religious, non-academy schools in the area and I feel it should remain open to offer families in the community the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school. It is a single-form school which helps to foster a sense of family and community, as well as connection between the teachers and the pupils, which is particularly important for younger kids and an important consideration for me when choosing schools for my daughter.</p> <p>Furthermore, Colvestone is at the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes plans to build affordable housing in the area, so it seems a little short-sighted to close the school when some of the new homes will be populated by families that require a nearby school for their young children. The current site of the school is set back from main roads whereas the proposed merger is with a school close by but sat right on a busy road, which is very concerning with regard to pupils' exposure to traffic pollution while at school and on their commute. Given that the school is the best part of 200 years old, the plans also appear to fly in the face of the Dalston Plan's purported aim to protect and celebrate Dalston's built heritage – if this is truly the case, why is the council removing teaching from a historic building that has been serving its community for this length of time? It would be a great shame for this building to be used for anything other than that intended so many years before.</p> <p>Furthermore, unless I'm mistaken, Colvestone Crescent is part of development plans to create a "safer, greener and more accessible public realm for Ridley Road Market" (see https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/streetscene/21cstreets2/, slide 6) – if this is the case, this would create a safer and greener place for pupils at the school to be educated. To be perfectly honest, accounting for the fact that Dalston is a heavily populated urban area, with these new developments Colvestone Crescent seems to me to be a perfect site for a primary school and I'd like to know why the council disagrees. On top of this, I feel that the plans to develop this street as outlined in the presentation above make much less sense if the school is removed from the area - you'd be moving children from a small community setting that is green with low traffic to a larger school with less access to greenery and with a great deal more exposure to traffic and its consequent pollution.</p>
<p>I'd welcome hearing the council's reasoning on this.</p>

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<p>Colvestone is uniquely placed as a one-form entry, non-religious, non-academy, non-free school which should be celebrated instead of being punished - it is harder for the council to propose to close religious schools, free schools or academies so it chooses the easier option of proposing to close this school instead of protecting it.</p> <p>Colvestone School is a listed Victorian purpose-built which should remain true to the purpose it has been fulfilling for over 150 years. Too many new schools in the area are occupying completely unsuitable buildings eg Halley House which has no outside space to speak of.</p> <p>Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan which says it will build family homes. Colvestone needs to be kept open as it is the closest school to this development.</p> <p>Colvestone Crescent is planned to turn into a 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. Crucial to this plan is that it's located next to a primary school. Colvestone School is essential to this ground-breaking proposal.</p> <p>Hackney Council need to look solutions for the dropping enrolment in the borough: lack of affordable family homes.</p>
<p>Colvestone is very important to the local community and should be left alone for sure</p>
<p>Colvestone needs investment not closure. It is only a year since the previous head left, giving the school not enough time to rebuild and strengthen. It is at the heart of Dalston, a historic building and site that could serve the needs of the many future parents and children to be housed nearby as part of the Dalston plan. Without it, the council will be looking at new school provision in a few years' time, making this a short-sighted and senseless proposal. My children benefited from its unique single form environment and close-knit community and teaching staff - it would be a great loss for Dalston to simply close the school rather than build on its strengths to make it the best it can be.</p>
<p>Colvestone new management need to be given the time and opportunity to succeed - in the short window they have already proved financial resilience and pupil success.</p>
<p>Colvestone primary is a community hub as well as a school, its small size as well as location on a quiet road make it particularly effective at creating the community spirit, the benefits of which are important far beyond the school gates, creating social cohesion and providing community members with key mental health benefits.</p> <p>It is a truly mixed non-denominational school that welcomes all, and with its one-form entry also provides a safe environment for children who can't overwhelmed in larger academic institutions, children who need to feel more personal contact with staff in a nurturing environment.</p> <p>The school is also pivotal in the plan to turn Colvestone Crescent into a 21st Century Street, the borough's first permanent play street. This will not only be an incredible community asset, but will make Hackney an example for other boroughs to follow in the necessary move to make cities more human-friendly and sustainable, which is all key to ensuring improved mental health across our city communities.</p>
<p>Colvestone primary is a fabulous local primary school and it's going to be very damaging to the children to have this upheaval. I am particularly worried by the impact on my god[child] and [sibling] for whom the stability of school life is tantamount to their well being. Once lost we'll never get back these schools back. Hackney is losing its children and if the council continues with these measures it'll lose more.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School has just undergone an extensive building restoration, and is the life and soul of this street. The fact that this historic building is still being used as the school it was built for is something that should be cherished and enjoyed. School intake is always in flux and the council should support the school through lean times.</p>
<p>Closing the school will mean the street has an unused empty building deteriorating after expensive refurbishment and selling the site to developers flies in the face of the council's own strategy for the conservation area and it's 21st century street.</p>
<p>The daily presence of families and small children in this street is a life enhancing experience for all of our residents.</p>
<p>It is a safe street for children to arrive at school in as it is a no through road, and the site offers good out door space not surrounded by traffic fumes.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary school is a big part of our community and one of the reasons I moved to this area. I wanted to live close to the school so when I have children they can go there and I don't have to worry, as it's close by, the classes are small so the children get individual attention. The school has recently undergone a massive makeover (which looks great btw). Please don't close our school.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary school is a medium sized local school that myself and my partner feel would be an excellent starting point in education for our child. The reasons for amalgamation seem to be driven by the economics of property sales and the value of the site as potential revenue for the council rather than the best interests of children in the borough.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is a nice school for our community that is close to a lot of families. Especially to children with special education needs, it is easy for them to travel to school. Having a greater distance travelling to school would be physically and mentally difficult for kids like my child</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is a relatively small school with good community connections and positive spirit that supports the local area well. This should be kept to support current and future demand. Primary schools should not become too large or cover too large an area at the expense of community cohesion and the wider benefits they bring to the locality.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is an integral part of the community - it would be a big loss for the community to lose the school</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is at the heart of the Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.</p>
<p>This is one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority and offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment.</p>
<p>Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community.</p>

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<p>Colvestone Primary School is part & parcel and a staple part of the Dalston/Hackney area. In recent years, children of friends and family have attended this wonderful school. They have all had positive time at this wonderful primary school.</p> <p>I attended Colvestone over 45 years ago; it was filled with unforgettable experiences and the most amazing years of my youth and my life! From music (which is a huge part of my life), with ***, (who was also my [child]'s music teacher too); to sport, which was inclusive back then and ahead of it's time! I played football, cricket, basketball etc. Also academically, we were all taught in a caring & supportive manner; teaching in a way for every individual child to understand, this is extremely important. English and Maths were extremely important and the teachers made sure the pupils were well equipped, when going on to attend secondary school.</p> <p>Colvestone Primary School has shaped so many children, young people and adults over the years and to date, that no-one will understand, unless they have actually attended this unique school. Colvestone Primary School, is where students have gone on to have very successful futures!</p> <p>We implore everyone involved to listen to the community to keep this fantastic primary school open. It is detrimental to the whole community and is vital that this one-in-a-million, iconic school stays open; otherwise, the community of Dalston and Hackney will suffer a severe loss.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary School is so important to the local community. The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus. If you close it and need to re-open the school if demand increases in the future, it would automatically be a Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land. With the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site. Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites so closing it would be incredibly shortsighted.</p>
<p>Colvestone Primary school really adds to the community around the heart of Dalston and Ridley Road market. The closure of the school would leave a hole in that community, and diminish the social infrastructure at the centre of Dalston. As a single form school, it is really able to provide a child-centred experience which we particularly appreciated with our child with SEN when * may have found a larger school over-whelming. It was important for us also to have a non-denominational school for our children and Colvestone has always been diverse and welcoming in every way. Without Colvestone I feel that you are depriving future parents in the catchment area of having a local, community-focused school.</p>
<p>Colvestone provided me with an incredible primary education, and the teachers and environment were incredibly welcoming. Bullying problems were dealt with immediately, and the size of the school led every student to be familiar with everybody else, leading to a place where students rarely felt uncomfortable, leading everybody to feel very welcome and able to develop bonds with others. I am still in contact with most of my friends from Colvestone, which I believe to be due to the close-knit structure. Additionally, I have heard very little praise of Princess May, and many of tales of parents regretting sending their children there, due to the rampant bullying issues and difficult integration of SEN students. I feel that the closure and integration of Colvestone into Princess May will only harm the local community.</p>
<p>Colvestone School has been through a lot of big changes in the last few years, including two restructures, a defederation, and now we are facing closure - and some of these quite frankly could have been avoided if the Learning Trust at the time did their job of monitoring the school much better! First and foremost, why did Thomas Fairchild even federate with Colvestone when their last Ofsted was good? And then secondly, the school went on to have two further Ofteds whilst in the federation, which were both requires improvement - why wasn't proper support given from the Learning Trust after the first Ofsted? The federation caused a lot of damage to both schools in terms of their reputations and clearly their budgets that the Learning Trust were not keeping proper track of. Yes this is historical, however it is a major starting reason as to why Colvestone has such a big deficit. The Learning Trust could have done a LOT more to stop this from happening.</p>
<p>This year has seen huge developments at Colvestone since the Blossom Federation partnership, which can clearly be recognised in all the ODR and SIP reports - yet we need more time to be given a chance to develop further (and build a new reputation under the new leadership) to attract new families, increase our numbers of children, and therefore really begin to lower the deficit again. Being on the list to close (or merge - which essentially means our school will close), completely diminishes our chances of attracting more families - and yes, if we were not on the list, with all the work that Blossom have helped the school to do this year, we would have absolutely taken a lot of the surplus school children in the area looking for Reception places because that's how much we believe in the impact they have made to our school!</p>
<p>Colvestone school is a huge part of the Ridley Road community and contributes to the intergenerational value that the area holds. It would be a shame to lose this important asset after so much effort and investment has gone into the market and surrounding area, much of it with an intention to retain and strengthen community. Additionally the draft Dalston Plan sets out ambitious goals for family housing in Dalston, which if fulfilled will surely result in viable admissions for the school without the enormous and shortsighted costs of closing and reopening Colvestone School.</p>
<p>Colvestone school is a small (single form entry) school with a rich history & deeply embedded links in the community which provides a haven for children that would struggle in the larger environment of Princess May or other bigger schools in the area. For neurodivergent children especially, it is a less challenging environment where they are more likely to get the sensitive, personalised focus that will enable them to thrive.</p>
<p>Colvestone School is a unique, historic and much loved part of central Dalston and its community, as the organised and passionate campaign to save it has shown. It is a central part of the Dalston plan that aims to bring 600 new homes including families, which will increase the need for schools in the future. The proposed closure seems short sighted.</p>
<p>Colvestone School is a very important focal point of positive, visible activity for the immediate area. It matters very much to have it there operating in such a different way from all that is going on around it - mainly retail, business, cafe etc. It adds significantly to the fabric of what makes up Dalston and enriches it as a result. It's important that younger aged children go to somewhere as local as possible to foster a sense of belonging. We know this from talking to children we know. It's important to be near as the children can easily walk to school - a point which is always being emphasised from a health point of view. Obviously then, more convenient for working, busy parents to accompany them. It is less likely for them to be driven to school. If Colvestone is amalgamated with Princess May, more cars will be heading that way adding to pollution and traffic jams. Princess May school has a playground right along a heavy polluted road! Colvestone is well sheltered from traffic - much more healthy place to play.</p>

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Colvestone School is a very special school and the amalgamation will take away from what makes this school special.

It is one of the smaller schools but by being a small school, it is able to take on the paramount responsibility within the heart of the community for inclusivity, celebrating culture, and giving each and every student with such diverse backgrounds the focus and attention they need for their futures to thrive. There was never a lack of exposure and opportunity this school gave to each and every one of their students from music and arts to sports and individual study support - the needs of each and every student considered.

Growing up in a small working class family that are an ethnic minority where my parents were busy working to make ends so I was predominantly looked after by my grandmother who spoke minimal English and whose age meant her mobility would continue to reduce over the years, the accessibility, placement, community aspect of the school was important to my family and my development. It will be a loss in many ways with the amalgamation of the school as one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area. It should remain open to maintain right for families, especially those like mine and all those I met during my time at Colvestone, the choice and accessibility of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.

I am proud to be an ex-student of Colvestone school and I am proud that this gem of a school exists in the heart of the community. The proposal if it were to go through will rip away such a vital part of the community and will be a long-term loss in the area for the future development plans and opportunities for the youth and families to come.

Please save this Colvestone School.

Colvestone school is a well-loved and well-used local resource at the heart of our community. If Dalston is to remain a hospitable environment for families to live we need local schools, particularly one offering the choice of non-academy and non-faith based education. If closed and empty, the former school building would be a magnet for anti-social behaviour, already prevalent in the street.

Colvestone school is a wonderfully small school which caters for, not only a child's educational needs but their social development. My [child] attends this school and is growing in confidence socially, mixing with Year 6s when * is only in ***. Further, * is excelling in all areas of * learning.

This school needs to be supported to remain at the heart of the community and continue to develop smart and fully rounded young people.

Colvestone school is an integral part of my local area. Due to

The schools location children and carers walk to and from their school day. This encourage a sense of community for the children, builds confidence and well being physical and mental. Many local residents say good morning to parents and carers on their way to school, which helps bring a community together. I live directly opposite the school, I am always encouraged by the sense of community the school brings to the area. There is a feeling of protection and calmness in the morning and afternoons when the children arrive and leave the school. I believe the whole community benefit from this.

I believe the school is a 1 year in take, a rare thing within central London and I believe must be a benefit to the children. I believe a smaller school can provide a calmer and more individual experience for the children and will help them grow up to be secure, responsible assets to our Community

Colvestone School is at the heart of the local community, and closing it will have a detrimental impact on the local area

Colvestone school is uniquely built and located, giving it a distinctive identity and relation to its community. It has much of the appealing and welcoming character of a village school. The children are very well cared for and receive a high quality of education. It is far better for children to be able to walk to school. This proposal (as well as the other three) will lead to much more car use and toxic air pollution.

Colvestone School is well renowned in Hackney for being a small community school, with a nurturing and caring ethos and a particularly positive approach to SEND children. They have small classes and are rare in that they are a one form entry. This matters to children in terms of their mental well being and development. Additionally, Colvestone has been at the heart of Hackney for 161 years and has a very interesting history. If Colvestone is closed, we will lose this for all future generations, not just now and the unique nature of Colvestone will be lost. The current cohort will be mentally distressed by the proposed merger; after two years of distress caused by covid, it is unthinkable to impose yet more disruption on these young people. We also know that the CAHMS referrals in Hackney have sky rocketed. It is unacceptable to add to existing stresses. It will also impact on the well being and mental health of the staff, let alone their job security. People will leave and the school will feel like a ghost school for those remaining. Finally, Princess May is a very different school. It is across a busy main road. The air quality in Princess May is worse than the air quality at Colvestone. As a clean air borough, why would the council knowingly put children in harm's way from air pollution? Why would they put children at greater risk from crossing a busy main road, when they purport to promote school and safer streets? With respect to roles, demographics change. When I moved to London, I taught classes of 12 children. I now teach classes of 24 max. Small classes are a benefit not a problem, to improving education and this will change as people start to have children. Demographics change, but never permanently. As an educator with 33 years' experience, I urge the council to rethink, on the grounds of health and safety of the pupils, historic value and legacy to the community and lead by good educational practice. Small community schools are a good thing. Do not be the ones who destroy that legacy for the people of Hackney. After all, politicians are merely the current caretakers. Colvestone has been there a lot longer than the current administration.

Colvestone school means such a lot to the community that it would be a travesty for it to close

Colvestone should not close.

De Beauvoir should merge with Colvestone.

Our kids have been through so much over covid and lockdown. We need the school and they need the school.

We don't want this to go legal!

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<p>Colvestone should not close. It is a vibrant, well functioning school with a potential to recover from the current drop in pupil numbers. The council could well help Colvestone get back on its feet and get more students if the council took steps leading to promoting the school instead of steps leading to discouraging parents of potential new students from enrolling them in Colvestone as is currently the case.</p> <p>The school has a great deal to offer - the building and schools grounds are beautiful and unique, it is a single form school which has a friendly, special atmosphere and is especially good for children with special needs, allowing them to thrive.</p> <p>Colvestone Crescent is apparently set to become a 21st Century street, which would be an additional incentive for parents to send their children there.</p> <p>It is not fair on Colvestone students to have their education disrupted in this way. They are not pawns on a chess board that can be just moved from one place to another.</p> <p>I, and many (probably most) other Colvestone parents, have no intention of sending my child (their children) to Princess May.</p> <p>This is just not a good solution to this problem. There are many other, better ways to approach current issues at Colvestone and they can result in Colveston thriving again. The council need to abandon this plan and create a new one in the light of the information suggesting that the merger with Princess May is not going to be successful.</p> <p>Concerned about the attention of teachers on individual students in case of an increase of classroom. I am also concerned about kids' association with their classmates as it may affect their understanding.</p> <p>De Beauvoir has been apart of our community since I was a child. My children have all attended and it has contributed to the growth and wellbeing of all three of my children. The teachers are compassionate and generally care about the students. They know each and every student by their name which makes the children feel special. We are a community and closing it would affect our wellbeing. The kids are settled and happy. This sudden closure proposal has left the kids unsettled which can have an impact on their mental health.</p> <p>De Beauvoir is a family, it is not fair! We have a huge playground. Some schools don't even have one. Just because Colvestone parents have the cash to protest doesn't mean other parents do too. I'm not asking to close Colvestone but I am asking to amalgamate De Beauvoir. It is hard to see my school disintegrate.</p> <p>De Beauvoir is a top school, and it would make more sense closing schools that are under performing and keep the schools that are thriving. I dont see know schools being advertised or promoted in the media or around the borough. Invest your funds into schools that do well and close the schools that don't do so well, those pupils will than fill up the school places resulting in funding etc</p> <p>De Beauvoir is a wonderful community school and there are limited options available in walking distance for a 4 year old. The school does wonderful work because it is small and can treat students as individuals.</p> <p>De Beauvoir is an old school. It has something to offer to the community. For historic reasons alone, please keep De Beauvoir for the coming generations. Let it reach 200 years. It is nearly there. Hackney, WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT!!</p> <p>De Beauvoir primary has been in our community for many years. Four of my children have attended this school. *** and the teachers and staff at this school have been extremely supportive when I have had health and personal issues. My children love coming to this school and are devastated about the possible closure. This school is one big, supportive family. It is not just bricks and mortar. I highly doubt that I will have this support from another school. The children at De Beauvoir are happy and content. They have made bonds with teachers and friends. Please don't take this away from them.</p> <p>De Beauvoir Primary school should be the main local school in the area. Many residents have attended this school in their primary school age. The Council has given permission to a free school to open nearby with a controversial history linked to a secondary school that has terribly failed in the past. The free school has indubitably taken most of the primary school age in the De Beauvoir area. Learning Trust has also a responsibility in the last troubled years for De Beauvoir Primary school. They have changed head teachers many times and chased results above building the community spirit that was much needed in the school. Community spirit that keeps alive the other primary schools in the small neighborhood</p> <p>Detrimental effect on families and children - deprived families with mental health issues will suffer - not conducive to the evolution of the area in a social and educational context.</p> <p>Disagree, I would like to see these school not merge</p> <p>Do not want baden powell to close down.</p> <p>Don't close local authority schools at the heart of squeezed london communities</p> <p>Education in Hackney, one of the most deprived boroughs in the country, is inadequate, underfunded and undervalued. Closing down some of the existing institutions is exactly the opposite of what the Council should be proposing : it shows a deplorable lack of vision, a desperate short-termism and lack of the required leadership for the Borough. We need more and better educational facilities in Hackney. Failing that, we have to retain what we have, nurture and develop them, and give the parents and children of Hackney to feel a sense of purpose, clarity of the path ahead for education, and optimism to see that path realised. Closing the schools down will only achieve the opposite of these goals. Falling school rolls are not an excuse to close down these institutions. They are an opportunity to improve them, with smaller class sizes and better results.</p> <p>Even if our [child] is in schaklewell, Colvestone is an important part pf the neighbourhood. The closure of Colvestone and nearby De Beauvoir would eliminate non-faith, one-form entry schools in our area, leaving a dominance of religious schools, academies, and free schools. This disregards parental choice and diversity. Additionally, closing Colvestone could negatively impact the Dalston development plan, hinder children with special educational needs, increase air pollution exposure for students, and erase a historically significant Grade 2 listed building from the 19th century radical education movement.</p> <p>Everyone in the school are stressing about this proposal I have two special needs kids you are not thinking about us at all kids are struggling</p> <p>Firstly, I do not understand why the school budget has been cut and they have to merge schools. What happens when they agree to close the school and the birth rate goes back up? Secondly, I chose Baden Powell as my [child]'s school because it is considered a family school. My [child]'s aunties, cousins, grandmother etc went there and the education that was provided is excellent. My [child] has had a big improvement in * learning and confidence because it is a small class. This school has benefitted * so much. I believe in a bigger school, this might change. Also, I have no idea which teachers and even the headteacher will move, who have not only helped my [child] but me also with his development.</p>
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	<p>For it takes a village to save a school and also for the pupils that are attending and enrolled to Colvestone, it is vital for this community, however small or insignificant they seem, they still need their school that has been an essential part of their community and education. Please save this school for the sake of the caring community that it's home to.</p>
	<p>Fully appreciate dilemma Council faces but Colvestone is an integral part of the local community. The building is beautiful and to close it would be to create a blight on the landscape. That end of the street needs occupying to create a transition from market place to dwelling place.</p>
	<p>Generations and generations of children have been attending this school and Baden Powell has been in the heart of the community of Hackney for many many years with nothing but good things to say about it. I am a mother of *** whose [child] is in year ***. However, I also attended this school when I was in primary years and I am *** years of age now. My friends children were sent to this school as part of the history of attending Baden Powell. My *** is a Teaching Assistant for over *** years or more and started when I was in year *** class. Many local residents to the school and within Hackney have worked here for over 20 or 30 years at this school making a huge impact on the children's lives. I'm worried for my *** that * will be without a job if you decide to close. If you do close the school - please ensure you can arrange to have the teaching assistants placed in Nightingale or near by schools so they can continue to work and not be unemployed as it's not their fault. I really hope you can leave the school to remain and not merge the school. Thank you</p>
	<p>Hackney Council has disregarded many points prior to taking this decision which is very appalling. There are many schools in Hackney, each of which is different, and Colvestone is unique with its catchment area.</p>
	<p>Hackney council have told parents that De Beauvoir school should close because pupil numbers are falling and will continue to do so in the future. The council cited three driving factors; Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis; all of which were pushing families out of London. Shortly after the consultation I asked the council to provide source for their predictions and to explain why they believe these trends will continue. I have not received a satisfactory response. I was simply told that the predictions were made by "experts."</p>
	<p>Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis are all recent events. Although they have had an impact on pupil numbers recently, there is no evidence that these trends will continue in the long term. In fact shortly before these events, pupil numbers in Hackney had been rising.</p>
	<p>The school has been serving the community for over one hundred years and once it's gone it will be gone forever. I strongly believe that the closure of De Behaviour School will be one of the biggest mistakes that Hackney council could make.</p>
	<p>Hackney needs all its schools</p>
	<p>Hackney requires more not less schools. Class numbers increasing is putting too much pressure on each teaching institution</p>
	<p>Hackney should not only have large schools in the borough. Some pupils are better suited to small schools and learning environments. In addition having large schools in busy urban areas is often overwhelming for residents at critical times of the working day.</p>
	<p>Happy about the merger</p>
	<p>Having joined the Blossom Federation, Colvestone has really improved. It is shortsighted in the extreme to close a school which is on an upwards trajectory. The effort which has been invested by all staff has been fantastic and this will be thrown away if the school were to close.</p>
	<p>The decision to close a school without any plan for the future of the site is bizarre. I understand it is to be a community asset, but this is vague and without a clear plan and funding will likely see the site lay vacant for a long time, draining further resources. This lack of plan is compounded when you consider the very recent (and long overdue) capital works to the buildings.</p>
	<p>Colvestone currently provides a wonderfully caring and welcoming environment for pupils and families and given time to grow I have no doubt that the current leadership can provide a thriving and viable school. I understand that the need to balance budgets but Colvestone could become financially stable if given time and support.</p>
	<p>I do hope that the Council reconsider these proposals and keep this school available for the local community.</p>
	<p>Having the option of a small community single form entry school in the heart of Dalston is invaluable.</p>
	<p>I agree with the proposals if it saves money and reduces the costs to the taxpayer. Obviously merging the schools will help to reduce financial loss. However my concern is why children left the schools leading to a significant reduction in attendance. The question we should be asking is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the reasons parents opted to remove their children from these schools? 2. How the closing schools be used as learning hubs, centres of excellence, alternative learning spaces to engage the children that have left? 3. Where are these 45% of children being educated? 4. When will Hackney Council implement activities that support homeschool children and their their parents?
	<p>I agree with the two amalgamations and disagree with the other two non-amalgamations, i.e., I believe the other two Primary schools should also be amalgamated instead of being closed down.</p>

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I am a local Dalston resident and parent of a [child] and [children], all teenagers now. who attended Colvestone Primary School from nursery to year 6.

My ***** family SEN requirements mean the intimate environment of a one form entry school in a small building with an enclosed playground are very important criteria for us as is the case for current and (we hope) future Colvestone families. We understand that the current SEN offer is very good and has improved since the school has a new leadership team. Therefore to merge the school with another larger one which we do not consider to be in our neighbourhood and is located on the busy and polluted A10 will be harmful to special needs children as well as all other Colvestone pupils.

Colvestone Primary School is a non-denominational school located in the residential district east of Kingsland High Street. The building was opened as a school in 1862 and has been educating children from the area ever since regardless of their gender, faith, socio-economic and ethnic background. As such it attracts a diverse section of the community adding to the richness of the pupils' educational experience. As such, it varies from other schools in Hackney which have a narrower demographic. This is an important reason to keep the school open on its existing site.

We are aware that pupil numbers have fallen since our children left the school. It is claimed by the Council that this is due to fewer primary school children living in Dalston, partly due to extortionate property prices, a lack of affordable social housing and the cost of living crisis, partly due to Continental European families leaving because of Brexit, and partly due to young families leaving London during Covid. Whilst these may be contributory factors, we cannot stress enough the decline in recent years of the school when it was part of the Soaring Skies Federation under the leadership of the former headteacher ***. We watched her run down Colvestone, putting all resources available into the partner school Thomas Fairchild. Eventually there were insufficient teachers for each year class and a couple years ago she let go of several much valued and long-serving teaching assistants. It is no surprise that high numbers of parents reluctantly took their children out of the school due to the inadequate educational provision.

However, it cannot be stressed enough that due to the small-scale nature of the one-form entry school the new leadership team and federation since last September has completely turned around the decline of Colvestone, returning it to the positive learning environment my children experienced when they were younger, the school interior has finally been redecorated, the playground upgraded, and long-awaited IT equipment has been provided to support the children's education. It shows how Colvestone is like a phoenix, risen again from the ashes. To close the school on this attractive and historic site effectively would destroy the school forever - especially for its current pupils and staff.

Colvestone should remain as a fully functioning nursery and primary school on its current site as it is central to the local community and residential neighbourhood. There has been a school in the current building and site since 1862 when houses around St Mark's Church down the road were first built. The school building is one of the oldest school buildings in Hackney, predating the larger London Board Schools which were built from the 1870s onwards. Originally one of six Birkbeck schools, it was originally founded by the educational philanthropist William Ellis to educate boys and girls, which has been happening ever since - for more than 160 years. So to close the school on its historic and established site would be extremely short-sighted and regrettable for the school and local community.

Furthermore, the school premises are statutorily listed grade 2 as a recognition of their special architectural and historic interest, The Council, as the owner and guardian of the building has a legal duty to safeguard the building to preserve it as part of our cultural heritage for future generations. The optimum viable use for a listing is its original use for which it was purpose-built. So in the case of this listed building, the Council should continue its use as a primary school for local children.

The Council also has a duty to maintain the listed building and ensure it does not fall into disrepair. In the last year, following many years of neglect, the school building and its railings have undergone a comprehensive and sympathetic series of repairs and roof renewal works. But if the school were to leave the site, it is likely it would fall vacant with no foreseeable future educational use, leaving the building vulnerable to squatters, vandalism and water ingress - reversing all the recent renovation works welcomed by the community. The listed building no doubt would be added to Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register for Greater London, due to its uncertain future and vulnerability to decline.

The school site also falls within the St Mark's Conservation Area. It is one of a few landmark buildings playing an important role in the community. The loss of the school on this site and the resultant deadening effect of a vacant and declining historic building containing no children or teaching staff would be enormously harmful to the conservation area, the character and appearance of which the Council has a statutory duty to protect in its function as the local planning authority.

Finally, it cannot be stressed enough that the loss of Colvestone on its historic site is contrary to the Council's adopted Dalston Local Plan which projects the need for around 600 new homes of a variety of tenures including high numbers of affordable family homes in the next few years. This is because there is an identified need in the area for more family homes, partly so that young families are no longer driven away from the area. Some of the allocated housing sites are in close proximity to Colvestone Primary School. This is clear evidence that there will be high demand for school places at Colvestone in years to come, do to close the school on its current site and merge it with another ill-located school outside the neighbourhood would not only be short-sighted, educationally ineffective and morally wrong, but inconsistent with the Council's own local plan for Dalston.

I am a neighbour and think it's insane you want to close a school. It's very short sighted. And irresponsible.

I am a parent and my children go to school here because it is close to my house and we are used to other parents.

I am a parent at another school that is being proposed for closure but after hearing about Colvestone, I would like to keep it open so we can join. We need an option for a small school and it seems to be the only one in the area. My [child] has asthma and I am not sure how we will manage to avoid all the traffic.

I am a parent of a 2 year old in Hackney Downs that would likely have enrolled in one of the 4 schools involved in the merges. I was not aware of the falling enrolment numbers but agree Hackney council should protect the funding and quality of the school provision by merging. My only concern is whether there will be enough places in future years if numbers start to rise again and the closed school buildings have been repurposed/sold to developers.

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I am a parent of a child at another local school, but feel it is really important for our community to have a choice of non-denominational schools. I understand that Colvestone has had some troubles in recent few years but that the new head is doing an amazing job at turning it around again. I expect the recent troubles were the main contributing factor for lots of children leaving to join alternative schools.

The Dalston Development Plan proposes to build 600 new homes, which will surely increase demand significantly in the immediate area.

The existing building is also a beautiful asset to the local area, and would be terribly sad to see this turned into something else or extended in a way which did not honour its original purpose. It feels like a little bit of village school amidst what used to be a series of villages. It has a massive connection to its local community and I believe it should be saved.

I am a proponent of the Dalston Plan, which commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community.

I am very concerned that the option for these children is a school on the A10, where pollution is 40% higher. Children are uniquely vulnerable to air pollution, breathing faster than adults on average and taking in more air relative to their body weight. Exposure to toxic levels of pollution, particularly at these early stages of development, exacerbates respiratory diseases, reduces lung function development and increases asthma incidence, as well as having an impact on brain development

I am a ***. My grand[child] joined *** at Colvestone last autumn. I have been to the class several times & assisted on a school outing & ***.

This school is impressive, providing a welcoming learning environment that meets the needs of all abilities, including those with special educational needs.

Hackney Council should take note of the concerns of the families of those statemented children who are well catered for at Colvestone ie they are integrated into main stream education. This is a cost effective arrangement as it reduces the need for expensive SEN provision in separate schools for those settled at Colvestone.

The school is a resource at the centre of Dalston. The response to the proposed amalgamation (closure) demonstrates how much it is valued by the whole community.

It is a purpose built school in a listed building. Until the terms of the restriction in the deeds of the school is known, Hacknet Council can not consider it's future.

I am a resident of Colvestone Crescent and galvanised with my peers on the street who object to the closure of Colvestone primary. The school is an integral part of the community and identity of this neighbourhood and should be preserved as a social priority.

I am an immediate neighbour living on Colvestone Crescent.

I am also a full time teacher (state school, elsewhere in London).

I attended one of the parent/council meetings held in the Colvestone Primary School hall. In my professional judgment as a teacher, it was crystal clear that CPS is an exceptional school. I heard stories of children with autism and special needs thriving, in a huge part due to the personal small space that this school offers. This will not be reproduceable in a larger merged school - and there will be the added challenge of meeting the special needs of these students which will not be so straightforward in Princess May. Furthermore, teaching in a school myself that has a large autistic student group, I understand the importance of routine and of familiar faces and of quiet spaces. The disruption caused by the merger to these students could be permanent, both on an emotional level and on an educational level. Safeguarding these young people who form a significant proportion of the school should be a priority for Hackney. The Hackney representative's pre-prepared speech kept stating that CPS was unremarkable in that ninety-something percent of Hackney schools were outstanding, but I am not convinced. I witnessed stories of an exceptional school that should be fought for, not abandoned.

I also heard the transformational story of a [parent] and [child] from *** who started attending CPS. The [child] went from being disruptive and failing to becoming engaged and thriving. The attention that * received at CPS and the belief that the teachers had in * allowed * to flourish. The whole hall was hugely moved by this [parent]'s speech. I sense that moving back to a larger (Princess May) school * might fall back into bad habits and lose interest in learning. The [parent] is astute enough to see just how [their child]'s future depends on this. A move to a bigger school and * could be lost. It makes me think that there must be other parents and carers across London who could only dream of their child studying at a school like Colvestone Primary School. If this parent could move to CPS from ***, why can't others? Make it happen!

Meanwhile, we learn about Hackney's 21st Century Streets plan, with God knows how much spent on computer-generated images and public relations. If only this budget could be invested in keeping CPS afloat another year while further strategies are planned and attempted. The irony of closing down a primary school on the very street proposed as Utopian is just too much. It reminds me that this is all political and arbitrary - if you want to find funds you find them, and if you don't want to find them, then we have crises of depleting student places. Again, if the time invested in promoting the 21st Century Streets were invested in finding more parents in ***, then perhaps CPS would have greater funding for next year. As I say to my students, "Solutions, not Excuses!". If you want a solution then you make it happen.

On a practical note, what will happen to the building and how expensive will that be to maintain? I understand that Hackney cannot grant permission for another surprise block of luxury apartments like Fifty-Seven East (above Dalston Kingsland) to be built on the site. So what will happen to the phantom school? How expensive will it be to maintain as a listed building with no purpose? I feel like Hackney will shoot itself in the foot by closing a beloved school that will actually not save them much money but lead to a lesser education for so many students.

On a personal level, it is also just really lovely to have a primary school on Colvestone Crescent. It is the heart of the community, and something that cannot quite be quantified on some spreadsheet at the town hall. Give me a primary school any day over the 'child-friendly place' provided by a 21st Century Street!

I am concerned about the effective closing on two counts.

1) It contributes so much to a dynamic, multi-generational neighbourhood, with families around the local streets.

2) The building is an architectural gem which brings dynamism to the street scope. Also, it has recently had substantial sums spent on its upkeep.

I am concerned about the level of teaching at an increased capacity school

I am deeply concerned by the proposal to amalgamate Colvestone with Princess May. I don't see either what proper analysis you have done and shared with the community of either the extent of the problem that requires such a solution, OR what other options were available to you, or why this is the necessary solution. You risk giving the impression that this is a fait accompli. On top of this, I don't see what evidence you have put forward of a proper risk assessment, in terms of the impact on the cohort of the children who currently attend and how the proposals will impact them over the coming year OR on future generations of local children. There is a significant consequence to reducing your offer of non-denominational school places.

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I am not really happy that the school is closing because I wanted my child to finish primary there. But unfortunately the school is closing and we need to look for another school.
I am really angry about the decision to close De Beauvoir school because this school has so many special needs kids and it is very difficult for them.
I am strongly against this proposal. Dalston is changing rapidly and the pace of gentrification is almost frightening. Colvestone has all kinds of families and is right in the heart of Dalston, represent inclusive education. Further, the building is listed and must remain as a school and a non-profit space in the midst of soaring rents. I live *** and it is very much part of our community. Please don't remove it.
I am very sad and disappointed that Hackney Council have not engaged with the parents or the local community about this proposal. Colvestone is a small one form entry school and by closing it you take away all choice -we do not accept the merger proposal We do not want a bigger school. We do not want a playground on an extremely busy road where pollution has been recorded as much higher than Colvestone. We are concerned about the SEN children who will suffer in a bigger school. We feel that there has been no discussion or interest in any other possible outcome - as though merge with PM school is the only option. Colvestone is thriving under the new Blossom management is now financially viable. It will cost a fortune to close the school and keep it mothballed bt Hackney Council's own figures show this and cannot be justifiable-it will be a disgrace to do so. We need to be listened to and engaged with so that we can help the Council to find a way out of this and protect a vital part of Dalston's community.
I am worried if Baden-Powell is closed that Hackney council will build a tower block in its space blocking out light and scenery. Making it harder to find a parking space due to more people living on this road. And you will probably only provide minimal amount of social housing.
I appreciate the falling rolls issue at Colvestone, but the smaller groups there have made it possible to offer real child-centred support which has especially benefited children with special needs and those on the autism spectrum. I feel that there are strong equity-based reasons for keeping the school open. As a close neighbour for over 30 years, I have been able to observe the great, positive atmosphere around the school.
I believe Colvestone should not be closed as this school is best for the local community. The kids will be affected.
I believe it should not go ahead as it will have a devastating impact on the children that are going to Colvestone primary school. Not only are they being displaced from the school they have been going to, and feel comfortable in, it will unhealthily stress the children, as they must get used to a completely new environment, with more students than they are used to being around (as colvestone is a 1 form entry school) which is a very difficult and extremely scary prospect.
I believe our school provides an important and vital role in the community and the future of children in the area - many of which are already disadvantages in many ways. Our school has recently received good Ofsted reviews as a testament to the quality of the education and support we offer. I in particular work with children with special needs and I have seen great progress in them. It would be a shame for that not to continue. I therefore urge you to reconsider your plans of closing this school. Thank you!
I believe that the children of De Beauvoir are well placed and supported in their educational advances. The staff are caring and nurturing and have successfully adapted teaching and learning styles to suit all types of learners. As a parent who is unable to drop off and pick up my child regularly, I have been able to reach out to staff whenever needed, including sending late night emails which have received instant replies. During the Covid 19 lockdowns, the school was quite quick in implementing online learning which many private schools still have not been able to implement. I believe De Beauvoir is key to the community and should remain open for more parents to share the same experiences I have had.
I believe that the community benefits greatly from the support received by the staff at De Beauvoir. I believe that the school is a supportive team to both (especially) the students, but to parents as well. De Beauvoir were one of a few schools that were very quick with offering parents and pupils alternative access to education during the critical covid times. Having friends who have children in private education, De Beauvoir surpassed even what high costing private school were able to do for young people. As a parent, I was supported in every turn of my child's education, with late night replies to emails and raising concerns during the school day. I have always been and felt supported at every turn and believe that more and more children need to benefit from this caring community.
I believe the loss of Colvestone will be a loss to the street, future children of Hackney and the community.
I can understand the pressures on the Council budget but once community assets are gone they are very hard to recover. I would prefer to see part of the assets (eg the house at the front of the school) sold and a combination. Of alternative uses (eg extended nursery provision) rather than the merger.
I did not pick Princess May - this is on the main road. Concern with pollution. Concern with the suppose for my [child] with SEND - currently * needs being met are outstanding. (Non EHCP) Concern that so much money has been spent on Colvestone - de federation / 2 restructures / building works - concern out the use of hackney money and not forward planning. Lack of other options of school - only faith / academy or free school left I didn't want Baden Powell to close because I got used to that school
I disagree to the closure, because kids mindset will shift drastically, some children do not take likely to changes or will ever get use to changes, stepping out of their comforts zones. This would have a very serious impact on their mental health and that will certainly disrupt their abilities to learn. Some of the children has friends from Nursery going on to year one and ect that they became best friend with, that they may never see again, that will have so much emotional trauma going forward for them if they should change schools. My [child] attend Baden-Powell Primary school and if this merge happens * WILL no be moving forward with the merge, Already * thinks about the possibilities of not been able to see * friends and the sadness and question i have to face already from * is overwhelming and sad at the same time when i look at the worry on * face. So i really do hope that Baden-Powell Primary school will stay open for the future generations. Thank you.
I disagree with the proposal and Hackney's housing policy and benefits cap. This has a direct effect on the number of school age pupils in the borough. This disproportionately affects working class families and means that important schools like De Beauvoir who provide educational/socio emotional function have fewer pupils than they would have if people with a local connection were being housed locally in the borough. This has not been carried out in a strategic manner; places should have been held until the end of the school year, schools are being destabilised by in-year transfer as parents panic at the news. Hackney appear to act amorally and irresponsibly.

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<p>I disagree with the proposals as the number of the students in the classes are going to increase so much. It would also affect the teaching as the increased number of students and teachers aren't going to teach effectively.</p>
<p>I do not agree on closing schools. Especially when children get used to it. Colvestone primary school is very close to me and my daughter built a strong relationship with her classmates and teachers.</p>
<p>I do not believe that school closures will benefit any children</p>
<p>I do not feel that this merge would be beneficial to Colvestone children due to:</p>
<p>Lack of parental choice (only church, free or academies)</p>
<p>Impact on Hackney's developmental plan (21st Century street)</p>
<p>Impact on SEN pupils - of which are well supported</p>
<p>Air pollution at Princess May</p>
<p>Historical significance (last of the Birkbeck School)</p>
<p>Hackney have been chipping away at Colvestone over the last 4 years which has impacted on the pupils number - the school has been through a period of instability due to the decisions of Hackney. Finally the school is settled and in a good place.</p>
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<p>I do not think closing any primary schools is in the long-term interests of the borough and its residents. The borough should be asking itself why the numbers of children have gone down and why you continue to allow the development of one bedroom apartments which nobody can have a family in (or can afford).</p>
<p>I know the area well (I lived 1.5 miles away for 20 years and worked in Haggerston for 6 years) and I support the parents and teachers wanting to keep Colvestone open. I believe that the school contributes to the long-established community in the local area and could contribute to the improvement of the area for families, particularly the school being a focus for the eco-friendly plans for Colvestone Crescent.</p>
<p>As a small and "calm" school, it provides very important benefits to those children. There should be other ways to make up the funds, not creating a larger school where the risk is that less-able children will be left out or less able to cope.</p>
<p>It is important that the school is so close to Ridley Road market, meaning the school, and the market, can benefit from this link. Schools contribute to the liveable-ness of a place especially long-established schools with traditional buildings that people appreciate.</p>
<p>Colvestone is slightly further from the main road and therefore has less traffic pollution than Princess May.</p>
<p>Colvestone is a rare non-religious school and it is important to retain that choice for parents.</p>
<p>Extensive new housing in Dalston will require school places, so it is very short-sighted and wrong to close Colvestone.</p>
<p>I do not want the school to close because the head teacher is doing a great job in the school and I can see the improvement in my son's education</p>
<p>I do not want the school to close. I am worried for parents and staff. It is a wonderful school and should stay open. The setting enables children to learn. The school has a high quality of teaching. The work environment is friendly. We have a great team. It is very stressful for everyone. The school accepts children from all backgrounds and needs, and are very well supported.</p>

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<p>I do not want to send my child to a religious school (especially as a gay parent) or a free school (the funding of which is cloaked in secrecy) therefore there are no other options available to us a family in this area. The schools we would otherwise choose are full. Colvestone has a village feel in bustling Hackney and this is the reason we chose it.</p>
<p>Had you chosen to merge De Beauvoir and Colvestone this would have been a different matter as they are very similar in ethos and size but going to Princess May is not an option for us.</p>
<p>The other thing I have major concerns about is the talk of further closures after this. So whatever school we choose might then be closed again (particularly Princess May) as there are so few parents at Colvestone willing to send their kids there. This is a perfect example of Hackney Council putting money before children's lives and my family and I feel incredibly let down by this proposal.</p>
<p>The consultation process has been a sham. Every time we have asked a specific question of the council we have been answered in generalities and every time we've asked a more broad question, we've been answered with specifics. Imagine attending a meeting about your child's future and the future of the community we have built and answering every point of criticism presented by the council only to be repeatedly told 'the numbers are the numbers' (when we've just proved we're financially viable).</p>
<p>In short, I very strongly object to this proposal.</p>
<p>I do not wish for my child to merge with another school as this disrupt their educational achievement that they already accomplish at Colvestone. Colvestone primary school is also in a convenient location for majority of parents.</p>
<p>I do not wish my child's school to merge with another school. We are very sad to find out that our lovely school will be shut down. We are all very happy in our school and we love our little community. Children are learning, playing and growing up in a close and peaceful environment. I deliberately have chosen a one entry form school for my child. Not everyone can cope with busy environments. From my personal point of view it's going to be devastating for year *** children to move once in year *** and then move to a secondary which is a huge change in their life in general. My [child] has [SEND] and * struggles to cope even with little changes during * daily routine. This will completely mess * up. Please leave our children to learn and grow up in their lovely, safe place Baden Powell! We have enough struggles in our lives! Don't mess us up and then offer support and help. I am against the proposal of Baden Powell to be merged with Nightingale. Thanks for your time.</p>
<p>I do not wish to comment because the decision has been made and sadly the school will close.</p>
<p>I don't agree with the proposal Baden Powell is an amazing school with spacious two playgrounds with many teachers who are dedicated to their work and positive attitude towards pupils</p>
<p>I don't want larger amalgamated schools , small and local schools for the community surrounding them.</p>
<p>I don't agree with the proposal to close Colvestone primary school</p>
<p>I don't think the children will benefit from bigger classrooms as its better to have small class so the teacher can better identify children needs and support them where if you have bigger classrooms some children will go under the radar and be missed and not get help if needed and also I'm worried that when it's time to apply for a place I might not get a place in the school of my choice. This proposal is absolutely outrageous and Hackney should not be considering closing schools or merge two school</p>
<p>I don't want to close De Beauvoir Primary School</p>
<p>I feel it would be a loss to the community and a shame for all the Colvestone pupils and a big upheaval for them to join another school.</p>
<p>I feel that due to Covid that these numbers have been pushed more in decline and the regeneration of Hackney so a lot of unfavorable homes have been built so people are forced to live out of London, if this was the prediction forecast why is that intake for schools with low numbers were still allowed to continue, also why wasn't parents informed before hand that over subscribed schools were originally designed to house more children How can we guarantee that in few years this solves the issues and again we aren't in same position</p>
<p>I feel that Randal Cremer is a strong community school which works well with marginalised families and children with high levels of SEND - perhaps it would of great benefit to offer more funding to increase and extend this work.</p>
<p>I have an [SEND] child and one with needs in years *** & ***. They both don't like change and do not like too many children around them. It took more than a year for each of them to get settled in Baden Powell. It is going to be so unsettling for them to change into a large school with so many pupils. I chose Baden Powell as it was small for both their needs. We love all staff. All staff know the pupils and parents. Please don't merge. If you do I will move them to a smaller school like Baden Powell.</p>
<p>I have been a parent of children who have both completed their schooling in various schools in Hackney. I strongly believe that the amalgamation of schools creates less diversity and less ability for the borough to deliver the specific and attentive requirements of children needed from schooling in contemporary daily life. I am a senior professor at a British University and see the results of the watered down education that is provided by larger schools with more pupils and less time for individual pupil attention over many years. In my view, this type of amalgamation goes against the ethos of delivering education in Hackney in the context of its important crosscultural and multiethnic environment. Children need time and individual attention; they do not need to be squashed together in an environment that cannot give them the care and attention that they need. In addition, Colvestone Primary has been an important part of Dalston's social infrastructure for decades, prized precisely because of its small size..</p>
<p>I have direct access to how this proposal has affected pupils, their families and staff members. I have direct access to children crying and emotionally drained as their peers leave for another school one by one. I have direct access to children as young as 4 only having 1 day to process that it would be their last day with their friends and favourite teachers; as parents frantically do in-year applications. I have direct access to parents who struggle with the English language asking for support and guidance on how to do transfer applications and what to do. Every day we are seeing a lack of content from staff members who have dedicated over two decades of service to De Beauvoir Primary School, only to now have to worry about whether they will be able to secure a job anywhere else. It is very sad to have to watch children say goodbye to their home. Yes, De Beauvoir is and was a home to many. Parents know they can come to De Beauvoir in any moment of stress or destitute and we would always support. They fear they are now left hopeless with one to turn to. Please reconsider as this will negatively affect more lives than you can imagine.</p>
<p>I have had 2 children, now aged 13 and 16, who went to Colvestone and had an excellent education. They're now excelling at Secondary school with my eldest having offers for Sixth Form from Latymer and Harris Westminster amongst others. And it wasn't only academically they were thriving but also socially in a wonderful community.</p>
<p>Now my third child, aged 4, is about to start at Colvestone because I think it's the best primary in the area. I will not send * to Princess May.</p>
<p>What would a 21 Century Street be without a school?</p>

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<p>I have lived at my address for over 14 years. When I moved in, I searched for schools in my area and found the best school near my house. I registered my first [child] and * finished at this school two years ago and is now in secondary school. I have two more children attending De Beauvoir - one is year *** and one is ***. I have one more child that I will register in school next year. We are happy and don't want De Beauvoir closed. Please don't close the school. Thanks.</p>
<p>I have lived opposite the school for 24 years, both my children were extremely happy pupils there and I was involved as a school governor for five years. The school needs to remain open because it is a vital hub in the community and serves the families and children of Dalston better than any other school can. Its small village like size is an absolute prize for the children and their education. I believe the SEN teaching and support there is so strong that it brings children from across the borough.</p> <p>If schools are to be amalgamated then it should involve pupils coming to Colvestone, not leaving.</p> <p>As a resident I'm aware of how the school would be a lynchpin of Hackney Councils 21st Century Street plan for Colvestone Crescent. It seems absurd, when one of the main beneficiaries of the plan would be the school and its staff and pupils, to consider closing the school.</p> <p>Moreover, I am very concerned about an increase in anti social behaviour and crime , including burglary, drug taking and violence, which would follow the closure of the school. This again would fly in the face of creating a peaceful and green haven as part of the 21st Century Street plans.</p> <p>As a resident and former parent I object most strongly to the proposal of Colvestone Primary being closed to allow for its amalgamation with another school.</p>
<p>I have not and would not pick Princess May as a school. I like the village-like atmosphere of Colvestone, plus my child has severe [SEND] and the change will really affect *. I have a good relationship with Colvestone and with my children's teachers.</p>
<p>I have spoken to a few parents from Nightingale who do not want a merger. I know a few parents who have a lot of problems with a few teachers, pupils and even their *** who takes everyone's business. I know a lot of what goes on. My *** went to a *** from Nightingale and they said they don't want to merge because we are ruff raff. Now children act upon their parents if we merge. I can see a lot of problems with pupils who are already there. My children will be subjected to bullying.</p>
<p>I just don't understand why the school will close. If the number of children in Hackney is so low so why did the new Hackney school open. It doesn't even have a playground.</p>
<p>I live in *** and have 2 children who are at nursery. I would like to send them to Colvestone primary once they are school age. I wouldn't send them to Princess May as I wouldn't want them to go to a school so close to a main road, with everything we know about pollution now. If you merge the schools I would probably move out of hackney</p>
<p>I live in the area and feel that schools like this are so important and the history should be continued. I hope to have children one day in this area and send them to a small school like this.</p>
<p>I live next to Colvestone Primary School in *** and have been a resident there since 2004. The school has been an integral part in the development of the area and its diverse mix of pupils celebrate everything that is great about the area.</p> <p>In the more recent years the investment in the school has reflected positively on the activities at the school - I love hearing the sports, music, after school activity etc! it seems absurd to close the much loved and cherished school after recent investment in its refurbishment and its record in diverse background of pupils including those with learning disabilities. It would send a wrong signal to the community already dealing with increase in drug dealing and addiction and crime at our doorstep.</p>
<p>I live on *** to Colvestone school. I feel the proposals to close the school would have a detrimental effect on the local community. The school is at the centre of the thriving community around Dalston and Ridley Road. If it were to be closed the building would be left empty and open to vandalism and squatters, while simultaneously costing the council thousands of pounds in upkeep until redevelopment. It would leave many local children and parents without somewhere to go and difficulties with moving schools. Furthermore, as one of few non-religious and non-academy schools in the area, it is open to all people and allows parents to choose for their child to be taught in a secular way. As more houses are planned in the local area through the development of Dalston, closing the local school would be negative in the long run as with the development of more houses, the necessary amenities, especially the school will be required. And on a more personal note, should I choose to have children, I would like the opportunity to send them to Colvestone School, as I am sure many others in the local community would.</p>
<p>I love the area and its attributes. So for me to get a such inspirational school out of the area is a tragedy</p>
<p>I much prefer the school class sizes to stay as they are. One class per year seems to help the children and teachers focus better on each other.</p>
<p>I much prefer the school class sizes to stay as they are. One class per year seems to help the children and teachers to focus better on each other</p>
<p>I strongly disagree because my kids are doing well in this school and don't want to change it because it could affect my kids since they cannot concentrate. A new beginning would just stress my kids out since they will have to make new friends.</p>
<p>I strongly disagree because my kids are doing well in this school, and don't want to change it because it could affect my kids since they cannot concentrate. It would just stress my kids out since they will have to make new friends since they don't want to have new beginnings.</p>
<p>I strongly disagree for closure at colvestone primary school, because this school has set a wonderful community within hackney. My daughter has gained a great experience academically and socially. And there is a really good support with parents also... colvestone primary school has brilliant support all round when it comes to children's education and wellbeing. This closure has to stop.</p>
<p>I strongly disagree on the closure of De Beauvoir Primary School because it is a part of the history of De Beauvoir Town. It's very sad for the parents and children because the school is a nice school. Education always comes first, the staff are amazing, always listening to the children's needs, they work very hard at making sure every child has a right to learning. My children are happy with the school and as a parent too because they have learnt a lot and I can see the progress everyday. They are sad because the school is most likely to close and they don't want to move to another school, affecting their friendships and mental health.</p>
<p>When it was lockdown the school helped many families to deal with the hardest time and my family was one of them. *** is more than a headteacher, having extra time to listen to parents' issues.</p>
<p>We will appreciate if the Council can review the proposal to close De Beauvoir Primary School.</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

I strongly disagree with the plan to close Colvestone Primary School and here's why:

1. It is not an amalgamation, but a closure because it has become clear that many of the wonderful staff from Colvestone will not be transferred to Princess May and based on this information and the survey that was carried out, many, if not most of the families (ourselves included) will not go to Princess May. So the result would be that Princess May will still suffer from low numbers and also face closure in not too distant future. Colvestone, being a small on-form entry school, could be filled by just a handful of new students and saved. One of these two schools could be saved and it is much more achievable in the case of Colvestone.

2. The 21st Century Street by Hackney Council is a brilliant plan and demonstrates everything Hackney is and what the residents want it to be like in the future. Colvestone Primary School is at the centre of this plan. The vision for such a street is built on creating a child-friendly safe environment. Closing the school makes no sense, whilst the plan itself is funded to go ahead. Without a school in that street, this investment is entirely pointless and a misuse of public finance.

3. Closing the school is very expensive. In addition to the usual costs Hackney Council will need to swallow Colvestone's historic debt. As a protected building, it cannot be sold for other development to earn this expense back. Under current management, however, Colvestone is already reducing its historic debt and with recently concluded upgrade works as well as the 21st Century Street, there is no question that this school will operate successfully and reduce its debt further. Hence, it is very likely that the cost of closing this school will be greater than keeping it open in the long run. The same mistake was already made by Hackney Council when closing Hackney Downs School, which cost several million, only to reopen as a new school due to restrictions on the site. I strongly object to such misuse and clear waste of public funds. The council will not only lose a great school, but also a great deal of money, reputation and local families, who will start leaving the borough due to poor management.

Colvestone Primary School could be the most wonderful setting for early years students, with clean air and a safe streets offering the ideal conditions particularly for children within the SEND provision. Whilst I appreciate that the council needs to take strong action to adapt to new numbers of children in the borough, this particular school is most clearly not the right one to be closed and this proposal should be taken off the table.

I strongly disagree with the proposal to close Colvestone Primary school. My child has done really well at this school. There are Faith schools with a higher vacancy rate and as a parent who doesn't believe in faith schools I'm upset that Colvestone would be chosen to close over these schools

Out of interest I looked at the reception intake for 2023 and saw that all the schools in my locality have a full allocation for this September, the only exception being Princess May. This was not on my list of schools and I would not send my child to this school. I'm concerned about the lack of parental choice if Colvestone closes. Also given that a high percentage of current Colvestone parents will not send their child to Princess May, would there be capacity in the other non faith (and potentially non free) schools in the area to accommodate these children?

The school has shown they can be financially viable with lower numbers and I feel this is not being taken into account in the consultation, along with the cost of closing the school, after a period of investment in the building. With the proposed housing in Dalston and Dalston plan there is likely to be an increase in families very close to Colvestone.

I have a concern about the long term cost on children of closing these schools. I work in *** and research is emerging about the long term impact on children of pandemic and school lock-downs, For a current year 4 pupil, they will have had big disruption to year 2 and year 3, then will move to a new school for year 6 and then to secondary school. Princess May is running at a higher vacancy rate and we were told in a recent consultation that could be considered for closures in the next round. So a child who started reception in the pandemic may move there and then have to move again before the end of primary school. This could be especially difficult for SEN children.

I feel the council's proposals are rather simplistic. They focus on numbers and perceived savings but don't explore or propose alternative models.

I also have considerable concerns how genuine this consultation is, I don't get the impression the council are open to taking on any points or concerns raised. They don't go away and consider them. My experience when I raised a question I was told the information is available but no attempt was made to give me the information and no signposting was made to how to access the information. I feel very strongly that the decision has been made, and that the council is looking like it is following the correct process rather than actually doing so. If it did it would properly respond to the points raised by parents.

Parent 3407

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I strongly disagree with the proposal to close De Beauvoir school. I have been looking at other schools nearby and their numbers on roll and percentage of surplus places on the government website which is updated regularly. Overall the vast majority of neighbouring schools, particularly those South of Dalston Lane, have been largely unaffected by the fall in pupil numbers in Hackney and London overall, and this is with no halving of overall spaces available by the council as has happened with De Beauvoir. Some local schools only have as little as 2% of spaces free but have an overall maximum pupil roll number of 500 or even more. In fact I am very reluctant to send my [child] to any of those schools as they seem too big and overcrowded, especially as * has additional needs and they will have to spread any support staff between more pupils.

A school does not go from being oversubscribed in several year groups 6 or 7 years ago meaning my children had to wait until nearly the end of the school year for a place, to virtually empty now in comparison, as has happened with De Beauvoir. When this has happened elsewhere it has taken decades.

I do feel like the council have somehow pursued an internal unwritten policy of diverting potential pupils whether they are reception age or in year admissions for older year groups, away from De Beauvoir and into other neighbouring schools, to keep pupil numbers up at the other schools so they don't have to consider closing more schools and the council admitted at a parent's meeting that they have no power to close free or academy schools and religious schools, so siphoning children into those schools saves the headache of trying to reason with those schools to close of their own accord.

In the current climate of falling pupil numbers in London and Hackney, for multiple nearby schools in one of the worst affected boroughs to have no issue at all maintaining pupil numbers despite having a massive overall pupil number on roll for primary level De Beauvoir has been a sacrificial lamb so to speak. I don't have definite 'scientific' proof of this but there is anecdotal evidence. Some months ago I was speaking on twitter to some parents whose children attended Hackney New Primary school and they were also living in the catchment area for De Beauvoir, some claimed had they known of the safety issues with traffic outside that school they would never have put their child in there but now felt it was too late to uproot them. Some said had they known about De Beauvoir, they would have sent their children there instead. There are still more social family sized homes that are still in council and housing authority hands within the De Beauvoir catchment area than around any other school nearby, including the large council estate opposite the school and the huge De Beauvoir estate further down in De Beauvoir town, while that isn't the only factor to consider, it does seem odd that De Beauvoir is the worst affected school in the borough.

Hackney will never admit to having this policy and the policy will massively backfire in the long run. Eventually if the demographic forecast does play out as the research suggests, more and more neighbouring schools will have to be sacrificed to keep numbers at the maximum in what Hackney sees as their flagship schools for some reason. Then if there is a sudden shift demographically due to unforeseen factors, Hackney will be stuck with not enough school places and no space to open new schools or expand existing ones because they will have sold off all the land to private interests. I have seen this happen in other boroughs and this includes some outer London boroughs. It also happened in the area I grew up in, the council pursued the unwritten policy of sending children to one particular large school until they could close all the others. A few years later there were several large family housing estates built in the area including, ironically a new council estate on the site of my old primary school. They had to expand the number of pupils allowed to be on roll at the one primary school left but could only do so by 75, they are close to the 75 now and there is no room for further expansion.

I strongly disagree with the proposal to close De Beauvoir school. This is not just a school for my children, it is a second home where my children feel safe and loved by all the members of staff. I myself used to work in this school for five years, so I know *** as a parent/employee. Many headteachers put on an act when talking to parents, but not *** Since * came to De Beauvoir, * has turned things around and made this school what it is now. * is the most loving and caring *** I have ever met and my children love *. Since this proposal has come to light, my eldest [child] has been feeling very anxious and upset as some of * friends have left during this process.

I strongly disagree with the proposal to close Randal Cremer primary school. I am very pleased about the school, especially the head teacher ***. Great atmosphere for parents and children. My [child] is so upset and sad about the proposal. I change the school for * this year and * is so happy. To take * from Randal Cremer again is like a nightmare and disappointment.

I strongly disagree with this proposal because I believe that it will negatively impact all students. In addition, it will limit the space provided for the students when schools are put together.

I strongly disagree with this proposal if closing Colvestone Primary school.

It is a school in central dalston and it is a very small school which makes it so special to all the children and their families in the area. It makes the city into a village and has grown an ongoing community around the school and the area since decades. There is so much love for this school which is very special - to close Colvestone would be heartbreaking for so many people and unforgivable for the future of dalston. Holstein and their families. As there is no other school in the area which could give children what they get in Colvestone. Think about now and the future of the area - there will be always more children being born. You are redoing all the playgrounds in hackney - which is great! Thisnis attracting more families with chikdrenor planning to have kids into the area but where will all the kids go to school who are playing on these playgrounds at the moment if you are closing the schools.
Save Colvestone school

I strongly disagree with transferring my son to a new school as I know this will impact his final *** years of primary school. He is currently at his best academically because he has a fantastic support system from both his peers and teachers and other staff members who have known him since the beginning. Moving him will make him feel alienated and in a completely new environment and I know this will affect his mental wellbeing as it will be difficult to handle this change and will be a completely new academic curriculum which will in turn worsen his grades.

Parent ID 18135

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<p>I strongly object to the proposal to close Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate it with Princess May Primary School for the following reasons:</p> <p>It demonstrates the same short-sightedness that we have seen in approaches to Ridley Road Market and the Ridley Road Shopping Village + Ridley Road Studios (51-63 Ridley Road) over the past 5 years. Hackney Council is consistently failing to acknowledge assets of community value and various facilities (including for schools for local children and affordable artist studios) that are vital to the survival of Dalston as a diverse and inclusive neighborhood. Hackney Council MUST reconsider its priorities and resist forces that are making Dalston unaffordable for families, cultural institutions and small independent businesses.</p> <p>In particular, Colvestone Primary School is a vital part of the Dalston community and I urge Hackney Council to consider the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area. • This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. • Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. • Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.
<p>I think closing down Colvestone Primary School and merging it with Princess May School will be detrimental and a terrible loss for our local community. Colvestone School is a very important part of the neighborhood. If the demography has currently lesser children this may not be the case in the far future. Demography constantly fluctuates and changes. Hackney should take a long term view and not close down important long established Schools like Colvestone School, De Beauvoir School and the others.</p> <p>Having worked in education most of my life I believe that teaching smaller cohorts of pupils is better for children's learning and development. I understand the financial constraint imposed by the government but these need to be fought back.</p>
<p>Please not close our local schools, keep an open mind on how changes can be implemented in each school and keep a long term view for future generations.</p>
<p>I think it is a sticking plaster approach to a wider, systemic issue that has real life, negative consequences for the lives of children and their families. Given the impact of the pandemic on young children's education and the poly crises hitting the parents (cost of living to name one). Any further disruption should be strongly avoided. Focus on the root of the issue instead.</p>
<p>I think it is disgusting, my child will be starting her final year of primary school and will have to transfer to a new school then a secondary school all in a year! I think the emotional well being of the children is not being considered, she is not sleeping properly and worrying so much.</p>
<p>I think it is important to keep the school open as i do not wish to send my kid to an religious school, an academy or a free school. I want a community non religious school for our children</p>
<p>I think it is terrible proposal and will have a negative impact on the school children and their families. The playground of Princess May is on main road, this raises concerns about air pollution. Amalgamation of the schools would mean more children in the playground, less space means pushing kids all the way up to the fence. It will also force families to walk a further 15mins across busy roads. This would put more stress on families. Closing Colvestone Crescent is a short sighted solution to the current trend of fewer school admissions over the past decade. The council should be encouraging families in Hackney and champion policies that address the issues of gentrification and affordable housing.</p>
<p>I think that I am not alone in this, I sincerely enjoyed sending my children to De Beauvoir because the staff are very helpful and engage all parents in solving problems. Looking back, my children learned a lot, made new friends and they have wonderful memories. It will affect them mentally and emotionally when the school closes. What an experience.</p>
<p>I think that if you joined schools the classes would be crowded and the quality of education would go down. I think one class should not be more than 12-20 pupils.</p>
<p>I think that it would be disastrous to amalgamate both schools and would have a terrible effect on the whole school community, especially for children and their families.</p>
<p>I think that single entry schools are very important and need to be preserved. Parents need choice, and the local school in any area is crucial to families building a support network for them selves and their children. The larger amalgamated academies and corporations don't have the same ethos which a school like Colvestone projects, they are less intimate, have more issues and problems to deal with simply by having a larger population. They are also more focused on their own business interests and public image, and less concerned with the needs of local families who see the school as community hub, which has always been one of the social values of small local schools. The smaller schools can suit vulnerable families better, and children with SEND can thrive in a less pressured environment with more space, less crowding, and a community ethos, which Colvestone has.</p>
<p>Families I have known over our 22 years of running a nursery in Dalston and out-of-school care with families at Colvestone have always expressed their preference for a smaller school, and currently are giving their support. All schools go through ups and downs over time, and I think that Colvestone is definitely on the up with very strong parental support. Colvestone as a building is quite unique and historic, and I'm sure will thrive again once we have all recovered from pandemic effects and Brexit changes in the demographic. I believe that Hackney's plan to develop more homes in the area will also require more school places in the coming years. The architecture and spaces of the school are both intimate and impressive, and it would be a shame to see it become something that is not accessible to the local community, which the school has been strongly connected to for a very long time.</p>
<p>I think that there is still a need for De Beauvoir Primary School. The school promotes diversity and provides quality education to the community. They have lovely staff who look after the children very well. I hope alternative options will be considered before the final decision is taken.</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

I think that this is a very badly thought through proposal as Colvestone parents have already outlined. We do not want our children to go to Princess May school. Colvestone is a small friendly village school that has suffered less falling roll than many other schools. It seems as though we are in this process mostly due to the large historic debt but Hackney Education supported the school to choose Blossom Federation as new leadership going forwards and they are taking proactive steps to address the deficit. YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN THEM A CHANCE.

We have asked what it would take to change the proposal - after all it is supposed to be a consultation process. You have stated that we would have to change the numbers against the criteria that led to our selection for the process in the first place. BUT we cannot improve pupil numbers or school finances whilst the school is under threat of closure so it does not feel fair.

We believe that Colvestone could be an asset:

- as a small one-form entry school it is great environment for SEN kids whether as a formal SEN unit or just somewhere that kids who find other school overwhelming could be directed to
- it is beautiful Grade II listed building that should be kept as a school to reflect its radical roots
- as part of the 21st Century Street proposals for Colvestone
- the fantastically strong Colvestone community

We think these arguments are strong enough for you to change your proposal and take Colvestone off the list, and this could be presented in a positive way for the Council.

You have asked us for practical solutions to our problems of falling roll and this is very difficult at the current time but I think there are options;

1. Colvestone as a merger school for De Beauvoir. They are a much better fit and are not far geographically. Initially there may have been too many pupils at De Beauvoir but many of these have now transferred to other local schools. In fact we understand that as families have moved away from Randall Cremer and De Beauvoir in light of the proposal many of the school in that part of the borough are now FULL and these families need another option.
2. Promote Colvestone for SEN families
3. Attract other families. Our campaign over the last few months has raised our profile and I think families will be attracted to the school and the strong community . This includes families currently at Halley House that is currently undergoing a change of leadership and significant change of staff.

TAKE US OFF THE LIST and demonstrate that this is a real consultation.

I think this is a consequence of Brexit, House prices and the cost to rent. We should rejoice in a reduced pupil to teacher ratio and produce excellent results which will attract pupils. We need more families locally. Pupil number will pick-up once the UK understand Brexit resulted in an exodus of families and we now need family homes not just one bedroom flats.

I understand that numbers are low etc, however the council has not allowed the community to respond or even local area. Tell us what can be done to recover the numbers, support the school, talk about alternatives to keeping the school open. I'm disappointed that the council are ready to give up. We as parents have not had this insight that you have. It's unfair to say we have given it a chance when really you haven't. My children are at the school and have learning disabilities and struggles with transitions who is to support them or me, I have my own health I have ***, ***, ***. Who will support me with a new setting for my children. De Beauvoir was a decision I made thoroughly I put a lot of thought into choosing a school for my [children] and now it's closing. I will keep them in there until the last day and probably won't get them back into a school until something magical happens and a school pops up like de Beauvoir small, intimate, family friendly environment, everyone knows everyone, everyone feels safe. Your taking that away not just from me and my [children], this is affecting all these families and the council don't care. Just like raising the rent on people and kicking them out all you care about is money. We want to help and support the school at least give us a chance.

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I understand that the council needs to make the argument for sound use of resources across local schools and that falling pupil numbers is hugely challenging. As a parent of a child at DeBeauvoir Primary I feel it's my responsibility to advocate for the school. It's my opinion that the school offers excellent value across a number of social indicators, that may be overlooked in the reductionist population data driving the recommendation for closure.

My [child] is a pupil at DeBeauvoir Primary school. * has ***** SEND needs. I have found the school to be welcoming, accessible and incredibly supportive. After a difficult journey through early years DeBeauvoir Primary has been a sanctuary. The staff team have developed a culture across the school where children are nurtured, valued and can thrive. They are led by a fantastic headteacher, ***, who masterfully engages with the community to promote the wellbeing of everyone connected with the school.

The latest OFSTED inspection and rating of Good with Outstanding Features speaks to the quality of teaching in the school. Teachers work tirelessly and dynamically to provide a rich and engaging curriculum. This is particularly impressive when the social context of the school community is considered; with approximately 65% of children in receipt of pupil premium and similar numbers where English is not the first language spoken at home. There is clearly a great deal of skill and expertise within the staff team, which is sensitive and responsive to the specific needs of the local community. I worry that the sudden closure of the school will result in the abrupt loss of this valuable resource. Once dismantled there's no way to reinstate this ecosystem, it would be lost entirely. The school community is a partnership of people that is rooted in 100 years of history. I really urge careful consideration to be given to the social losses that are incurred as a result of closure.

This thriving school is at the heart one of London's most sought after and affluent neighbourhoods. But my experience of living in DeBeauvoir for the past 6 years has been that this is a very divided area, with extremes of experience in terms of wealth and wellbeing. Increasingly the amenities of the local area are orientated towards the needs of wealthy residents. There are few spaces for children and young people. The school is a much valued community resource for families. I'd argue that the tokenistic closure consultation process has served to further disempower local residents who perhaps already feel marginalised and neglected in local planning decisions. The decision of the council to close the school will have a social impact beyond the disruption of those children who are currently being educated in the setting.

The school is the only local authority maintained secular school in walking distance of Debeaviour Primary. In a multicultural community of many faiths (and none) a faith school may not be the most appropriate setting for children. There is an argument for retaining Debeaviour primary to reflect the needs of the population it serves.

The school is a one form entry school. This is increasingly rare, but it is right that families are offered the choice of smaller school setting. My child has [SEND] and has thrived in a small familiar setting. * also has *** and knowing that all staff know * and have been trained to support * is invaluable. As a parent of a child with complex needs the individualised support we have received has been greatly appreciated and reduced our reliance on other health and social care services, for which there is an economic argument.

The schools finances are well managed and it is currently operating with a surplus budget. I wonder how this compares to other schools in the borough and if there are schools operating in deficit which are more of a financial burden.

The school estate is well maintained and provides a good environment for children; it benefits from ample outdoor play spaces, which may not be the case for many schools. It is located on a quiet side street with no through traffic, which is beneficial in terms of air quality and children's health. The building is listed and has been in use as a school for over 100 years. It's part of our collective heritage.

My personal experience has been that the school is excellent at managing complex needs. There is a real competency in dealing with challenging health and social issues, and this has been evident during the consultation process with many families sharing personal testimonies of the great work done by the school. I urge the council to think carefully about the loss of this resource in our community. It's hard to quantify the value of this work, but as a health and social care professional I am very aware of the cost of placement breakdown for young people with complex needs. I urge the council to scope the SEND work the school is currently providing and consider carefully how these needs would be met in other settings. I think DeBeauvoir should be recognised as model of good practice and excellence, and this should be considered in the evaluation of which schools are ear marked for closure and merger.

In future think it's important the council reflect on messaging and communications about maintained schools, and offer more support to schools with low pupil numbers to promote their good work and appeal to prospective parents. If pupil numbers follow the trajectory the council is predicting then schools will need support to recruit new starters and avoid further disruptive closures. There is open criticism of the free school model that has put pressure on pupil numbers, but the council must find ways to compete in the current landscape and appeal to more families.

I think it would be wise for a third party to check the data informing the school closure policy. There is low public confidence in the data interpretation. Many parents are sceptical, and cite examples such as the closure and reopening of Hackney schools previously.

I want to raise the point that many children in the DeBeauvoir catchment are Islington residents and will potentially have a preference for relocating to an Islington school, where they will have no priority in terms of waiting lists. Has the council considered how it might support in such cases?

In summary I feel strongly that the closure of DeBeauvoir primary school would be a sad loss for our local community. I feel that the impact of closure will be most keenly felt by children experiencing disadvantage and disability, and those with the broadest shoulders are not being asked to bear impact of this policy. It is disappointing that the consultation process has failed to engage the community in problem solving and left few with hope of being listened to. People feel real distress at the forced loss of something so integral. There are lessons to be learnt should further school closures be necessary in future.

Debeaviour primary offers enormous value as small, inclusive setting. There are intrinsic structural advantages to the estate and a wealth of expertise in the staff team. Children with complex needs really thrive in this very special local school.

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<p>I understand that the merger proposal is essentially a financial proposal. I am concerned that this very nice little school in a lovely building built in 1852 and Grade 2 listed should be preserved as a school partly because it was purpose built as a school. It is aesthetically pleasing and has a nice small feel for pupils and staff alike. To close it would be a very sad loss not just for the pupils and staff but would affect the whole feel of that corner of Dalston.</p>
<p>The knock on effects for the aesthetics of the area if the building is turned to another use would affect that area of Hackney and the community detrimentally, uglifying the area and removing the 'soul' of a part of Hackney. I feel the proposal is very short sighted and that immediate financial gains (which I understand would be for the Local Education Authority) should be considered to be of far less importance than the above considerations and the long term value for Hackney of the school's preservation.</p>
<p>I understand the council needs to take some action due to decreasing numbers. I think the school proposals are too concentrated around dalston. I think the proposals do not take the current children in years rec -5 into enough consideration, particularly in terms of parental choice as there will not be enough places in dalston for these years I think the proposals do not consider the increase of housing and families being proposed with the local dalston plan, they seems dis connected I think the proposals are adversely affecting lower economic communities and SEND children I think colvestone school is in a prime central location within dalston to help facilitate spaces and place. As a single form entry it is not as difficult to fill as an entire form</p>
<p>I understand the rationale for the consultation for the closure of schools in Hackney. My concern is the length of time it has taken to LA to address the problem of falling rolls - it has been clear London, including Hackney, was likely to be put into a difficult position. Other LAs adjacent to Hackney acted sooner. It is difficult for governors to understand why the timing in Hackney has been so different. De Beauvoir is now a highly successful school, popular with the local community, with good levels of achievement for all pupils. It is difficult for parents and carers to understand why this has happened to the school. The well-being of the Headteacher and the school team at this time is so important. -They will continue to provide the best education they can to the children and their families but no-one can underestimate the impact of this process of their well-being. I am not sure there has been sufficient support for staff since the start of the process.</p>
<p>I would like there to be a school in my area when I have children in the future. Im also concerned that Dalston is becoming a place to live for young single people.</p>
<p>I would like to express my serious concern and dismay at the proposals to amalgamate Colvestone school. Colvestone is a successful, intimate school in a purpose built listed building offering the children of local families a calm and inclusive educational environment in which they can thrive. Unusually it offers a maintained (ie free) nursery facility in a separate space providing a seamless progression to the main school. More broadly, the proposals seem to ignore the transformative 'Dalston Plan' which comprises of 600 new homes (including 200 affordable family homes). These would place Colvestone as the school nearest to and best serving the new found needs. For years Colvestone has shown great energy and commitment to the local community, be it fundraising for deserved improvements to the school, to fighting insensitive developments encroaching on its space. Far from being threatened with closure it deserves full backing and recognition for the important function it serves in the area. Please reconsider these plans.</p>

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I would like to register concerns from a SEND perspective about closure/merger of Randall Cremer Primary School and Colvestone Primary School.

Hackney currently has very significant challenges with inclusion of pupils with SEND and with EHCPs in their mainstream settings. Many of our settings leave a lot to be desired in terms of proactive child centred work to include SEND students. This is not just a secondary school issue. As you will know, Hackney specialist settings and ARPs are full, with many many more requests for placements than we have available. We spend an extraordinary amount on out of borough independent settings for this reason.

However, Randal Cremer and Colvestone are in my experience very inclusive and nurturing environments. I am fairly certain children in these settings with SEND are currently doing well, and as such not much on the LA's radar, because their needs are being met there. I am concerned that the proposal has not sufficiently considered both the distress and cost implications of closing our most inclusive primary schools. I think it is likely we will see children come onto our radar, when/if not coping in less inclusive environments, perhaps needing more costly specialist settings. I think this could be avoided by these two schools remaining open, but working with them to expand much needed SEND provision on their sites or as part of their schools. There is an opportunity to build on and expand good practice of SEND provision in mainstream schools here.

I would encourage decision makers to consult further with the EHCP and wider SEND Team, as well as the Re-Integration Unit, as I believe my sentiment is shared amongst SEND and inclusion professionals.

Ofsted says about Randal Cremer:

"Staff and governors share high expectations for their pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are no exception. Leaders work closely with external professionals. Together, they find the best ways to meet pupils' needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also well supported. The partnerships that leaders have formed with families contribute to this work. Pupils' wider development is very important at this school. Pupils learn about life in modern Britain. For example, all pupils took part in a community project with a local organisation. They learned how to celebrate other cultures and faiths".

Ofsted says about Randal Cremer:

Leaders promote equality and tolerance well. I found pupils to be kind and caring towards each other and adults. Pupils who joined the school recently commented on how they received a warm welcome and settled in within a few days. The vast majority of parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that the school is friendly and inclusive. Parents also noted that the school encourages 'a love of learning'. Pupils told me that they enjoy lessons because they are interesting.

Thanks for considering these comments.

Kind Regards,

T: ***

E: ***

I would love to have children in the next few months and this campaign has brought to light what a wonderful school this is. If it closed, I would have to move to a different area as I would like a small school with low pollution levels, and ideally, not have to walk down the A10 for 10 minutes. Colvestone is perfectly situated for our future family! Please keep it open!!! Thanks for listening.

I would strongly encourage you to seriously consider all options and think laterally and with an eye to the long term before making any decision on what might be done with school buildings if schools do close or amalgamate with other schools.

Outside of my role as a governor in a hackney primary school, I work in *** and I advise ***** in the urban context.

Falling school roles and forced school closures can be an indicator of systematic problems making cities hostile to families and children. Hackney and London are not alone in this struggle and there are innovative and valuable examples to learn from in the international context especially around municipalities and councils retaining real estate even if schools close, to be repurposed to generate income for the municipality and also to be held for use in the event that populations swing upwards in the future.

The loss of the existing schools and school communities is challenging and emotional for all involved. The loss of these buildings forever I believe could be a strategic error on the part of the councils which will have further negative impacts on the viability of cities for children and families in the short medium and long term.

I'm not understanding why De Bevoivre can not merge into Colvestone which is a central hub for the market and Dalston

I'm worried about the pressure the closure of De Beauvoir Primary will put on other schools in the area. Our most local school (Hackney New) has no outside space so it is important to us to have other options with outside space when our son starts reception in Sept 2025. We're worried if De Beauvoir Primary closes that not only takes that option away but possibly others as the other schools will be full with children who would have gone there.

If consolidation needs to happen, OK. But to close four schools is disruptive, surely more can be merged. De Beauvoir primary has been improving their standards of teaching and it will be a loss to the local community to see that school close. Especially those in close proximity to the school

If numbers on enrolment are dropping, it makes sense to close the schools

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P&G 11/11/11

<p>If schools close it will make it progressively more difficult for people to bring up a family in the borough. This combined with lack of affordable housing means that people have to move out of the borough to do so, which seems like it will have a negative impact on being a borough of only transitory people without people making roots in the places where they live.</p> <p>If the school closes I fear for the building, which is both a purpose built school but also a community asset, may be sold off to private owners at a loss to the community.</p> <p>This will also have an impact on the travel distances for pupils and may encourage people to drive to school which has a negative impact.</p> <p>If the Council closes Colvestone primary school, the impact on the local community will be devastating.</p> <p>A unique and historic primary school will disappear, taking with it the Council's chance to use the school as the central part of its ambitious plans for the local area. These plans include affordable housing developments, a new 21st century street, improved transport plus wider activities regarding jobs and culture.</p> <p>The school is academically strong - as proved by my son's excellent Sats results last week - and now led by an excellent team in partnership with the Blossom Federation. Despite the financial deficit, the school is financially viable due to efficient use of resources, and the school would move from strength to strength if given a chance.</p> <p>We have received huge support for our campaign including 2,100 signatures on our petition, press stories from across London, UK and Europe, but critically a real sadness from local people about the short-sighted actions of Hackney Council.</p> <p>Finally, I believe that writing off Colvestone's deficit, and paying for security costs whilst the school is mothballed, is an egregious use of public funds.</p> <p>If we do not close / merge schools even though there are less children, everyone else in Hackney schools will need to pay for it as the £30 million will have to be found somewhere else in the education budget. I strongly support the mergers and closures.</p> <p>If you are closing the school the market is finished and we will lose our business</p> <p>If you close the school, we will lose out on the business of parents and children of the Colvestone school coming to the shop - this will have a huge impact on our business</p> <p>Ill considered and damaging for the children.</p> <p>Ill-thought! Think about the pupils mental state following such sudden change. Kids cannot manage change generally so for it to be so rushed - why?</p> <p>Important school for our family. Have been in the area for 12 years. Another poor judgement from Hackney council</p> <p>Instead of closing long standing primary schools Hackney council and residents should be fighting the creation of yet more schools set up outside council control. These establishments creating yet more tiers within the education system, with many of the children in most need having yet more resource taken from them and their families.</p> <p>It feels that the only consideration for this proposal is to do with pupil numbers and funding. These are crucial, of course, schools have to be viable, but they're not the only factors. I haven't seen evidence that enough consideration is being given to providing a suitable learning environment for children, especially those who learn best in a smaller, calmer environment.</p> <p>It's obvious that some schools in Hackney will have to close, but please consider what makes Colvestone special and unique - it is different from the other schools in the proposal and could be supported as a real asset to Hackney Education, especially in support of children with SEND and neuro-diversity.</p> <p>The proposal is in response to falling family numbers in Hackney but I believe that closing a school like Colvestone will further push families out of the borough. Parents want choice, smaller school options, non-denominational options, and these are being severely reduced.</p> <p>Finally, Colvestone is in a different position from the other schools in scope because it has recently entered a partnership with the Blossom Federation which is having an incredibly positive impact. It's not right to judge the school on the falling numbers of the last few years, we parents really believe Blossom Federation will make Colvestone a really desirable school for future families.</p> <p>It is a good school. I don't want it to close. They help me with my son.</p> <p>It is a historic school, providing an important service to the community. I live on Colvestone Crescent with a new born infant and it is concerning that this consultation did not reach my via the council but the campaign. The proposal ignores the need for local schools serving the educational needs of local children. The dedicated staff and community was evident at a recent event I attended and this type of school community and success should be celebrated rather than shut down.</p> <p>It is a historical institution, a centre of the local community and should be developed as such with Dalston and Ridley Road.</p> <p>Please</p> <p>It is a wonderful school with so much space. An asset to it it's surrounding neighbourhood and it would be a tragedy if it closed...</p> <p>It is crucial to have a small school in the area.</p> <p>Colvestone has had new management and there was no financial deficit this year.</p> <p>We are a crucial element in the council 21st century street plan.</p> <p>We don't want to merge with a school where the pollution is 40percent higher - closing Colvestone in light of this would be an abuse to young lungs and a step backwards as congestion would be increased on A10.</p>

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It is important for the community as well as the benefit of local children to keep Colvestone School open.
It is important to keep many smaller schools actors the Borough
It is not in the best intrest of the children and community.
It is out of consideration
It is really sad to hear the is school closing. For our children, it is the best school and very close to our home. It is hard to hear from the council. The school teachers are very active in teaching our children's future. I hope they think again about the proposals. I hope the plan won't go through. We need a better future for our kids. Please give our children's future the best.
It is unfair and unjust to be closing an historic and community school. This school has served the local community and more for years, generations have attended De Beauvoir, friendships have been started, children have grown. No school can or will give children what De Beauvoir and its staff can, and to shut it is a CRIME. I hope the building isn't given to a free school when it does. No MORE FREE / INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS e. G. , Hally House etc.
It is unfair to the parent and students. Having a small number of students jn a class is good. They must be other ways jn which tye school could be use for to raise money.
It is very bad, we need the school to be open - we will lose on all customers/parents taking their kids to school. I will lose business - kids' parents are the market's customers - you are killing the businesses.
It is very distressing to hear of the proposed closure of De Beauvoir. This school has been part of the community for decades and a place I feel safe for my child to attend. My child has developed friendships, confidence, resilience, but more than that, knowledge and a vast amount at this school. Closing it down would cause such upheaval and distress for my child, myself and many families.
It is very important to retain small primary schools. Some children will be much better suited and have much better learning outcomes from a smaller primary school. Colvestone has had a brilliant track record in the past and we should not lose this choice for parents and children in the area. Dalston has been a brilliant place to raise a young family; we should be fighting to retain the family feel of the area, not adding to transient younger professionals moving into the area.
I understand that there has been a change in leadership and management structure, this is not mentioned in the report. Has this been taken into consideration at all? The school should be given a chance to improve enrolment numbers.
In addition, I am acutely aware that there has been great interest in building development in the adjacent lot, which has not been successful due to covenants. The local area is under great pressure due to redevelopment and must not lose vital community services.
This decision has a huge impact on the area, and will likely shape the character of the neighbourhood. Please save Colvestone and let the more timid children have a chance to thrive in a smaller, close knit school.

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It is with a heavy heart I am responding to this Informal consultation addressing the closure of one of the best schools Hackney Council could have asked for; De Beauvoir primary school. I do wonder if filling this form is merely a process with no clear facts that it would be read and understood. This is because I cannot believe we are even at this stage considering the comments and issues raised at the first stage and the lack of answers and explanations provided by Hackney Council.

First Stage:

The first stage process was an absolute nightmare and scaremonger approach. It seemed the council attendants either rehearsed their speeches or was wobbling their way through it. Many questions were not answered with great certainty, clarity and precision which makes me wonder if this decision has been properly thought through. For example, whether our children are guaranteed places to their chosen school if the school is closed. Children with special needs, where do they go given the competition already to get into those schools? Why could they not seek an open consultation to take to cabinet to address the issue of all these free school openings in the borough which they have no control over and which also has a knock-on effect on the closure of this school? I do not recall the free school issue being factored in as a reason for the low population in state funded schools like De Beauvoir. Every answer was a repeat of what was rehearsed. Hackney Council Head of Education who has brought us here expressed sympathy at the emotions displayed in the meeting as though he could not do anything more than proceed with the decision to close. There was no real sense they would also do their best to save the school or work with us to achieve a better outcome.

Informal Consultation Stage:

The decision made is premature and based on graphs and charts by a prediction which we have no resources to independently challenge or have re-assessed. To this date, I do not know how it can be predicted that the birth rate is going to drop. Our children's future are based on predictions. Predictions such as the cost of living crisis. A crisis which, if put into perspective, is now even more devastating because of the Council's premature approach to close this school. Life is hard enough as it is, so to be adding further pressure on children and families at this difficult time is harsh, immoral, unreasonable and irrational. I look at mortgage rates increasing and, despite the impact, many are finding ways to cope and are not seeking the easier option to sell. Why is the council trying to find an easier option only to make their job easier at the expense of parents and children. Children who are in a safe, secured and currently within their yearly budget.

The Council has no regard to the BEST INTEREST OF CHILDREN. They talk about predictions for years down the line. Predictions that can change. The things I feel are not factored in to this decision are as follows:

1. Predictions can change so we are not dealing with a real time issue that justifies this decision
2. The issue of too many free schools
3. The fact that the school ratings have changed from 2018 to Good in 2022. The increase in pupils changing also as the ratings changing also as the ratings changed. There may have been a drop, as per the graphs which presented what ratings fell. This was not factored in. The school has not been given a chance having worked so hard to improve over the years and during a difficult time such as COVID to now being recognised as a Good school. The school has not been recognised by Hackney Council for its strengths, otherwise they would not have put this school on the list for closure.
4. The fact that there is a cost of living crisis and having to deal with a school at this time is ill-thought and self fulfilling to the Council members who joined together to make this decision to start this process.
5. Some parents arguing that the school building is also a building which should be classified as a landmark building.
6. There is no clear answer on what will become of this building when closed. Are our children being moved out so another financial stream is created whilst our children suffer the loss of a good school; a school with quality and supportive teachers. A school that is safe.
7. The fact that Hackney in general pushes people out the borough through, for example, their own housing schemes, increase in rental properties, lack of initiative to encourage people to come and live in the borough, road closures where many consultation processes showed more voted "no" to closure than "yes" but they still proceeded. They have not factored in their own conduct as a borough into this decision to close De Beauvoir. Why do the children have to suffer?

Solutions:

I strongly endorse that De Beauvoir remains open. The following things could be done by Hackney Council to help:

1. Request for an increase in budget if so needed
2. Merge the school with another school they are looking to close, even on a temporary basis to give the children from both schools the benefit to continue to get the support from teachers and staff they are used to. The merging of the schools could take a temporary approach of 3 to 5 years within their prediction graph to see how it works. Hackney Council made excuses to merge when the question was put forward and made no excuses for closure. They talk about the issue of creating a strong school. You are currently tearing apart a strong school.
3. Merge curriculum or areas from other schools where the budgets will be affected the most and there is an excess or unused amount. This way we can keep all the schools alive rather than trying to maximise on every school budget.

Overall, the decision is premature, irrational and a cowardice approach. The decision does not show children are at the heart of this borough. The decision shows lack of thought and certainty. The best interest of children should remain paramount.

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	<p>It makes no sense to close this school. It was second on our list for our [child] (we went with a closer school otherwise would have chosen Colvestone) because we came away with the impression that the quality of care and education our child would get there would be outstanding. All the children looked happy. The teachers, including the new head who we found to be very impressive, were clearly passionate about and committed to giving their students a love for learning. I know ex students who loved it there. The school is central to the Dalston community and its closure would be devastating in many ways.</p> <p>Then you look at the data - it's not a cheap option closing a school (the Council estimate well over a million pounds, plus £250-300,000 each year to maintain closed buildings). The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus - how can closing it make financial sense?</p> <p>- the Council say that it can re-open the school if demand increases in the future, but if it does this under current legislation all new schools are automatically Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land (and will have spent a huge amount of money in the process). This is hugely concerning.</p> <p>What I also find very concerning is that with the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site.</p> <p>Seeing the smaller class sizes as a reason for closure is short sighted - small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities (the school is particularly strong in integrating children with SEN - special educational needs or learning support plans - into the wider community to the advantage all pupils). The small community context is key to this. A single form school enables kids to be supported by their peers across age groups and produces a real sense of belonging and pride in their community.</p> <p>There is so much building going on in Dalston and Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites (200 of which will be affordable family housing). As a small school it only needs a small number of kids per year to be full - it makes absolutely no sense to close it now when it already occupies a strong position at the heart of the Dalston community, providing a diverse range of students with exceptional care and can serve an increase in students in time to come.</p> <p>I strongly oppose the closure of the school and urge you to see the opportunity in keeping it open and serving the Dalston community.</p>
Page 7	<p>It seems that it is only certain parents who fundamentally prefer the aesthetics of the school that are insisting on it remaining open. This preference is to the detriment of properly funded education for the pupils. The council is not to blame for the way in which education is funded, and it is not within the Council's gift to modify the national system of education funding. Wishing that it were different does not address the present problem. Amalgamation of the schools will deliver better outcomes.</p>
	<p>it seems unfair to disrupt so many children, parent and carer's lives by doing this, especially when new developments are constantly going up in the area and there will likely be more demand in future.</p> <p>Merging schools will increase journey times for many, and will force parents to send their children to a school based on the busy A10.</p>
	<p>Limiting parents' choice of non-religious schools is particularly damaging, no-one should be forced to send their child to a faith school simply because there is no other option. It is key to keep state-run schools open, in contrast to the academies etc nearby.</p>
	<p>It will have a seriously detrimental impact on the local community and the children who live in these neighbourhoods. Things haven't been this hard on families for years, and the council and education authorities have a duty to deliver local, high quality and accessible education for all, especially given how far behind they have fallen in recent years. Closing these schools will be yet another failure on the part of the Learning Trust, another casualty of its multi-decade long experiment on our children's educations.</p>
	<p>It will increase the class size of the nearest school.</p>
	<p>It would be a disaster to the local community if Colverstone Primary School was moved or closed. The school brings much needed community life to the area and supports so many of my friends and family in the area.</p>
	<p>It's a single form entry school which is close and serves the local community and is deeply loved . It's a pity</p>
	<p>It's very sad that local schools have to consider closing. It's another unwanted impact from the cost of living crisis and the environment from the last few years of life. I live by De Beauvoir primary school and it's a pillar of the areas community. It'll affect the community feel if it were to close. What will happen to the school buildings and land if it were to close? Will the council keep ownership and use the space for another positive community benefit? It would be a shame if the space went to waste or to private development.</p>
	<p>Its a tragedy that hackney is so underfunded that this may happen I think we should demand funding from government rather than closing schools</p>
	<p>It's an incredibly bad idea.</p>
	<p>Closing Colvestone means removing a key part of the community that many people rely on, and that cares greatly about their pupils wellbeing and provides incredible support for those with special needs. Furthermore, due to the small size of the school it's very close-knit which allows for tight bonds to be created between different students and the teachers.</p> <p>Also, I have only good things to say about my time Colvestone and while talking to friends I've made in secondary school (who went to different primary schools) I realised this wasn't a common experience. Almost all the people I know constantly complain about their primary schools and talk about how horrible they were, but this is the complete opposite of most people's experiences at Colvestone.</p>
	<p>It's incredibly disheartening given all the hard work staff have put in over the years to come to such an abrupt end. As a teacher (one of many!) that has started their career at DeBeauvoir as an *** and now in a leadership role, it is strange to think that I will never be able to return to the place that gave me the foundations in my career.</p>
	<p>My wellbeing is deteriorating as I have to constantly readjust and support my children as their friends leave randomly week by week. The anxiety in my class of *** year olds is completely unfair and out of their control. As someone who has had their own primary school from childhood close down, I know how saddening it is to walk past a derelict building thinking of the memories it once held. Children deserve to feel safe and considered in every part of their education. Right now it doesn't seem like Hackney has considered the children at all.</p>

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<p>I've worked at De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer for *** years. While I understand why De Beauvoir has to close, I struggle to understand why Randal Cremer also needs shutting down. I know both schools really well: staff, families and pupils. These schools share a similar ethos and demographics. Why can't De Beauvoir be amalgamated with Randal Cremer? Randal Cremer has enough space to accommodate all De Beauvoir children.</p> <p>Just make sure enough funding is in place for teachers and cover any additional needs kids might present.</p> <p>Keep the school</p>
<p>less than 10 years ago there were not enough school places - surely this could be cyclical so very soon there could be a shortage of places again</p> <p>Loss of public amenity, costly. I do not want schools to re-open in the future as private as too costly for residents and I do not want any faith based schools</p> <p>Major disruption for the children involved</p> <p>Making sudden changes to a child's school can have a negative impact. Children settle and become familiar with their surroundings. I didn't change my [child]'s school even when I moved home only to be told the school will be merging. This was disappointing. I feel Nightingale will not be able to handle the extra children and will also not be able to employ everyone to come over either. Their after school clubs do not tie in well with working single mums as well and it will cause a real disruption to my work as well as my son's schedule. I do not see the point of this merge and can only see Nightingale being overwhelmed by the extra students.</p> <p>Already a class of 30 students to one teacher is not beneficial and to increase that by merging is jeopardising children's best chance at learning properly.</p> <p>Many of us picked Nightingale because it's a small school. As a parent of a SEN child, I am worried how a busier school will affect * day. I also hope that the kids won't be torn apart as they a lovely little community with many friendships already formed.</p> <p>Most of the parents who are collecting their kids from Colvestone stop in my shop and if you close the school, I will lose business. They are part of the Ridly Road community and you are killing the community.</p> <p>Moving children after settling them in is highly disruptive to their education. A small village-like school in the heart of the city should be praised and supported, not made bigger. Not every child thrives in a big school. Often these are the most vulnerable SEN children who will excel in a quieter, one form entry setting. These are children who need stability, not the disruption of closing their school and putting them into a noisy strange environment</p> <p>My [SEND] *** attends Colveston School and has thrived in this diverse school community. It makes no sense to move the school out of the area and will increase stress to the pupils and parents with the increased journey times traffic and congestion added to the local roads and the adverse effect of air pollution. The new local developments in housing will have MORE children requiring a local school not fewer school places. The impact on local schools increased classroom sizes will have detrimental effect on educational standards for years to come. I hope the council will reconsider the proposal and realise the terrible impact on the community there action will have</p> <p>My child and lots across Hackney who started their journey through education in September ***, have had to face an unprecedented impact on the nature of their learning. There are reports currently emerging about the severe impact the pandemic had on the mental health and well being of many, many children. School is meant to be a place that offers learning, security and safety; it can be an anchor for a child in otherwise difficult circumstances. Colvestone Primary School excels in creating a community among its pupils. The power this can have is impressive and the size of the school lends itself to this development.</p> <p>The merger is a simple exercise in statistics, which can be manipulated to whatever the user of them wants. In-takes to schools across the country have been affected by the last 3 years. Yet within Hackney and specifically around Dalston there has been a noticeable upturn in the birth rate (the lockdown babies). What are the provisions for them in 3 years or less?</p> <p>Disruption to education is what many children have known. You actually have an opportunity to secure their future and development, not further disrupted it. Colvestone Primary School is part of a community, it is not just some school. I have spoken to people who went to Colvestone Primary School in the 1970s and 1980s, they have nothing but praise for it, and the part it played in their lives and their communities. This school has history and needs to remain as it is, central to the community.</p> <p>My child has SEN and needs to be educated in a small, calm school. It has taken * three years to settle at Colvestone, so any disruption to her routine will harm * health and education. * also suffers from [health conditions], so both will be exacerbated if transferred to Princess May.</p> <p>My child went to Concessions from year 2 to year 6. * benefited hugely from the supportive environment that could be delivered by the single form entry structure after moving from a much larger school. The loss of secular single form entry schools puts at risk the well-being of children who are challenged by the pressures of larger schools.</p> <p>My children now aged *** and *** both attended Colvestone Primary from nursery to Year 6. They received an excellent education in a caring and nurturing environment. Both of my children were diagnosed with ASD and they benefitted greatly from the small one form entry school. I believe that it is short sighted to propose the school closure, in essence robbing the local children, especially those with SEN, of a local school which has a long record of offering excellent and inclusive education.</p> <p>My children went to Colvestone before and I have a lot of customers whose children go there - I will lose business if the school closes.</p> <p>My children went to Millfields Community School, an extremely overcrowded school with very little outdoor space. That should not be the norm and had they gone to a school with fewer pupils and more space, their primary school education would have been much better and all children would have been safer and much better looked after. Merging these schools is an ignorant way of solving a primarily financial problem. Why not move some of the children from other schools to balance student numbers? Had these been private schools, these student numbers would be the norm. But we can't allow that to be the case for children who can't afford that, we must put them in overcrowded and at times, unsafe spaces.</p> <p>My concern is that no information was given about birth rates projections for the future and the level of confidence the council have that numbers will not rise again in the foreseeable future that would impact on these proposals.</p> <p>I am also concerned about the loss of publicly provided nursery places, I do feel this is a loss to the local area and that alternative provision will not have the same outcomes for the children that they currently get being on the same site</p>

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My [child] goes to Colvestone Primary School which, in the proposal, is planned to close. It is proposed that all pupils be moved to Princess May Primary School however, this is not a school that I would choose for * to attend and was not one of my choices when applying for a primary school in the borough of Hackney. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. Colvestone Primary School is a small, welcoming, creative school with a unique feel and benefits hugely from single form entry in terms of the focus and attention this afford the teachers and pupils. In conversations with other parents the reasons they repeatedly give for choosing Colvestone Primary are exactly these and are the reasons that I chose Colvestone. As a smaller single form entry school I believe this affords more individual attention and a more nurturing environment which has benefitted her development and learning. Choosing a single form entry school was a deliberate choice based on the experience we wanted for our [child] and the closure of Colvestone Primary School would unfairly remove parental choice for this form of school in the borough.

2. Colvestone Primary School is in a sheltered but stimulating area of Dalston which provides distance from traffic pollution but exposes our [child] to the bustling market life of Ridley Road Market and all the community and history that accompanies it. The pollution levels at Princess May Primary were 40% higher than Colvestone Primary School in 2021 due to the extremely busy main road that the school sits on. With 70% of eligible roads in Hackney becoming LTNs and the councils drive to promote LTNs in the borough the diverted volume of traffic is only going to increase this pollution. Also, the risks and dangers of having my child arriving and leaving a school on such a busy main road are not risks and dangers I would ever choose.

3. Colvestone Primary School is not a Free School, a Faith School or an Academy. I chose Colvestone Primary School because I believe in the Council State-run school model. I am bewildered as to why so many Free Schools and Academies have been granted permission to open with no consideration for the possibility of fluctuating pupil numbers. Why was there a lack of focus on the healthy maintenance of th existing schools in the borough?

My [child] has had a fair amount of disruption in * Education already with, COVID, redundancies and a change of Head teacher. The council's proposal to close the school is another forced disruption which is not taking * education and well being as its priority.

The consultation has listed 6 out of 38 primary schools in the borough to merge or close but Paul Senior, in a consultation meeting on the 27th of June, said this is only the first stage of the 'process' and more schools, including faith and free schools, would be consulted in the next stages. If Princess May Primary is included in the next stage of closures this will mean more disruption to my [child]'s education which, as a parent, makes me question whether the well being of my [child] and * education is a priority to Hackney Council and whether the borough is the best choice for raising a family.

This brings me as to why the consultation has chosen Colvestone Primary School as a school that needs to close. The reasons for placing Colvestone Primary School on the list of potential closures is unclear and has been unclear from the start. In a number of meetings with Paul Senior the only reason given was that Princess May Primary is a larger building with a two form entry so can accommodate more children. Again, this does not imply that the children are at the forefront of this 'process' and purely financial and logistical factors are at the forefront. I am aware that all schools in the borough are facing financial challenges due to falling child numbers but Colvestone Primary, under it's new Blossom Foundation partnership and with proactive help from Hackney Council, has started to reverse its financial situation and is on a path to recovery. To close it now would remove the schools chance to complete its journey of recovery and remove its potential to become a strong and flourishing asset to the borough.

I feel that the consultation 'process' as a whole has been completely unfair to the six schools thrown into the melting pot with no solid reasons given as to why they have been singled out. If this was a fair and considerate consultation all schools in the borough would have been included in the 'process' from day one. The six school chosen are now having to fill their enrolment quotas for the coming school year with the shadow of closure hanging heavy above them. This is obviously going to have a massive negative influence on their success. If this was a 'consultation' I do not understand why Hackney Council would put a small number of the boroughs schools at such a debilitating disadvantage.

There have been discussion as to what will happen to the Colvestone School building when it is closed as an educational establishment. The council has stated that it will not be sold and will be kept as a 'closed school' with the potential to reopen. Surely the cost of moth-balling a historic building, already undergoing remedial work, will be considerable. Could we not forecast the potential spending of these funds into the existing and active School? In the duration of this consultation I have not heard of any creative 'outside the box' suggestions to counteract the closure of Colvestone Primary School, only that numbers of children in the borough have fallen and so we must close schools. This also highlights a bigger question as to where Hackney Councils sees the future of the borough and whether this included the a thriving family friendly, diverse and desirable borough with children at its heart.

I am grateful for the chance to put forward my concerns and objections to the closure of Colvestone Primary School as my [child] loves attending the school and the closure would leave a gaping and irreversible hole in the community of Dalston. We, as a family, have chosen to make Hackney our home and I hope the council will listen to ours and all the voices put forward to find a way to prove that children in the borough are its foremost priority.

My [child] has been going to Colvestone for two years, I have already moved * from a different school. * loves Colvestone, * loves * teachers and loves * friends. * would be devastated. Colvestone is also perfect for me to get to work, The breakfast club starts at 7:45 and I head straight to work. Getting to work from Princess May would add more pressure and probably make me late. Princess May also has higher air pollution due to the school being so close to the main road.

My [child] started at Baden Powell primary school when * was 3 years old and * loved the school and still loves it. Please do not close the Baden Powell primary school. All the children have a lot of memories and it is not fair.

My daughters have attended Colvestone school and now my grand[child] is attending this school. * is excelling educationally and because it is one class for each year, * has made friends in each year including year 6, while * is only in year ***.

My grandchildren go to this school and there future is important

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<p>My [child] attends Baden Powell Primary School, the same school I went to as a child. The close nit nature of the school has allowed children to thrive in a comfortable friendly environment. This is reflected by a consistent year on year Ofsted rating of "Good". Nightingale Primary School cannot make such claim. I'm concerned that the increased class sizes and an overall bigger school will destroy the close teacher child relationships found at Baden Powell, and have a detrimental affect on my [child]'s education.</p>
<p>The schools in the current wave of mergers proposed by Hackney Education have a total deficit of £30M. Baden Powell Primary School contributes approximately £300k to this deficit. This represents 1% of the total deficit. How will this help reduce the deficit in real terms? Taking this further, how does Baden Powell's deficit (£300k) compare to other expenses within Hackney Education and the wider council. e.g. Stationary, coffee machines ?</p>
<p>This has the makings of landgrab. i.e. Hackney council are very aware of the increasing land value in the area, and closing Baden Powell is an easy way to sell off valuable land to the next property developer waiting in line. There are already a number of new builds are under construction in the area. The likelihood of young families occupying these units is rather high, thus there's likely to be increased demand for school places within close proximity.</p>
<p>When the performance of Baden Powell is compared to that of Nightingale Primary School, it's clear that Baden Powell is a better performing school year in year out, and that the proposed merger has the potential to reduce or even undo all the hard work that has been done over recent years to get Baden Powell Primary School reaching the high standards it does today. With pupils routinely being exemplars of the school logo "Reaching for the Stars!"</p>
<p>My [child] has [SEND] and will find it difficult to communicate and interact with other school's staff, children and environment.</p>
<p>My [child] is an ex pupil of Colvestone and I have had a lot of dealings with DeBeauvoir School. I feel that the closure of both of these schools would have a real detrimental effect on the area. In an area full of Academies and religious schools both of these schools offer an important alternative and are integral parts of the community. Closing them will only encourage more families to move away from the area and further narrow Hackney's demographic. If "The Dalston Plan" goes ahead there will also be another 600 new homes (200 affordable) in the area and will undoubtedly mean a surge in demand for primary school places. Removing Colvestone school would also seem a bad idea in light of the plan to turn Colvestone Crescent into a play street. Both schools have an important role in the community and closing them, along with the pubs and independent businesses that I see go each month will only create space for more Starbucks and the like which recently appeared on the high street. Please don't let Dalston lose it's identity for the sake of short term financial gain.</p>
<p>My [child] went to Colvestone Primary school for 8 years (* started at the nursery). It felt so good to have this small local school in the heart of the community. London is a big and busy city as it is so small local schools I think is really important to keep the children feeling safe and grounded.</p>
<p>My [child] had a great time at Colvestone - please don't close it! I think we need small local schools in big busy towns. Kind regards ***</p>
<p>My wife and I are expecting our first child and live on Colvestone Crescent and would like to be able to send our child to the school. The area also suffers from significant anti-social behaviour issues and if the school is left vacant these will only increase. The school is the heart of the community and we are very much opposed to the proposal to close it /merge with the nearby school.</p>
<p>Nightingale is already a relatively small school, which also benefits from a distinctive admissions process that prioritises children in care and those subject to a child protection plan. There is a delicate ecosystem and one that will be particularly destabilised by the sudden arrival of so many additional pupils. Proximity should be just one measure of the suitability of a potential merger.</p>
<p>Nightingale school does not have the space to accommodate a merger. It may be possible but the quality of learning and the children's experience will not be fulfilling,</p>
<p>Also I don't think merging the school solves the financial difficulties but merely shifts the problem and slows it down for the time being.</p>
<p>Nightingale school is currently in between residential homes. I believe by amalgamating 2 schools it will become more busier, noisier and the quality given to each child would be reduced. Class sizes should be reduced. I feel we are heading towards Prison like schooling. Condensing kids in a small space.</p>
<p>No short sighted children join mid year overwhelmed school in two years</p>
<p>Not only are you taking away our school, you are taking away our family. My children have progressed so much since they have been here.</p>
<p>On one hand, I understand the proposals as a logical step forward. Baden Powell is an older building in disrepair and it makes sense that we would move into the newer and better equipped Nightingale premises. I have been anticipating this change for sometime and, if it's handled well, I think it could be beneficial for the children and families we work with. On the other hand, schools are important and complex institutions which become an integral part of the community they serve. Schools can be very different. I chose to work at Baden Powell because I liked the atmosphere and ethos of the school. It is a friendly place with happy students and staff. I like that it is a small school with staff who have worked there for many years - it has a close, traditional, family-like feel. I respect the senior leadership there and I am grateful for the way they have supported me to grow and develop professionally. In my role, I have worked hard to implement changes to continually improve and refine the way we do things to make sure the teaching and learning is first class. It would be a shame to lose all of this with the move to Nightingale - it needs to be recognised with the amalgamation that Baden Powell has a lot to offer and everything possible should be done to preserve the soul of the school within the new premises. To do this, I would like to see all Baden Powell children offered a place at Nightingale. I would like all Baden Powell staff offered a job at Nightingale to ensure a smooth transition for the children. I would like there to be extensive collaborative work between Baden Powell and Nightingale in the lead up to September 2024 to ensure that this is a proper amalgamation of systems & ethos and not just Baden Powell becoming taken over by Nightingale. I would like the leadership at Baden Powell to move with us as the leadership in Nightingale. I am not against change and progress, but I think it would be a shame to lose what we have at Baden Powell. If I am offered a position at Nightingale, I need to be sure my skills and experience are recognised. I would want my job, including leadership responsibilities, to be the same or equivalent with opportunities for progression. I would not be satisfied if Baden Powell staff were put second to Nightingale staff. If I am not to be offered a role at Nightingale, I would need to know as soon as possible so I can make plans for my future. I love teaching in Hackney and have worked in the borough my whole career, working passionately to help the amazing children and families in our community. I hope I can continue to do what I love in the Nightingale premises and I believe it will be a terrible shame if Hackney loses experienced and motivated staff (the best!) on the basis of this move. I would also like to see the former Baden Powell site used for something that would benefit the community.</p>
<p>Other schools will be overwhelming and cause alot problems</p>

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<p>Our children is our future in the Country. Education make the change the country and strong our children future. In my opinion continue carry on the the study same School where children and parents fill comfortable and safe , stress free and friendly environment's most important to grow our children .</p> <p>Thanks</p>
<p>Our group of parents has worked tirelessly to articulate the many reasons why closing Colvestone is a bad idea, and to rest their arguments on data, numbers, facts. Something the Council has not done. All of the actual consultation has been done by ourselves, meaning noone from the Council has engaged with the community or even tried to listen to market traders, stakeholders, residents, parents and neighbours. It is hard not to despair at the lack of response we have been getting, at how badly the documents from the council are prepared, at the lack of data, research, or even just answers, at the fact that there is no discernible scope of the actual consultation that has been outlined, and how much this process reveals a broken democratic process and a disfunctional education department. The only financial modelling has been provided by the school itself and our group of parents, and as it emerges that clearly closing the school will be more expensive to the tax payer than keeping it open one wonders if anyone really cares what a decision like this one is being based on.</p> <p>But who do you think these parents are? they are the same people who have been voting and canvassing for labour and there is no way to hide how unpopular and damaging this proposal is for Hackney education, but also for our local representation as a whole. I just vainly hope we will not come out of this process completely cynical and against you, and that our kids will regain some sense of hope and agency in spite of this. Our children do not think you are listening, and I doubt this "consultation" documents will even be read.</p>
<p>Ourselves and many other families from Colvestone have absolutely NO intention of allowing our children to attend Princess may school. Colvestone only needs a handful of students more to become fully functioning allowing us to recoup the historical debt. It is shortsighted to close this school having also approved a development of 600 homes in such close proximity.</p>
<p>Closing it is an ill-considered and damaging move for children and parents in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-fee schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school.</p>
<p>further more, the closure of Colvestone will cost the council a huge amount of money, which I believe to be a miss use of tax payers money that I strongly object to.</p>
<p>Overcrowding of pupils, overload of teachers with workloads, inadequate facilities</p>
<p>People won't come to my shop if they close the school. This will be the end of the market and my business</p>
<p>Pleaae do not go forward with any closures. It is counterproductive and benefits no child.</p>
<p>School classes and schools are already overwhelmed. Closing the school will simply make the problem worse.</p>
<p>I urge you to listen to psrents and think aboutbthe children's education as your own child's education</p>
<p>Please don't close local authority schools in the hearts of already squeezed inner London communities.</p>
<p>Please keep Colvestone open. We would like to move from De Beauvoir Primary to Colvestone. It would be a good transition as they are small and it has a great community. The Save Colvestone Campaign showed us that it would be a great option. I heard the Blossom Federation did a great job to keep it in credit this year. It has just had a fresh start and has good potential.</p>
<p>Please save the Colvestone School as it is heart of community</p>
<p>Post brexit and pandemic naturally There's less pupils in primary schools but closing or merging them isn't the best solution-smaller classes and less staff in existing schools could work better</p>
<p>Pretty simple really. Build more affordable housing so families can afford to stay and live in London. What a dystopian fucking country this is.</p>
<p>primarily, the plan has no regard for the value of the school to the local community</p>
<p>- closing a school is very expensive (the Council estimate well over a million pounds, plus £250-300,000 each year to maintain closed buildings). The school is very strong academically, has hugely beneficial class sizes for its diverse pupils and is running a surplus - how can closing it make financial sense?</p>
<p>- the Council say that it can re-open the school if demand increases in the future, but if it does this under current legislation all new schools are automatically Free Schools - run for profit by the private sector, completely outside local government control. Hackney would lose control of the school and the land (and will have spent a huge amount of money in the process).</p>
<p>- the site has multiple protections - two Grade 2 listings and an outdoor classroom / playground that is an Asset of Community Value - it is not a building easily repurposed but it is an excellent building purpose-built as a school. We also strongly suspect that it has protected educational use and are searching for the deeds.</p>
<p>- with the threatened closure of De Beauvoir Primary, closure of Colvestone will leave Dalston without a single form entry, non-faith or Academy/Free school within a mile of the Colvestone site.</p>
<p>- small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities (the school is particularly strong in integrating children with SEN - special educational needs or learning support plans - into the wider community to the advantage all pupils). The small community context is key to this. A single form school enables kids to be supported by their peers across age groups and produces a real sense of belonging and pride in their community.</p>
<p>- Colvestone is the closest Primary School to all the main Dalston Plan homebuilding sites (200 of which will be affordable family housing). As a small school it only needs a small number of kids per year to be full - closing it would be incredibly shortsighted (the council should consider demand for places in the mid- to long-term, as per statutory guidance, but it is not factoring long-term demand at all).</p>
<p>- Colvestone is central to the 21st Century Street - the play street and re-greening project that joins Colvestone Crescent to the market. Removing the school will rip the heart out of this project and the neighbourhood.</p>
<p>Primary school should not be closed.</p>

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Princess May has a highly polluted site and will harm the lungs of my asthmatic child.
Randal Cremer has been a very big part of the local community. All *** of my kids have had the pleasure of studying there and going on to further education. The school really sets up the children well for their future. There is a great sense of community which is key to a child's development. The children have grown to love their school and they should not be made to suffer by having to move schools and be parted from their peers due to funding issues. The closing of Randal Cremer is unfair and should be reconsidered.
Randal Cremer is a school that has long supported children who would otherwise be excluded from other schools in the area. They are a fantastic support for children with SEN and other needs. They have also been a hub for Refugee families and other minority groups within the area. The loss of this school will be an incredible blow to an already marginalised community with no thought to where these families will be sent across the borough.
Randal Cremer is the only school in the borough that will take pupils who have been excluded from other schools. It provides absolutely essential services for pupils who are our most vulnerable, and they have been directly impacted by the Hackney New School opening nearby - but this school won't address the needs of the very disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils served by Randal Cremer. Not enough thought has been given to the long distances children will have to travel, what will happen to the vulnerable children who rely on Randal Cremer and the divide that is opening up between schools serving middle class pupils and those from working class families.
Randal Cremer is a great school. They are great with SEN kids and do their best. Our kids are mentally affected because of the school closing. We want the school to stay open.
Regarding the proposed closure of Baden Powell Primary School at Ferron Rd, Lower Clapton, London E5 8DN, due to the declining numbers of children, it is important to note that there is a growing child population within the Orthodox Jewish community in Hackney, with an annual growth rate of more than 4%. Currently, nearly 30% of children in the borough are Charedi children.
In September 2021, Hackney conducted a Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment for the Stamford Hill AAP, which revealed (in paragraph 2.26) that Orthodox Jewish schools "have a total of 9,354 pupils, while capacity indicates there is space for 7,933." This means that Charedi schools were already overcrowded by more than 1,421 in 2021, and this number has likely increased since. The survey also highlighted that 82.3% of respondents stated that the settings are overcrowded.
Given these circumstances and considering the proximity of this site to the Stamford Hill Jewish community. I request that the council explore the possibility of leasing or selling the school premises to one of the Jewish schools in the area as part of this consultation process. This would alleviate some of the overcrowding issues faced by the Charedi schools and help accommodate the increasing number of students more effectively.
Right now this seems short sighted: Dalston is an area that has seen a large amount of growth in residential properties. There are developments being built nearby the school which will increase the number of students. This in the long run will lead to over crowding in the schools Colvestone is merged with. It also doesn't take into account the number of SEND pupils within the school, who could flounder in a school that is further away and larger. On top of this, the future plans for Colvestone School aren't clear: what will the council be using the site for? Will it benefit the community rather than investors??
School are oversubscribed as the population increases the demand for school is needed by merging school and selling of public land to develops is taking the interest away from residents and more of a money making scheme
School closure is not good for children. It's very stressful for them. They like their building. They know where everything is. They like their classes and playground. Every change of school causes stress for children. They don't understand why school will be closed. They don't understand why there is no money for this school. They want to stay in this school. They feel very good here, a new place will be too stressful. Please don't close this school.
School is heart of community and so any closure or amalgamation hurts the community. Colvestone is the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools and it is important to families. This school is also part of the Dalston plan for affordable housing. Building affordable housing and closing the closest school is not a good idea.
Schools are extremely important for the community. The Colvestone Primary School serves many students with special abilities that will need to find education elsewhere - far from where they live. The school is located in a quiet street and with lower emissions than Princess May Primary School. Better air quality is beneficial for students with asthma and the quiet location is more fitting to students with certain disabilities. The school also serves a less privileged community. Moving it will force students of that community to travel a longer distance to go to school along a large and busy street.
Schools are part of the local life, colvestone is only a 2 entry school and is vital for a lot of pupils in the neighbourhood. Even if number of pupils have reduced in the council the last years, won't be ready if number were increasing again and loose resilience in closing all those schools.
Schools need to stay open and not shut down. Even if there are less children. A lot of people choose to home school because they don't like certain policies. While homeschooling has its benefits it also has the downsides.
You need to let the schools thrive and welcome pupils. Right now you have allowed for several schools to be swallowed up by academies which are money making enterprises, not caring about children. Look at the shoreditch park secondary school and haggerston which have such rough behaviour by the pupils as they go and leave their schools. Why not allow children to develop, learn and grow without cramming them in to institutions that does not help them learn and develop. These schools would be better off at teaching smaller groups and give pupils a chance to learn. Do not shut these schools down.
Short termist. Poor strategic planning. Gentrification programme - eg new flats built in south Hackney and Woodberry Down - means fewer children.
Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes.
Since I entered this school, I recognised its value. Children are engaged in their learning, there is a strong sense of community, not to mention the friendly and warm environment created by all members of staff. It would be a disgrace to lose such a strong, caring and high standard of learning school.
Small classes benefit children therefore there is no need to merge or close schools School estate cannot be returned to the LA once it has gone Demographics and populations change dynamically We need all our community schools
Small school benefit children social and emotional development, specially on their first years. It's of absolute importance to keep them. Big school may come up cheaper but at what cost?! Education is about investing in young human beings not saving at cost of their happiness, fulfillment and mental health. Less is often more!

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<p>small schools are great for kids with diverse needs - Colvestone has an amazing track record of producing great results for kids of all abilities (the school is particularly strong in integrating children with SEN - special educational needs or learning support plans - into the wider community to the advantage all pupils). The small community context is key to this. A single form school enables kids to be supported by their peers across age groups and produces a real sense of belonging and pride in their community. Coke vesting is essential to the Hackney community.</p>
<p>Smaller local schools have Always been better for children education</p>
<p>Such a great family based school, that also support SEND children so well . They are more then a school Great staff that have the children at heart and will go that extra milestone with you and your child and would be so sad to see this school close</p>
<p>Terrible idea - these are precious schools, especially Colverstone</p>
<p>Terrible idea that will run a great school and waste precious tax payer money at the same time</p>
<p>The amalgamation of Colvestone Primary School would not only mean the closing of an excellent school (where I'd like to send my future children) but it would also decrease safety in the neighborhood. As someone living right next to the school (Time Square), I'm also concerned that all the issues we are currently having around drugs and anti social behaviour will get worse once the school is emptied out.</p>
<p>The benefits of small one form entry schools are well documented. The council is showing an interest only in it's spreadsheets and not in it's responsibility in helping to raise and preserve a generation of well educated citizens that participate fully in society. Where are the long term goals? What about the housing that's planned in the development of the area? It feels very short sighted.</p>
<p>Further to this is the shocking information (taken from the councils website https://hackney.gov.uk/air-quality) that clearly shows decrease in air quality on Kingsland road in comparison to Colvestone Crescent. It should not be legal to put schools in areas of moderate risk to NO exposure. Guidelines state that individuals who are unusually sensitive to nitrogen dioxide should consider limiting prolonged outdoor exertion when in an area such as Kingsland road - how are kids to do PE under these circumstances? There has been no consideration for health outcomes from our council (who should be on our side!) when making these decisions.</p>
<p>The closure by amalgamation of Colveston removes a unique, academically strong school, that is a traditional, essential part of the local community.</p>
<p>The closure of Colvestone PS will stop parents who have kids in that school to come and buy from my stand. I will lose my business if I lose my customers.</p>
<p>The closure of local authorities schools is going against the community that is already with overly crowded growing populations.</p>
<p>The closure of schools in hackney seems to be a foregone conclusion. We found out about it earlier this year but I feel this has been years in the making, especially given the councils gentrification of Hackney in recent years. The reasons for closure are valid but most are caused by Systemic issue with social housing and social care that mean people have not been able to stay in the area.</p>
<p>I have had to move *** of my children to a different school and leave *** at Randal Cremer until they go to Secondary school. This is not because I wanted to or because it is a bad school but because I had to give my kids some stability in the situation that Hackney Council have created. There are children still at Randal Cremer seeing their friends leave because their parents, like me want to give them stability. I have no faith that Hackney can meet their promises of supporting parents to find appropriate places. Moreover, I have seen the staff at Randal Cremer lose heart and although they are all doing amazingly to support the children, who is supporting them? They are about to lose community that can't be replaced and jobs that are hard to find elsewhere. To top it off, our head *** is visibly heartbroken each week to see more kids leave. And then there are many kids left with SEN, who have no easy way to stay or move to somewhere else as places are so limited.</p>
<p>Hackney decided to do this, and will continue to justify it but the way in which it has been handled is disgusting and heartless.</p>
<p>The closure of these schools will have an impact on the students and their families but also the staff and their families. Detrimental effect.</p>
<p>However the impact will be so much greater. The schools around those proposing to be closed and amalgamated will also be adversely impacted. The class sizes (which are already too high) will only further increase. And where teachers and non teaching staff are already struggling will only find it harder.</p>
<p>The Colvestone children would be exposed to more traffic pollution and much more noise; removed from a safer dead end street abutting a traditional market; and close to 2 overground stations and more bus routes than Princess May. If anything, Princess May should be absorbed by Colvestone.</p>
<p>The council has no choice but to make these hard decisions, if they don't then a high quality of education is not achievable for all Hackney pupils.</p>
<p>The falling roll in Hackney is certainly an issue and this is recognised. The proposal to merge two different schools has not been thought through. The closure of Colvestone limits parental choices and solutions to this are not available. There is short sightedness of the closure when a proposed development is due in a few years. There is a lack of recognition of the values of a small school and the school was not asked to produce structural options in light of a reduced roll. The lack of council oversight of the previous federation/defederation/deficit increase has contributed to the school being left vulnerable.</p>
<p>The impact of closing De Beauvoir Primary School is catastrophic for the families and children who attend it and devastating for the staff and community. As one of the few community schools in Hackney, De Beauvoir Primary School offers an education to many families who do not feel the other local schools are representative of their families. Whilst the school has had a falling roll for a number of years, the opening of Hackney Free School severely impacted on the number of children applying. When the area was already suffering with many unfilled Reception places, Hackney's decision to allow an additional Free School to be built is baffling. The closure of De Beauvoir, we believe, is related to this decision and seeing as the school has recently achieved a good Ofsted, the timing of the proposed closure is devastating for everyone involved. In addition, due to the lack of specialist places in ARPs/special schools, we are particularly concerned for the high percentage of children with SEND who attend the school (35%) and worry that these extremely vulnerable children will move from a school that knows, supports and actively advocates for them, to non-specialist provisions who may not be able to meet their needs. Our school has offered support beyond the pupils we have, our role has been much greater than the teaching of students from 4-11 years, supporting parents, offering addition resources to families, and once again, we fear that this support may look very different once the school has closed, meaning that our pupils, particularly those PPG students, do not have access to the same resources.</p>

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<p>the locals dont want it closed. it's liable , once closed that the site will be sold. later the numbers may increase but by then it'll be too late. it costs more to close it and keep it vacant than to operate it as a school. even if it does re-open it would have to be as a 'free school' the proliferation of which im oposed to.</p>
<p>The merge will come with its pros and cons. Indeed, the school building will live up to its potential but the new students and the new staff will bring some disruption and moment of instability. But we are sure it will all come together in the end.</p>
<p>The merging of the schools is liable for an increased number of pupils per class, and in the school in general. There is concern for the availability for school places for children/pupils who may want to enrol with school. This particularly for children whose siblings are already at the school. Also, with the increase in pupils number due to the merging, this will impact the learning of pupils - especially with larger classes of pupils.</p>
<p>The proposal is damaging and short sighted ; the plan to reduce hackney to just flats will damage its heart and soul for generations to come. The school supports many local children and with the ever increase in high rise developments the rise in need for local school places will also rise. How about focusing on preserving the integral parts of our community and not only bowing to developers . Be a beacon of hope for current and future generations, protect what we have all nurtured and all care about show that local community can really be a support for everyone and be a council who listens and stands with us. History always remembers those who stood strong for its community and its values; who protected smaller but significant community institutions .</p>
<p>The proposal to close De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer without any amalgamation offer reflects the council's lack of care or consideration for schools with higher levels of disadvantage in their school community. There aren't any other schools in easy walking distance which aren't church schools or part of the consultation process. The children who end up not having a place at their school will end up having to travel to a new school which they didn't choose. The council continue to protect the gentrified schools. We all know that in a couple of years once the dust settles they are going to sell off the school buildings. The council doesn't care about the communities in De Beauvoir or Randal Cremer because they don't reflect the type of people the council wants to have in Hackney. The type of people who will be living in the flats they make out of the school buildings in a couple of years. The council isn't Labour really, it's Tory Lite.</p>
<p>The proposed merger of Colvestone into Princess May is not a merger it is a closure of Colvestone with children being offered a place. My objections to this are the following:</p> <p>Partnership: Colvestone has entered into a partnership with Blossom Federation which has had a positive impact on Colvestone both financially, aethetically, structurally and most importantly academically. There should be time given to embed this partnership which will result in Colvestone being an attractive school to families - which it has until the pandemic - historically been. Working in partnership has also made the school more financially secure and stable. There are many benefits to the partnership from sharing of resourcing to financial management that have had an impact on Colvestone.</p> <p>Community school: Colvestone is a 1-form entry school in a quiet and safe street. There are no other 1 form entry non-faith school near by. It is important to maintain a balance of non-faith schools in Hackney. It is also more likely that a 1-form entry would fill up than a 2 for entry school. In comparison to other schools that have gone from 2 form to 3 form colvestone has 'lost' less children and therefore could, with the current leadership and positive experiences when entering the building, build back up.</p> <p>SEND - by proposing to send the children with SEND to Princess May there has been no consideration of the difficulty in taking a child on a longer walk across and alongside a major road. Also the small and supportive community has seen children with SEND flourish at Colvestone. This year there has been a positive impact as SEND is one of the schools strategy.</p> <p>Loss of Money by council - there has been investment made in the building from the sand blasting of teh outside, the replacement of lead on the roof and the school hall being fixed. This along with the cost of mothballing a school, cost of redundancies and also the loss of any repayment of the deficit is a huge waste of money.</p> <p>Part of the regeneration plan for Dalston - Colvestone is integral to the Dalston plan. The investment made takes into account the school and making a 21st century street. There is no consideration of this in the proposal.</p>
<p>The school has always been a fundamental part of the Ridley Road community and it shows the kids of the community life.</p>
<p>The school has come so far over the last few years and plays a big part in the local area. Some of the parents of the children were pupils at De Beauvoir themselves and have strong feelings for the school. To close De Beauvoir would be tragic and have a poor impact on the children who attend as well as the parents and staff.</p>
<p>The school has low uptake, perhaps because of second to last Ofsted review. Resources spent here could be better deployed to other local schools.</p>
<p>The school is a community hub for the area and it would be a terrible loss for cross cultural integration and cross curricular education to close it down.</p>
<p>The school is a very good school running for a lot of years now. My kids and I are unhappy with the decision that the school is closing. My child is attached to the teachers because of how friendly and helpful they are, making it a positive environment.</p>
<p>The school is an active part of the street and of the local community. Moreover, as Colvestone Crescent had been neglected in the past years, being one of the poorer maintained road in the neighborhood and therefore preferred spot for anti social behaviors, I fear the closure of the school will have a further negative impact on the street.</p>
<p>The school is an integral part of the community of the local area. The plans to close the school are shortsighted and more funds are needed to save this school and others like it. It isn't right that families from poorer areas of Hackney without the resources to help fund there schools are so detrimentally impacted by the governments cuts to public funding and investment. It should not be the responsibility of parents to protect schools it should be the first priority of government and local authorities.</p>
<p>the school is in perfect condition and is part of the heritage of Dalston and Hackney, it supports the merchants of the district and its inhabitants.</p>
<p>The school is part of the community and bring such a contrast within the Ridley Market area that's great for diversity. It also brings a sense of peacefulness in the area.</p>
<p>The school is part of the community and closing it will have huge damage on the community. The market won't be the same.</p>
<p>The school roll will change in time. This happens to my cousin family in Leeds. When the numbers went up again they had no places and children were bused to schools further away. Public educational building need to be used for education. Make the building a community arts centre and a school. Then the building has dual community uses. There are millions in funding available for the arts in communities like Hackney. You are not thinking ahead, being honest or looking after the interests of the community long term. I am really shocked by this lack of insight and expertise.</p>
<p>The school should remain open</p>

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<p>The school should remain open for the following reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the performance is good 2. staff is brilliant, helpful, understanding and always put children and families first. 3. Children are settled well and by closing the school it has created panic and stress for their children.
<p>The schools are all unique, caring and academically strong.</p>
<p>We need schools of all shapes and sizes within our community to keep it diverse and unique for all children.</p>
<p>They should not be treated as a mass of beings that all need to be trained in exactly the same way.</p>
<p>The schools are vastly different in culture and management. Princess May has a very bad reputation among schools and continues to say one thing and do another. ***** This is not how Colvestone would treat their parents or children. If Colvestone merge into Princess May I fear the culture *** has maintained will continue to affect more and more children in the borough, whether * remains *** or not. Colvestone has a more family oriented culture which will be lost at Princess May. Colvestone children will be done a disservice if they are to merge with Princess May.</p>
<p>The schools will be more populated and the children from both schools won't get along well. The teachers won't be able to support everyone as it will be a packed classroom. My child wants to swap schools but he doesn't understand the outcome because he is still young. We don't want our school to change. We like our school!!</p>
<p>There are a lot of parents and children from the school buying from my stall and if they close the school they won't come anymore - it will have a huge impact on my business - the school is part of Ridly Road community</p>
<p>There are both positive and negative effects to school amalgamations. Positive: increased resources, improved curriculum, larger population, enhance social interaction, extracurricular activities etc. However, I see challenges with student/staff experiences of adjustment, disruption during the process. Students need to be properly supported and needs must be met. The merging of different school cultures whilst creating a cohesive and inclusive environment. Communication is key and concerns should be considered. Possible job losses. Different leadership styles. Poor communication. Children may not identify with the school.</p>
<p>There are kids in the area which need the school</p>
<p>There is a covenant on the school building and the entire cartilage of its site stipulating the school site should be solely used as a school. For Colvestone Primary School to leave this site would be unlawful as it would be contrary to the covenant.</p>
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There is no good reason to force this closure on Colvestone Primary School. It is, I believe, unnecessary and wrong - misguided, myopic, and a needless violence.

Under new leadership Colvestone Primary has a lack of recent deficit: Blossom Federation - who also run three other schools successfully in the borough - are the new leadership of Colvestone Primary since 2022. The Federation has turned a budget surplus - despite a low pupil roll - in its first 6 months in charge. So doing Blossom Federation has shown that the school can be financially viable under its new leadership. We, as parents, carers and students, love the stability and improved facilities Blossom Federation has brought the school. Colvestone is financially viable in the future.

Colvestone Primary is core to the future of Dalston: it is situated central to your (now) approved policy 'Hackney's first 21st Century Street' on Colvestone Crescent. Without families, children and the school it was envisaged around, this street will be a tragic token. Furthermore, Colvestone Primary is situated just 200m from the recently approved Dalston 2033 development plans. To me and my family it feels wrong, simply bad policy, and tragically myopic of the council to close this successful, high-academic achieving community school, when plans are in place to build affordable housing, and create civic environments/streets designed to attract families but with no school within a short walking distance.

It is clear from the information we shared with you during our public meeting on April 24th, and the summary document we submitted in advance of the cabinet meeting on May 22nd that with the support of Hackney Council, Colvestone Primary can turn into an even more definitive example of a one-form entry, local authority school to attract pupils from across the borough, and beyond, in a pioneering future facing 21st century street.

As parents we worked hard to produce and submit that summary document of reasons to you in advance on the cabinet meeting on May 22nd 2023. Please read it if you have not done so, and take time (as professionals) to re-read it if you have time. In it you will find our additional evidence for why: Colvestone Primary should be taken off the list; and hackney Education's proposal is flawed.

As you will see, with careful planning, Colvestone can serve as an attractive local one-form community school that parents from the closed schools will want to send their children to. To re-iterate, as well as the lack of deficit under our new leadership, key reasons are as follows:

- Lack of parental choice

The closure of Colvestone (and nearby De Beauvoir) would mean there would be no non-faith, one-form entry local authority schools within a mile of the Colvestone building. Our local area would be dominated by religious schools, free schools and academies, which are currently not being considered for closure, regardless of numbers.

- Impact on the Dalston development plan

Colvestone plays a key role in the Council's development in Dalston. Closing Colvestone could have a significant impact on the new housing development and plans for greener pedestrian spaces. Closing Colvestone will also mark a tragic absence - children and families - in Hackney's 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent.

- Impact on children with special educational needs

Seven percent of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), well above the 4.3 percent average across the borough. Many of these children would find the transition particularly challenging. Closing a school with such an unusually high proportion of the most vulnerable children is cruel. In doing so, you are choosing to harm children.

- Air pollution

The Council is proposing to send students from Colvestone to Princess May, whose main playground is right next to the A10. The Council's (missing words - possibly "environmental report") shows Princess May had 40 percent higher levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO2) in 2021 than Colvestone. Adding more students to a school closer to the A10 with higher pollution levels is a backwards step in the effort to reduce children's exposure to air pollution. In doing so you are choosing to harm our children.

- Historical significance

Built in 1852, Colvestone is a Grade 2 listed building. Closing it would mean shutting the last surviving example of an important 19th century radical education movement. This is a loss of national significance.

Finally, we did not choose Princess May (it was a second choice school for only a very small percentage of Colvestone families). We do not want our children to go there, and like most families at Colvestone, will not send our children there. We chose and want our children to go to Colvestone Primary School, like all of the other families who send their children to this wonderful school.

As it is clear from the above, there is no reason to force this merger and closure on Colvestone and its families. Doing so, you are choosing to do lasting, life-long harm to children and families. Please do not act with such violence towards our children, us, and Colvestone's children and families. Please do not close Colvestone Primary School.

There is no point closing our school

There needs to be choices of schools - it's important to have different types of schools in a neighbourhood. Why are none of the schools in the proposed mergers and closures faith schools? They are emptier than community schools and it's very strange that Hackney council, which is a Labour council, is protecting them and sacrificing really good and old local school.

Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.

This proposal has made huge improvements already and it seems illogical that the council would sabotage its own actions by closing the school at the heart of the 21st century street.

There should be more choice in primary schools not less due to closure.

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<p>There's no point me reiterating all the many reasons why closing Colvestone is a bad idea because I don't think you're really listening anyway. But I will tell you this. My daughter, a student at Colvestone, was getting frustrated when I dragged her to yet another meeting related to trying to get the Council to listen to our arguments. She told me making all this effort to engage with the Council was a waste of my time and hers because no matter what we do the Council was going to close the school anyway. She's *** years old. At such a young age she is already cynical, already has no faith in democratic institutions and processes. She still believes in unicorns, but she doesn't believe in you. This is the lesson you are teaching hundreds of children across the borough, that elected officials lie, that democratic processes are phony, that engagement is fruitless and that they are powerless. So when they grow up and they don't want to vote or get involved with local government or when they turn to more extreme means to respond to societal problems you can know that you helped contribute their sense of hopelessness.</p>
<p>These are community schools</p>
<p>These are public local authority schools. Once closed, because of government policy, they can only reopen as academies, which are secretive schools outside democratic control. Many problems have recently come to light in Hackney academies. Working class and black students are less likely to thrive. It is very disruptive to children's education to uproot them from their school community. School staffs too will experience great disruption. Small classes and small schools are better for children's welfare. I find the financial arguments unconvincing.</p>
<p>These proposals as they currently stand offer no benefit to the children, parents, school staff, or the wider community. All this is as a result of this tory government's dogma of cut and cut again. Unfortunately Hackney Labour Council like a lot of Council's have carried out the bidding of this government which sanctifies profits above the needs of local populations. The Council should join with the parents the local community and the Trade Unions in common cause for the resources that are needed to to take advantage of smaller class sizes for the benefit of children's education.</p>
<p>These schools are these kids' safe space. Larger class sizes do not work for a lot of children. Families love their schools, their kids want to stay where they're happy.</p>
<p>They shouldn't close the school as they (parents and kids) are part of the community and if the school is closed it will have a huge impact on my business and the community</p>
<p>This a huge shame to the local area and the cost to maintain the property when it is no longer in use as a school, are far higher than simply investing in young families in the area and providing jobs and a local vibrancy</p>
<p>This fall in pupil numbers is a real opportunity to provide a proper education in smaller classes and should be welcomed. Why cram everyone together in large classes where it's all about crowd control when you can have smaller classes where children can be supported properly and actually achieve their full potential.</p>
<p>This is a fantastic school because of its size and the single form entry. This give the children an opportunity to mix with all years and have different friendship groups. Please keep this school open!!</p>
<p>This is a great decision for the Government</p>
<p>This is a hugely valuable school to the local community</p>
<p>This is a small school in a close-knit community. It is counterproductive for the area to close this school for many reasons. At primary level, small schools of this kind are very effective in promoting well-fare of the children and their families and of the community. While Colvestone seems to be a particularly small school at the moment, it is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. The school is also central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.</p>
<p>This is an excellent little school and worth saving in an age when bigger is not always better.</p>
<p>This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p>
<p>This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.</p>
<p>This is giving no consideration to Colvestone Community and to our children.</p>
<p>This is not a consultation process. The decision has already been made. There seems be no opportunity to amalgamate. Parents and staff have not been given adequate notice. It is opportunistic as undoubtedly the building will be sold to developers to turn into private housing for large amounts of Money. Children will have to attend new schools, siblings may have to attend different schools, which amalgamation would have avoided.</p>
<p>This is not an amalgamation: Colvestone primary school would effectively close. If it re-opens in the future, under current legislation it would do so automatically as a Free School, ran for profit by the private sector. This is a gateway to privatising education. Privatisation didn't work for trains, it's not going to work for primary schools. Colvestone is a small school offering amazing value for the local community, don't take that away.</p>
<p>This is short sighted and with proposals to make the surrounding area a pedestrian area will shoot that proposal in the foot! No school - no reason for it to be pedestrian! Short sighted and shameful closing this multi racial school down. Please reconsider this closure - it's such a happy and nurturing school it would be such a loss to this area!</p>
<p>This is the most incorrect proposal for closing the school. For us as parents it is very difficult to talk to children about this. My children are very sad. It is not right to take away the children's right to the school where they have spent their quality time there, they are happy and satisfied with their teachers. This is a bad decision of yours.</p>
<p>This isn't great. Colvestone is one of the only local feel intimate schools across Hackney. It's such a disappointment that it is even thinking of closing.</p>
<p>This proposal is a betrayal of hackney children. Sharing already limited resources will seriously impact on their educational progress. I have been a hackney resident my whole line and each of these schools has benefitted local community and ensure children do not have to travel miles to attend a school. This proposal should be scrapped</p>
<p>This proposal sound like a rushed decision by the Hackney Education council and very unprofessional in the sense that proactive steps should have been made long before now and the parents and members of public should have been involved long before this stage. This proposal/decision is only conducive and only sooth the Hackney Education board just to make them cover their inadequacy for not doing their job. It should not have gotten to this stage at all. I personally do not like or support this merger and I WILL NOT be taking my kids to the proposed merged school. In fact, my kids will not be schooling again in Hackney as it is clear that the Education board only care about the politics and not the effects it will have on kids and family. My *** kids are [SEND]. This is a massive disruption and having a year for the change is not right at all. You all new about this problem and didn't inform the parents long before now. What about the new houses been built around the school. Has consideration been given to when the statistics change.</p>
<p>This proposal will increase lack of confidence and self esteem as to children and parents.</p>
<p>This school had just had a lot of money spent on upgrading it. It is a family school. It has a very strong community and is the heart of Dalston. This area does not need another block of flats or whatever would be built in the beautiful listed building. Colvestone is the heart and soul of the area, so unique and charismatic. It is a safe haven for many children with disabilities and is truly rooted within the community.</p>

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PA 090 218 55

<p>This school has helped many children over the years, especially those with ecp plans when other schools lack in the help. Not only now are children going to lose their school place , they will get moved from their friends and social circles which are vitally important to them.</p> <p>All *** of my children attend here and they have all excelled in their subjects and that's thanks to the teachers who put 110% in and actually care about the children!</p> <p>The teachers are going to be out of their jobs some of the teachers have been there over 20 years!</p> <p>I don't see why you can't merge the 2 schools that your proposing to close, yes there may still not be loads of children but it will be better then closing 2 schools down and distrusting many people's lives.</p>
<p>This school has provided very local, community-focused, excellent education, in a truly multi-cultural, multi-religion setting, provided by local authority not private bodies, where children thrive and develop. The nursery alongside provides continuity from early years. The threat of closure has already been detrimental to children's progress and the local community. I note that of families I have talked with NONE had put Princess May as even their 3rd choice of school for their children! This school is central to a street with plans to become pleasanter, healthier, more community-focused. A further large housing development is due in Dalston soon; a number of these homes will have families and children wanting this local facility. Please keep what is local and good.</p>
<p>This school is a useful iconic and has so many memories for most people in this community past and present. It will be part of history for a lot of this communities and families who have been pupils there.</p>
<p>This school is at the heart of the local community and removing it will have a detrimental impact on the local area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area area, it is being unfairly targeted. It should be kept open to offer parents the choice. Whilst pupil numbers have dropped, there are huge building plans in Dalston and the families moving into the new homes will need a local school. The decision is very short-sighted.</p>
<p>This school is incredibly important to the Dalston Community. Amalgamation is not the answer.</p>
<p>This school should not be closed ever. Please reconsider this proposal.</p>
<p>This will adversely impact the tightly knit local community and in particular its young people. How can it make sense to close the school in light of plans to build 600 homes in the area? Wont there be children who move 8nto those homes?</p>
<p>This is a rare a valuable LA home. The budgetary constraints are known but we beg you not to close a community provision which once lost will be lost forever with lasting impacts for the community.</p>
<p>This will be devastating news to so many families. I'm extremely disappointed to hear that we are closing down schools, which are a pillar of our society. This will be seen as a failure of government, more than a failure of individual schools.</p>
<p>This will her extremely disruptive to all involved and result in the loss of Colvestone as an asset at the heart of the community. If streamlining is required I urge you to explore options for some partnership and shared facilities between these schools which retains their independent status rather than wholesale amalgamation.</p>
<p>This will reduce the care and wellbeing of children of Hackney</p>
<p>This would be terrible.</p>
<p>Those schools shouldn't be closed, while certainly there's enough financial support from the government. Hackney council shouldn't waste money such as Hackney fashion district which is an immense waste of money. Do not closed the schools, they are vitale to our community and children's future. It displaced family, and community resilience and spirits.</p>
<p>Three of my children currently attend this school. They are very happy everyday, the staff are very nice and friendly and push my children to reach their full potential. The headteacher is brilliant, always available and approachable to handle any concerns. I do not wish to change schools as I do not hear the same feedback from parents at other schools.</p>
<p>To some extent, I agree with the proposals as I do understand the reason behind merging the two school together due to financial reasons. However, to some extent I disagree with the proposals as well. I feel it will affect the children who are already at Nightingale Primary School, who have bonded and made strong friendships within the class. Having new staff and new children in the class will be overwhelming for the children. I will be very very disappointed if the class get divided; as I said the children of my child's class have bonded very well and all are very close to each other. I do not want schools merging together to affect my child's emotional and mental wellbeing.</p>
<p>Totally disagree with such decisions being made. Randal Cremer has been around for many years and has a huge reputation. We as a community definitely do not want this school to close. That sounds absurd! For one, I do not want the children's happiness to be taken away from them. As well as their education being affected, I believe a huge change like this will affect the students in their work. They are in a happy environment with the teachers and classmates they have grown with through-out the year. The amount of children that is attending from around the area, every single one will have a hard time moving schools, as well as the parents. I personally am extremely sad and anxious about such proposals and to not condemn this action. My little brother is currently at Randal Cremer and I do not want him to move into a new school! This will affect him hugely, especially mentally! I do not want his confidence to be taken away from him. I would like this to be taken into serious considerations and am totally against this proposal. Hoping this message will help give you understanding on such matter and make the right decision.</p>
<p>Unfortunately these schools have falling numbers of children attending. No fault of the schools problem across London. But the way school are funded it unfair to disportiontantly spend money on these few children when this money could be spread out amongst all Hackney schools.</p>
<p>Uprooting all these kids in the middle of a key development phase will not only cause distress to the child, but add more financial pressure onto each parent from having to buy new uniforms for their children and additional travel costs, which in this day and age is one more nail in the coffin</p>
<p>Very few parents from Colvestone will move their children to Princess May, if this merger goes ahead. They will seek to move to an alternative school. Therefore the number of children at Princess May will pretty much remain the same, meaning this amalgamation will not work to increase the number of children at Princess May.</p>
<p>We are about to have a kid. We need these primary schools to stay open. They are needed by families in Hackney.</p>

We are in favour of keeping Colvenston open

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We are writing to express our disagreement regarding the recent proposal to include Colvestone Primary School in the consultation to close schools in Dalston (Hackney) by Hackney Council.

We are very disheartened by this proposal and in the worst case scenario that this is going ahead, in total honesty, this will have a tremendous effect on [child]'s education and subsequently in * future academic life as * would take a really long time to adjust to a new setting and it will take years for [child] to re-access education. Princess May has never been a choice of us to move [child] to, it is a two forms school (too big and not safe for [child]), the school run would be too noisy and too dangerous, not a all a good school that would suit [child]'s need.

We believe this will be an ill-considered and damaging move for children especially for our SEN children, parents and carers and the community in this area. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in Dalston, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority.

We live on *** and have been part of the Dalston community for a long time, we love our diverse community. We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [child], who is *** years-old and [SEND] because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([child] has a experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [child] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [child] to be happy and settled in * school (** years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredible difficult impact on * and it will be practically impossible for * to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on * mental health.

Let me give you a brief history of [child]'s life so that you have an insight of where * is coming from:

[Child] was diagnosed at 2.5 years' old with [SEND] by Hackney Ark (with severe delays in communications, severe delays in social interactions and severe repetitive behaviour). [Child] regressed from age 18 months, * was prior to that stage able to say 5 words: Maman, Daddy, cheese, hello and bye (I am *** and [parent] *** - I only spoke *** to [child] from note to 2) and literally became non-verbal and lost * sounds capacity A, E, I, O, U, [child] was now only screaming, lost eyes contact and only presented with repetitive behaviours. With tremendous tenacity we managed to access straight away Hackney services of Speech Therapy (once a week where Specs was implemented) and Portage ([child] attended the later services for one year, at home and at the Garden (in pre-school) once a week alternatively). At this point when I thought I would get back to my career I realised that [child] needed so much support and decided to stop my career to support [child] full time and at this point I went on a mission and to become my child's therapist and a nucleus that would utilise all services offered and my own therapies. I taught myself an American therapy which is called ESDM (Early Start Denver Model), taking my child everyday to Gymboree (a pre-school private center) and implementing ESDM at the same time, helped also [child] to support * physical mobility as at this stage * upper-body and hands were going inwards (I used daily a home school bench at home, making [child] copying me standing on one leg and other leg and also using a climbing wall we had at home). With all these combinations of supports from Hackney services and my own therapies, [child] progressed, we retrieved * eye contacts and * body posture developed now to a straight posture. At the end of the year, when [child] turned 3, Portage Coordinator asked me what we foresee for [child] academically and I expressed at this point that [child] could go mainstream to a nursery, which was 7mns from home, Portage facilitated transition to nursery and [child] entered nursery with an EHCP and worked hard at making sure * has all support needed so that * attend nursery. The setting kept on using Pecs for promoting speech and in 2019, when [child] started to make the sound A, I, O, I found the Gemini therapy programme and within a month [child]'s perceptive communications improved tremendously. We have used this programme since then and [child] is now talking more, single words and understand everything we are saying to *. [Child] attended nursery for two years 3 days a week with allocated one to one.

We then chose Colvestone Primary School because it is a one form small school and just 5 mns from home. [Child] remained in one corner of the Reception class for a term and half and by the end of that year * had ventured in all corners of the school with a phenomenal support of * allocated TA. * attended Reception (with of course the pandemic, and attended school during the second lock-down)

When [Child] was in year *, after a week at school (***) * refused to go to school and leave the house, it took us 7 months to bridge * back to school and as you can imagine, it was a real isolated work for us as [child] didn't want to go out anymore but with great effort, determination and tedious work we thankfully managed for [child] to be happy going out and then managed to bridge * back to school, with the School Senco we worked very hard collaboratively to get [child] back and * did for the end of year one. [Teacher] has done a tremendous work. Now, we have complete faith in the school SEN support which as you may have heard from other families is not a given, [child] has an EHCP and now a level 5 in funding which goes towards * SEN and * needs to be cared by someone all the time.

But even though, we have all in place on paper, the tremendous work we have had to do with the school in order to secure [child]'s support has been a real effort, as well as working hard to make sure that [child] is happy attending Colvestone and this in view to attend * years at Colvestone to year ***.

To be honest I can't believe we have to write this and the idea of this plan going ahead is very difficult for us and we are trying not to think about it! We have put a considerable effort for the past *** years for [child] to be finally happy where * is.

We know our child feels safe and happy at Colvestone, * receives a wonderful SEN support with a fantastic experienced SEN one to one *** and a brilliant *** **. Moving our child to another school will be strongly difficult and disruptive in our child's education and have consequences on * achieving long term education goals. And it will take us years to get to where we are and by then, it will be the end of primary school. This will literally damage all the hard work we have put together for the past *** years. I hope you realise the difficulty of what we have to do on a daily basis to get to where we are. We are working hard at [child]'s school foundation so that * can thrive in the future and become the astronaut * want to be (I asked lately [child] what * wanted to be and * astonishingly responded to me: "Astronaut" and repeatedly saying: "Captain ***, to the rescue").

In January, [child] was awarded a Colvestone's Achiever for:

"[Child] enjoys the creative aspects of the curriculum. In art lessons and in Music, [child] shows good level of engagement. [Child] takes part in daily phonics lessons where * is exploring environmental sounds with * peers. [Child] enjoys drawing and will often draw pictures that are detailed in design. [Name] has drawn pictures linked to * favourite stories, such as "Class *** at the Zoo". Which * enjoys listening to and reading alongside the adult, some of the known phrases. [Child] takes part in PE lessons and will join the class line when * knows that it is time for PE. Well done [child]! - [Child] went to receive * award in front for Y***/Y*** assembly.

In April [Child] was awarded 100% attendance Award, there again [child] during full school assembly stood up when * name was called and went to receive * award and came back to sit with everyone else aside *** Yes 100% attendance! Incredible! What a journey, what an amazing achievement! And this done to the wonderful work of the school, one to one, Senco, staffs and the Leadership team, *** and team. [Child] has received a fantastic report for this year and this is done to the great work of ***, *** ([Child]'s one to one) with our constant support to take [child] to school and support * with learning at home.

Colvestone is a unique primary school offering my child an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment, which we strongly believe in and is required. We strongly hope that our wonderful Colvestone Primary School can stay open and all is done to support our school and for our [child] to keep accessing education as well as all the SEN children and all the children.

The council is making such a fundamental mistake in planning on closing Colvestone:

- Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.

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<p>We believe it is a huge mistake closing De Beauvoir! It is such a wonderful community school, with amazing staff and children. Our [child] went there and our [child] has year *** left to go. There are many kids and families at De Beauvoir who need additional support and I worry that they won't continue getting such dedicated levels of support if the school closes and they have to find new schools. Why can't Colvestone merge into De Beauvoir? De Beauvoir has space and the schools are near to each other.</p>
<p>We chose Nightingale largely due to the fact it was a single form entry school and our child does not thrive in environments that are too busy or noisy. We feel quite strongly that the proposed merger will have a negative impact on his confidence, security and ability to learn.</p>
<p>We don't want the school to close.</p>
<p>We have an amazing school with amazing staff. We maybe a small school but we are valued. I could have sent my child to any school, Morningside is the end of my road. But I didn't I chose to send her to Baden Powell as its a better school with good of steady. Even during covid the school was beyond supportive and after they worked hard to help our children be where they should be. I could not be more grateful for Baden Powell it is an experience you will not receive anywhere else. Please do not deprive other parents and future children this wonderful experience.</p>
<p>We have customers who come all day with their children because they come from Colvestone school, they shop in my business, buy trainers, tracksuits, sweaters. If you close the school, I will lose all of my customers.</p>
<p>We have lived in Dalston for the last 16 years. Next year our daughter will go to school. We wanted to send her to Colverstone primary. We will not consider Princess May as it's too big and next to a main road. We will instead consider moving out of Hackney to find a more family friendly environment. The other day I spoke to *** from local council, even * agreed that nobody wants this merger.</p>
<p>Please do not take an affluent small neighbourhood away from Dalston. The result will be a corporate class moving in replacing the families. Dalston will be for bankers and city clerks who want cocktail bars. Preserve Colverstone Primary and Ridley Road Market as areas of the community.</p>
<p>Colvestone is at the heart of the Ridley Road and Dalston community, and removing a school and its children from this area will have a detrimental impact on the local area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an ill-considered and damaging move for children, parents and carers in Dalston. As one of the only non-religious, non-academy, non-free schools in the area, it should remain open to offer families the choice to be part of a small, close-knit community school – run by the local education authority. • Colvestone is a unique primary school offering children an opportunity to develop and thrive in a single-form entry, community-focussed environment. • Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes commits to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. • Colvestone Primary School is central to a pioneering proposal to turn Colvestone Crescent into 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, and innovative play spaces. A key part of the 21st Century Street is that it's located next to a primary school. Explicitly, without Colvestone school, that plan makes less sense.
<p>We have more and more beautiful children being born and we need more schools not close them down.</p>
<p>We need local authority schools serving the community.</p>
<p>We need more primary schools and spaces and smaller class sized. Closing down schools is also a detriment to the local community.</p>
<p>We should be encouraging families to stay in Dalston, not closing local authority schools at the heart of the community.</p>
<p>We should be keeping schools local & small. Creating bigger schools does not support students with additional needs & will cause significant stress to many having to move.</p>
<p>Once a school is shut, it will most likely never re-open again.</p>
<p>It is a loss to our community & distills the creativity & uniqueness of each school. We should be fighting to keep them open.</p>
<p>We want to move from De Beauvoir to Colvestone. Please KEEP IT OPEN!</p>
<p>We will lose Colvestone - we love the school, it is part of our community</p>
<p>We will not be sending our child to Princess May school. Absolutely no chance we are sending our child to a school on one of the busiest roads in London. We are also extremely unhappy regarding the process the council has taken in putting forward this proposal; in particular the lack of alternatives for a school like colvestone</p>
<p>What will be happening to the buildings once those 4 schools close?</p>
<p>Where are all these kids going to go? I don't want my kids in a class where 35 kids is the norm. You are pushing families out of central London. This is gentrification in full effect.</p>
<p>While I appreciate the problems associated with falling numbers in the Borough, I am also aware of the recent increase of young professional adults in Dalston and am certain that the birthrate in the Borough will be starting to increase.</p> <p>It will be tragic if there are no local schools to send their young children.</p>
<p>My children went to Colvestone. It was a 4-minute walk to a beautiful building. A very mixed demographic. A lovely community and a strong sense of identity. Friends just around the corner. Having to go further away for ones early school experience would interfere with these important early life experiences. Important bonds between the parents would be harder to forge for similar reasons.</p>
<p>Primary schools must above all be local.</p>
<p>Furthermore, smaller class sizes are better for young children. As I understand it, Colvestone has a relatively large proportion of children with additional needs. The small size of the school gives them a better chance to develop skills and confidence.</p>

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<p>Whilst falling school rolls may be a fact, the plan to close Colvestone Primary School is a badly thought through response.</p> <p>To date, the 'consultation' process has been unclear and feels like a sham. And worse than this – that a Labour administration is primarily targeting and closing local authority schools is unforgivable.</p> <p>If the Council does close Colvestone primary it will have a deeply felt impact on the local community. We have received huge support for our campaign including 2,100 signatures on our petition, press stories from across London, UK and Europe, but critically a real sadness from local people about the short-sighted actions of Hackney Council.</p> <p>We are constantly told that Hackney Education is one system, that needs to meet the needs of all our schools - including Academies, Free Schools and Faith Schools. But the only perception we have is that local authority schools have been unfairly targeted in these proposals. If there is ONE system - then it needs to be considered as A WHOLE. Not in this piecemeal manner, crudely picking off the easiest, and smallest targets.</p> <p>As a result, the plans have not been properly thought through. The 'term' merger does not fool anyone. It is a closure of Colvestone with a presumption that our pupils will transfer to Princess May. This is not borne out in our consultation with parents and carers at Colvestone - and betrays a real lack of understanding behind parental choice. There is a real demand for a single form entry Local Authority school in Hackney. That need should be respected and met. Colvestone IS that school.</p> <p>Colvestone Primary is a unique opportunity for Hackney!</p> <p>We understand the pressures of falling pupil numbers. But a way of addressing this is not to simply force children into schools with empty spaces – but to attract them back into vibrant, caring community based environments. After a period of disruption, Colvestone has turned a corner. We have just had significant investment in the physical structure of the school with the Grade 2 listed building restored and accessible. Colvestone has a new and highly successful partnership with the Blossom Federation. Having returned the school to be running in surplus for at least the next two years, the new leadership team has proven itself, and the school is benefitting from its new partnership. The school is academically strong as shown by my [child]'s excellent Sats results last week.</p> <p>We need very few pupils to join our school to make a massive difference. There are a number of factors that could affect this – but as no 'creative' or positive solutions have been proposed in the Strategy – these appear to have been individually discounted and their cumulative effect not considered.</p> <p>For example, the proposed closure of nearby De Beauvoir Primary, a 700m walk away, could have a substantial impact on us. Keeping Colvestone open would give parents at DeBeauvoir an option that is close to them, is small and non-denominational like DeBeauvoir and has enough space to allow friend and family groups to remain together. This, could have been prepared for if it was not for the threat of closure that also hangs over our head. Again the manner and nature of the proposal put forward is itself the most damaging factor in Colvestone's continued turnaround of its fortunes, both financial and in pupil numbers.</p> <p>Colvestone Primary School is in the centre of the Dalston Plan which commits to building 600 new homes in Dalston, with nearly 200 being affordable 3-bedroom family homes. The overwhelming majority of these will be built at Kingsland Shopping Centre, with a number of smaller development sites nearby. For almost all the new developments, Colvestone would be the closest school.</p> <p>Colvestone Primary School is also central to the pioneering decision to turn Colvestone Crescent into a 21st Century Street, Hackney's first permanent play street. A long tree-lined pedestrian walkway with lots of new plantings, ecology gardens, spaces for congregating and innovative play spaces. Councillor Mete Coban confirmed that work is due to commence as early as next year. This would in no doubt further improve Colvestone's appeal as a destination school and be a showcase for Hackney's commitment to the future. A small, village school, in the heart of Hackney on a pollution-reduced, tree lined 21st Century street. What's not to like?</p> <p>We firmly know and believe that closing Colvestone would be a bad decision, not just for the school, but for Hackney too. It does so little to address the over capacity of the system. So why close a genuinely diverse, financially-viable school with a recently much-improved parental offer and an academic record that outperforms Borough and National averages? When simply removing the threat of closure could be a springboard to the financial viability that is attainable.</p>
<p>Why are families not being consulted or involved in any of the decisions?</p>
<p>Why do you close a school after you leave children to spend 1 to 5 years there. Then you decide to close it. Why not leave all the children to finish their primary school and do not let any more children join this school, and after 6 years when everyone has finished then you can close it for good because this is unfair for the kids and parents.</p>
<p>Why is this proposal being made</p>
<p>why merge a good school that is perfect for SEN children to a big school that would increase their anxiety, chances of being bullied, not enough time for their learning, higher level of noise pollution that these kids can't cope with, high level of dangerous location (princess may school location). don't merge colvestone primary school pls. it is a safe haven for our children.</p>
<p>Why shut down a good school that has served the community so well for so many decades. The staffs and teachers are friendly, dedicated and helpful, the children attitude to learning is fantastic. Also in colvestone, the air and noise pollution is minimised. It also a school where the children with special needs are being looked well after.</p>
<p>Without the school many children with special needs are going to suffer greatly. Children with autism in particular are going to feel the effects in very negative ways. Not only will they not receive the wonderful educational benefits of the small school environment. But also the upheaval in their day to day routine that will set them back. Some to the point of not being able to cope with a new travel route, larger environment, bigger classes. Not having the trained staff needed.</p>
<p>Would be a crying shame for the kids to lose this special school that supports so many families</p>
<p>Yes I agree</p> <p>We need more housing</p> <p>Ore more business</p> <p>Ore more green spaces</p>

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

<p>You can't close schools, what happens if there is a population increase - where will the children go. This affects my child's education..never mind the fact that your poor housing policy - which has led to a lack of affordable and social homes in hackney is largely to blame for this.</p>
<p>You have no clue what you are doing</p>
<p>You're dressing this up as a 'merger' but it a closure, pure and simple. You have no intention of taking any Colvestone teaching staff who children (particularly those with SEN)are familiar and happy with. There is no parental choice being told your child is going to Princess May with the only other alternatives in the area with current space being a free school or faith school. Paul Senior - Princess May is not a 'good offer'</p>
<p>Comments on Proposals - Email</p>
<p>Dear all, I am extremely concerned that the informal consultation documentation sent out to schools has not been provided in other languages for parents/families for whom English is not their first language. This is hugely disadvantageous for a large number of parents and carets who will be unable to express their views. In fact if a school or family want it in another language the only way to do so is buried on the final page : "If you require this document in a different format please contact us and we will get back to you in the next five working days." Which obviously if English is not your first language or a language you fluently read and speak would be difficult to find and understand. I know that this was raised by *** after the first parental engagement documents and I raised this when I was sent the document at the end of last week. Other schools must have the same concerns. Already we have had parents/families who are unsure of what is happening as they are unable to read this. The least we would expect is for the documents to be available in the main languages spoken in Hackney or for the census information submitted by the schools to be used to ensure that the documentation would be produced in other languages. Alongside that adjustments should also have been made for families who are unable to read in English or their home language as well. Please can you let us and the other schools know how this will be rectified. Many thanks *** *** Colvestone Primary School</p>
<p>Hello Hackney, De Beauvoir is an old school. It has something to offer to the community. For historic reasons alone, please keep De beauvoir for the coming generations. Let it reach 200 years. it is nearly there. Hackney, WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT!! A parent ***</p>
<p>I wish to object to the closure of Colvestone Crescent School and THE AMALGAMATION OF COLVESTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH PRINCESS MAY PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM SEPTEMBER as from 2024</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A crucial part of the community in Dalston and Hackney. 2. Proving the community a place for their children to be educated which is close by to their residents 3. Will have a detrimental effect on the education of so many important younger members of the community 4. A historic school that will probably now be converted into another block of flats 5. A local community school and should not be closed 6. Good ofsted reports and will have a detrimental impact on all the current and future children who will be given a crucial educational 7. A decision based on cost saving and not the requirements of the community <p>An absolutely outrage. ***</p>
<p>To whom it may concern, Please see the attached response and objection to the proposal of a closure of Colvestone primary school and merger/amalgamation with Princess May Primary School from the Colvestone Governing body. Also attached are the objections from the parent / carer group Save Colvestone Primary School which you should have also received separately. Please confirm receipt of this email by replying to this email address, Many thanks, *** *** Colvestone Primary School In partnership with Blossom Federation [Attachment: Objections to the Informal Consultation by Hackney Council to 'merge' Colvestone Primary School on the Princess May site. See Additional Responses Report appendix 2]</p>

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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Hi there.
Attached our response to the consultation regarding schools in Hackney.
Please can you confirm safe receipt?
Thanks.
[Attachment: Save Colvestone. See Additional Responses Report appendix 3]

Hello all
Hope you are well. Thanks again for the time given to Colvestone parents at Cabinet. I have had a few questions from parents regarding the pre-consultation and next steps for Colvestone.
I understand that a meeting is scheduled for 27th June but none of you will be in attendance, parents would like the opportunity to continue discussions with you as key decision makers - particularly after the responses & engagement at cabinet. I wasn't aware of the meeting on the 27th - are ward councillors being informed of meetings & activities in schools in their wards? They would also like to know a bit more about the format of the meeting on 27th.
Other questions/ comments:
Will responses / input sent in previously count during this consultation phase or do they need to be sent again?
Consultation response format is very structured and does not really allow for real consultation. The consultation is structured to only give comments about individual schools in response to restricted questions. Will you be expecting input in other formats?
There are also the emails from *** who is yet to receive a response, *** emailed again on 19 June.
Best wishes
[Council member]

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All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Dear Councillors Caroline, Antoinette and Mayor Granville

I hope my emails finds you well.

I am reaching out to follow up the council meeting we attended two weeks ago.

I was hoping to be in touch sooner than now, however with half term holidays and busy work, it has been a challenge finding time to compose my thoughts and an email.

To put a face on this email, I am ***** and was at the council meeting accompanied by my son ***.

Firstly I would like to thank you for the impromptu meeting outside the chambers, all be it brief, it was great to be able to have a bit of a conversation regarding the situation we are in, as we were unable to do so during the official meeting, and have not been given much opportunity to discuss our concerns.

I must admit that I am extremely disheartened that the meeting as well as the whole process of the consultation, feels very much like a done deal.

We do not feel heard, we do not feel supported by the council, we do not feel like we matter.

During the meeting in chambers I mentioned how disappointed we have been upon receiving a standardised reply to most of the emails we have sent yourselves and the rest of the councillors and team working on this consultation.

I am hoping that this email will receive a more detailed reply to the actual questions I am going to be asking.

To make it easier I will bullet point the subjects and highlight my actual questions in blue, so that there is nothing missed.

*Please note that capitals are used in the email only for emphasis and not in frustration :)

Regarding SEND services and the creation of an APR unit in Colvestone:

As I mentioned in my email dated 25th of April, there are currently only two schools in Hackney that have an APR unit and they are both two form, and oversubscribed.

I understand that there are more APR's being created, but those are again in naturally unsuitable, very busy and overwhelming two form schools.

Colvestone would be AN IDEAL candidate for an APR. PLEASE I implore you to consider the possibility of creating such a unit in our school.

If the council really cares about SEND kids and wishes to support them in getting the education they have a legal right to, they need to acknowledge the scientifically proven fact that SEND kids do better in smaller, less busy environments.

Question 1: Why is the council ignoring this scientific fact and refusing the right to a suitable education to these SEND children? Why is the school not considered for an APR unit and what do we have to do to make it so?

Regarding the Deficit of the School and Due diligence from Hackney council:

During our informal chat outside chambers I cheekily asked Councillor Bramble if she could promise that if one school was to be saved it will be Colvestone. She replied something along the lines of: "How would it look if we save the school with the biggest deficit?"

It is my understanding that Colvestone pupil numbers have been falling over the last 5 years, however the deficit of the school dates prior to that, and that it is one of the highest deficits in the Hackney area. This deficit was created whilst the school was at full capacity.

Fast forward to the current academic year, where the school is operating with a reduced capacity and therefore reduced income, but has a better management and is managing to be viable.

Question 2: When the deficit first appeared in the school, why did Hackney council continue to pour money into the school but did nothing about auditing the books and checking how the deficit was created in a fully subscribed school. Was due diligence done in this instance?

According to the reasoning behind this merger, a school that is not full can not sustain itself. Why was then a full school not sustaining it self? Why did Hackney not investigate when this deficit was being created?

Regarding the merger with Princes May:

During the impromptu chat we had outside chambers, Mayor Granville said something along the lines of: "it is interesting that parents from Colvestone are really opposed to their children attending Princes May- we had not realised"

How can that be the first instance the Mayor was made aware? How can he not be aware of our preferences and opinions regarding Princes May when:

1) We were very clear during the meeting at the school on the 24th of April. ***, one of the Y3 parents specifically asked Paul Senior " what will the council do if we all refuse to send our kids there?"

2) I mentioned it in my original email on the 25th of April to all of you.

3) It is included in the 62 page document we have composed and send you prior to the council meeting. We run a sensor and the results were overwhelming. Not only parents do not wish to send their kids to Princes May, but they never had the school in their choice of schools when applying. Please see a more detailed analysis in the folder we have already provided.

Question 3: Has the Mayor actually seen our dossier? Is he now in possession of all our evidence and campaign points?

Question 4: What will the council do when most of the Colvestone families refuse to go to Princes May?

Question 5: When can we expect to have a further meeting with the council regarding the consultation and what is the council planning on doing to ensure that there is an open channel of communication?

There are many other points that we would like to discuss but if I can get some answers on my above questions it would be a great start.

Thank you all for your time, I appreciate this is a challenging task for you all.

I very much look forward to hearing from you

Best wishes

All Comments On Consultation Proposals

Dear Anntoinette,

I hope you are very well. Thank you for the updates on the proposed school closures.

I'm getting in touch as residents and ward members have raised the issue of the school buildings and what might happen to them. They are concerned first of all that these historic schools could be closed at all, leaving us with less local authority run schools in a borough with a high proportion of academies, which are harder to hold to account and often do not recognise unions and employ staff on less favourable contracts (such as Mossbourne Primary, who hires new staff on less favourable contracts than the previous local authority school on the site ever did, leading to old staff on old contracts anecdotally feeling hounded out).

Residents have asked for guarantees that any closed schools will not be sold off and turned into flats, which would leave us in a difficult situation if the population of children were to increase and we wanted to reopen a school on the same site.

Do you have any information or guarantees about the sites that I could share with residents?

Thank you very much, [Council member]

Dear all,

Re: Consultation, Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy - falling rolls, parent consultation, April 24th 2023

I am writing again to request the financial modelling data and projected budgets prepared by Hackney Education that challenge the projected budgets submitted by Colvestone Primary School / Blossom Foundation prior to the pre-informal consultation phase of the above consultation.

These materials were requested in the public meeting at Colvestone on April 24th, 2023. Paul Senior (Interim Director of Education and Inclusion) stated then that the financial modelling and projected budgets prepared by Hackney Education in regards to Colvestone Primary School would be sent at speed to the Governing Body. In the Council's minutes of that meeting, page 193 of the Public Information Pack prepared prior to the Cabinet meeting on the 22nd May, you will see the response to this request summarised as follows:

'We can make this information available to the Full Governing Body [action] if they haven't received it already.' (Red highlight in original).

We are still waiting for these materials over 2 months later. You will also note that we are now almost half-way through the informal consultation period and we have still not received this information - despite the school, governing body and parental body requesting it both in private meetings, by email, and in public engagement events.

We have been repeatedly told by the Interim Director of Education and Deputy Mayor Bramble that 'financial viability' is the key determinant of Colvestone being in frame of this consultation. How Hackney Education's modelling and budget projections for Colvestone differ from those prepared by the school are therefore essential in understanding why Colvestone is in the consultation - and to allow stakeholders to democratically interrogate the modelling and assumptions made by Hackney Education to arrive at the conclusions they have. Without this information it is impossible to know how Hackney's projections differ from the School's own or to scrutinise the Council's methodology.

Given that this modelling is so central to the Council's case it must have been prepared - the response from the Interim Head of Education implies that it has been, its forwarding to the Governors a formality. Why are we still waiting for this vital piece of financial modelling that underpins Hackney Education's case for including Colvestone in the current consultation?

Given that we have already been waiting over two months for this, I would appreciate this budgeting, financial modelling data and analysis being forwarded to us (I'm cc'ing *** from our Board of Governors if you would prefer to send it to *) by the end of the week (30th June 2023) so that we have time to digest it and respond before the end of the consultation period.

If this modelling and projected budgeting has not been prepared, I would appreciate a response from Group Director (Children and Education) Jacquie Burke, within the same timeframe, to explain why it has not been - given how fundamental we have been informed it is to Hackney Education's decision to consult on closing Colvestone Primary School.

I have cc'd *** and *** from the Scrutiny Commission, who heard us request these materials again yesterday and are scrutinising this consultation. I am also cc'ing *** from Governance, Cllrs Bramble and Woodley who were present at the meeting on the 24th April (the Deputy Mayor having responsibility for the preparation of the above-named report) and the school's local elected Councillors. My apologies for filling everyone's inbox, but it has been extremely frustrating attempting to get anyone to honour this straightforward request and promised reply.

I thank you in advance for your rapid response.

Best wishes, yours sincerely

Save Colvestone Primary School

Paragraph 63

Consultation On Amalgamation Or Closure Of Six Hackney Primary Schools

Additional Responses & Engagement Workshops

Report Date: September 2023

Report author:

Sarah Pedder
Consultation & Engagement Manager

Contact

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Additional Consultation Responses

Introduction

Additional responses to the consultation were received by email, sent to school.sufficiency@hackney.co.uk, Council members and the Mayor's Office. The comments in the additional responses have been classified in line with Kwest's qualitative analysis classifications.

Responses

A total of 9 additional responses were received by email during the informal consultation period (5 June to 16 July 2023.)

Key themes identified

The chart below presents the key themes identified across the additional responses.

Classification key theme	
General statements:	13
Criticism of consultation / expectation buildings will be sold	5
Comments on the decision to consult & wider context	4
General comment that do not want school to close / amalgamate	4
Positive comment about existing schools:	13
School is at the heart of local community	5
Staff go the extra mile / school has a good reputation / facilities	3
Existing school provides good support for children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities)	2
Small class sizes / schools are better for children	2
Other positive comment about existing schools	1
Other:	7
Comments about school places:	6
Demographics of population can change	2
Impact of free schools / and religious schools in the area on enrolment at the school(s).	2
Other comment about school places	1
Other local schools do not have many spaces	1
Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:	5
Move will negatively affect children	2
Parents will need support with paperwork etc	1

Impact on staff and potential loss of jobs	1
Other negative comment about other schools / process of moving	1

Overview of comments

A summary of the comments within the additional responses is provided below. Where the responses were significantly longer and included comment on a larger number of issues, a summary of the key themes has also been provided. Please note that Hackney Education responded directly where questions were raised by email respondents about the proposals or consultation process.

Responses related to Colvestone Primary School

Response 1

The respondent raised an equality concern regarding the translation of consultation documents and support for parents/families for whom English is not their primary language. The respondent requested for information to be translated.

Response 2

The respondent objected to the closure of Colvestone and amalgamation with Princess May. The respondent stated that the school is a “crucial part of the community in Dalston and Hackney” and that it is close to residents, that the closure will be detrimental to children’s education, that the school is a historic school and expressed concern that flats would be built on the site, that it has good Ofsted reports and lastly, that a decision should not be made for cost saving reasons.

Response 3

The respondent requested financial modelling data and Hackney Education projected budgets. The email states that this information had first been requested during the Colvestone engagement session in April 2023, prior to the consultation, and requested the data be provided before the end the consultation period. The respondent states that: “How Hackney Education’s modelling and budget projections for Colvestone differ from those prepared by the school are therefore essential in understanding why Colvestone is in the consultation - and to allow stakeholders to democratically interrogate the modelling and assumptions made by Hackney Education to arrive at the conclusions they have.”

Response 4

Submitted by the governing body of Colvestone Primary School, the document sets out objections and concerns over the proposed closure of Colvestone. The document notes that the governing body does not view the proposals as an amalgamation as the proposals only offer children a place at Princess May and do not include an amalgamation of staff and education. The document also states the view that the term “merger/amalgamation” has been chosen by the Council to avoid being seen to close four schools. The objections are divided into two parts. The full document is provided in Appendix 2.

Part 1 refers to the Hackney Education webpage on the proposals and responds to the

following factors considered by the Council when considering alternatives and solutions to the proposals. It raises objections and concerns related to:

- School at financial risk
 - Objections: The response states that the school has indicated it is financially viable for 2023/24; the partnership with Blossom Federation enables financial savings and has the potential to continue beyond the next academic year; there is an in year surplus this year and for two years running; and there has been significant capital investment in the last financial year and so no additional costs will be required in the future.
 - Concerns: The response states that final SMRA data has not been taken into account and was commissioned to make cost savings; the data was used unfairly to support closing Colvestone; and that Colvestone has future-proofed with recent capital investments.
- Number of vacant places
 - Objections: The response states that more children could attend Colvestone in reception if De Beauvoir closes, due to oversubscription of other local schools; that there would have been more interest in the school this year following partnership and repairs work; that it would be easier to fill a one form entry school; there has been less movement of pupils this year compared to pandemic years; and that many parents have remained at Colvestone despite the proposals.
 - Concerns: view that Hackney Education modelling was not accurate and the changing circumstances of the school have not been taken into account.
- Physical size of school
 - Objections: States that Colvestone has the ability to provide high quality education as a 1 form entry school on an “appropriately sized” site with all aspects of the site utilised and in a manageable condition; and proposes that the school keeper’s house could be used as an ARP.
 - Concerns: States that no risk assessment or costs of the size of schools has been done, or comparisons of schools.
- Geographic partnership
 - Objections: States that Princess May was selected as a merger site based on distance and that other nearest schools are church schools with full ARP; comments on the proximity of schools in the proposals (Colvestone, De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer); sets out concern about the route to Princess May and the proximity of the playground to the A10 and the impact of pollution; and states that Princess May is not geographically closer for many families.
 - Concerns: States that pollution has not been considered; and parents/carers have not been surveyed about their preferences.
- New neighbourhoods and new builds create significantly more need for school places in the future
 - Objections: The response refers to plans for 600 new homes in Dalston; shares view that Hackney Education and Planning do not have a coordinated strategy and belief that the school is key to planning aims; similarly, refers to Colvestone school as a part of aims for Colvestone Crescent, 21st Century street; and states view that the 21st Century street would bring more families to the area and school.
 - Concern: States that there has not been a discussion of the role of the school in the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Streets.
- Current OFSTED grades and predicted outcomes for children
 - Objections: The response refers to the ‘Good’ Ofsted rating; and to significant improvements at the school in EYFS data.

- Concerns: States that schools have been told that Ofsted grades are not relevant as the majority of Hackney schools are good or outstanding.
- Community impact
 - Objections: Located near Ridley Road Market, the response raises the historic significance of the area; the school is a Birkbeck school and is of historical significance.
 - Concerns: The response shares the belief that the local community has not been consulted; and again raises concerns regarding the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Street.

Part 2 states that the merger/amalgamation with Princess May has no benefits for Colvestone. The objections cover the following points, referencing the benefits of a merger stated by Hackney Education

- Context [of the Colvestone as part of the Blossom Federation]
 - Part 2 highlights successes and achievements of the school as part of the Blossom Federation. The objection states that “The deficit, the restructuring of support staff and the lack of infrastructure in the school to support teaching learning was a direct result of the previous federation.”
- Creation of one new, stronger school community, maximising the funding available to it
 - Objection: The response quotes a parent survey and states 100% of parents surveyed believe that the Blossom partnership has had a positive impact; and raises the positive impact of the partnership on the governing body.
 - Concerns: The respondents believe this has not been considered by Hackney Education in the Cabinet proposals; and the response states that governors were told that the school would have been considered for closure, if not for the Blossom partnership.
- Increased specialist expertise from a wider teaching and pupil support team
 - Objections: The response states that specialist expertise is already in place through the Blossom Federation.
 - Concerns: The respondents believe that the partnership has not been considered by Hackney Education.
- Increased potential for school improvement and targeted support in response to local needs
 - Objections: The response states that teaching and learning has improved with the development of middle leaders supported by the executive head and head of school.
 - Concerns: Questions Hackney Education processes to ensure a school does not have a deficit and states that issues were not raised in a remote audit.
- Stronger finances, with consistent resources and stable staff workforce
 - Objections: Colvestone has identified a surplus this year; the surplus has come from funding from the Schools Contingency Fund, which it had not previously accessed and objects to the suggestion that the surplus has been achieved due to emergency intervention from the Council; the respondents believe that Colvestone budgets are achievable and states that systems are in place to resolve historic debts; surplus has been achieved despite historic debts and again the respondents raise questions about the Hackney Education audit; it is also stated that the federation delivers IT support and PE support.
 - Concerns: The respondents ask whether any schools have gone into deficit within a year.

Key themes:

- Comments about school places:
 - Demographics of population can change
 - Other local schools do not have many spaces
 - Impact of free schools / and religious schools in the area on enrolment at the school(s).
 - Other comment about school places
- General statements:
 - Comments on the decision to consult & wider context
 - General comment that do not want school to close / amalgamate
- Positive comment about existing schools:
 - School is at the heart of local community
 - Staff go the extra mile / school has a good reputation / facilities
- Other
 - Other comments raised in the summary that do not fit into the key themes are included in the summary above.

For the full comments provided in the Objections document, see Appendix 2.

Response 5

The Save Colvestone document was submitted twice by email.

Save Colvestone states that Colvestone Primary School is a pillar of the community and should be able to continue in its role. The document details reasons for the school to remain open, opposition to the proposed merger with Princess May, and raises multiple questions regarding the decision to include Colvestone in proposals and raises criticism about the consultation process. The summary below provides an overview of the issues and arguments raised in the document. Headings are taken from the document. The full document is provided in Appendix 3.

- Key benefits of Colvestone remaining open
 - The response states that Colvestone as an academically strong, non-denominational, one-form entry school and the attraction of Colvestone to Dalston families.
 - Keeping Colvestone open is an opportunity for Hackney Council to recover the budget deficit.
 - The response discusses the role of Colvestone Primary School within the Dalston Plan and Colvestone Crescent 21st Century Street.
 - Provision of non-faith education at Colvestone, quoting a survey of resident support.
 - States that there is strong SEND provision at Colvestone.
 - Keeping Colvestone open would avoid the costs associated with closing the school and paying off the deficit.
 - View that Colvestone remaining open reassures residents that their views have been considered and increases faith in consultation processes.
- Key risks of closing Colvestone
 - The response states that closing Colvestone exposes pupils to air pollution at Princess May.
 - Comments on the negative impact of closing/amalgamating schools at once and cost impact.
 - Comments on the cost of closing schools.
 - Again discusses the role of Colvestone Primary School within the Dalston Plan.
 - Suggests that the closure will also negatively impact developers associated

- with the Dalston Plan.
- States that there will be a lack of school places in the area, with the proposed closure of De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer.
- Raises concern that Colvestone could be reopened as a free school.
- States that it will have a negative impact on children with SEND.
- States that it will have a negative impact on school engagement and Emotionally Based School Avoidance and damage the local community
- Challenges GLA predictions.
- States that the closure would have an impact on faith in the Council and Labour Party.
- Flaws in the consultation process
 - View that the consultation did not follow statutory guidance or the Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy.
 - View that the Cabinet Briefing Report did not include sufficient detail.
 - View that the design of the consultation is ineffective.
 - View that the consultation was inaccessible to some groups.
 - View that the consultation process has been damaging to the schools in scope.
- Reports and underlying data
 - Resubmission of the full report prepared in the pre-engagement stage, May 2023 (referred to as the 'pre-informal' stage of the consultation.) The document states that the views in the report were not considered in the Cabinet report ahead of the decision to informally consult.
 - The Case for Colvestone Primary School
 - Addressing falling role
 - Positive financial management
 - Strong Academic record
 - Correcting future development impact assessments
 - Air pollution threat
 - Historical significance and site protections
 - Risk of current proposal: parental choice
 - Alternative options
 - Conclusion
 - Submission to the School Sufficiency team at Hackney Council, for inclusion in the Cabinet Report ahead of the meeting on Monday 22 May 2023
 - The case for Colvestone Primary School
 - Colvestone: A village school in the heart of Hackney
 - Context for Colvestone
 - Financial viability
 - Academic record
 - Parent choice
 - Impact on children with special educational needs
 - Impact on local development
 - Air pollution
 - Historical significance and protections
 - Campaign summary
 - Petition
 - Local support
 - Press coverage
 - Appendices - 1) Colvestone Parents Choice Factor Survey
2) email from a parent of children with SEN.

Key themes:

- Positive comment about existing school
 - Existing school provides good support for children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities)
 - School is at the heart of local community
 - Staff go the extra mile / school has a good reputation / facilities
 - Small class sizes / schools are better for children
- Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:
 - Move will negatively affect children
 - Impact on staff and potential loss of jobs
 - Other negative comment about other schools / process of moving
- Comments about school places:
 - Impact of free schools / and religious schools in the area on enrolment at the school(s).
- General statements:
 - General comment that do not want school to close / amalgamate
 - Comments on the decision to consult & wider context
 - Criticism of consultation / expectation buildings will be sold
- Other
 - Other comments raised in the summary that do not fit into the key themes are detailed in the summary above.

For the full comments provided in the campaign document, see Appendix 3.

Response 6

The respondent, speaking on behalf of parents of children with SEND at Colvestone, expressed that the consultation feels like a done deal and Colvestone parents feel unheard and unsupported by the Council: “We do not feel heard, we do not feel supported by the council, we do not feel like we matter.” The respondent also expressed disappointment at receiving a standard reply to emails and raised the following comments and questions:

- Questions about the SEND services and the creation of an ARP unit in Colvestone. The respondent stated that ARP units in Hackney are oversubscribed and that Colvestone would be an ideal candidate for an ARP, citing that SEND children do better in smaller classes.
 - “Why is the council ignoring this scientific fact and refusing the right to a suitable education to these SEND children?”
 - “Why is the school not considered for an APR unit and what do we have to do to make it so?”
- Questions regarding the deficit of the school and due diligence from Hackney council
 - “When the deficit first appeared in the school, why did Hackney council continue to pour money into the school but did nothing about auditing the books and checking how the deficit was created in a fully subscribed school. Was due diligence done in this instance?”
 - “According to the reasoning behind this merger, a school that is not full can not sustain itself. Why was then a full school not sustaining itself? Why did Hackney not investigate when this deficit was being created?”
- Questions regarding the merger with Princess May, stating that Colvestone parents had made their views on Princess May clear in April, 2023 and had included survey evidence stating that Colvestone parents did not wish to send their children

to Princess May:

- “Has the Mayor actually seen our dossier? Is he now in possession of all our evidence and campaign points?”
- “What will the council do when most of the Colvestone families refuse to go to Princes May?”
- “When can we expect to have a further meeting with the council regarding the consultation and what is the council planning on doing to ensure that there is an open channel of communication?”

Response 7

Member enquiry raising a number of questions from Colvestone parents regarding the workshop events for parents:

- Whether ward councillors would be informed about parent meetings at schools in their wards
- Whether responses and information shared in the pre-engagement stage would need to be resubmitted to be included in the consultation.
- Criticism of the consultation format and structure and asked whether consultation responses could be submitted in other formats, external to the consultation questionnaire.

Responses related to De Beauvoir

Response 8

The respondent stated that “for historic reasons alone” De Beauvoir should not close. The parent referenced the age of the school and stated that it is part of the local community.

General responses or responses related to all proposals

Response 9

Member enquiry raising questions from residents and ward members regarding the use of school buildings, namely:

- The loss of historic school buildings.
- As a result of closures, concerns that there will be fewer local authority run schools in the borough and a higher number of academies.
- Resident requests for a guarantee that school sites will not be turned into flats.

Engagement Workshops

Parents and carers were invited to attend workshops at each of the schools to provide an opportunity to ask questions about the consultation proposals. Workshops were developed in partnership with school leadership teams and were adapted to meet the needs of each school community. Schools were asked to identify the language support needed for each event and interpreters were provided at the events to support parents and carers who speak English as an additional language and who may need additional support to engage with the consultation.

Overview of the workshops approach

All workshops followed a similar format and agenda, agreed with school leadership teams ahead of the events. This included a presentation from Hackney Education to provide, or reiterate, the context behind the proposals. Participants were then given the opportunity to ask questions. After the Q&A, participants could speak to Hackney Education officers about admissions, SEND support, and general concerns specific to individual circumstances in a smaller group, surgery style format. Participants were also encouraged to share their views and comments through the formal consultation process by completing the consultation questionnaire.

The above format was adapted for each school following school leadership teams' direction and understanding of their school community's needs. Baden Powell held two workshops, one focused on SEND and one on admissions. Colvestone held one workshop for parents and another for staff. The Princess May workshop was held online.

As stated, interpreters were provided at events to help parents with limited English or who do not speak English as a primary language. Schools were asked whether interpreter support was needed, parent/carers invitations were translated into the languages requested and interpreters were provided at the workshops. Colvestone requested support for Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish speaking parents and Baden Powell requested support for Turkish speaking parents.

The following details the questions and comments raised at the engagement events.

Overview of workshop questions and comments

Comments and questions in each of the workshops have grouped to align with the broad themes identified in the Kwest Consultation Report.

Baden Powell Primary School
Two workshops were held at Baden Powell, the first focused on admissions and the second focused on SEND.

1. Workshop 1, 26 June 2023, 3:30pm

Negative comments about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants were concerned that the move to another school will negatively affect children, stating that the move will “mentally damage” children.
- Participants asked why Baden Powell had been selected for closure and not Nightingale. Other participants questioned why Nightingale had been built, if school rolls were declining. Some participants compared staff at Nightingale and Baden Powell, stating that there is more parent interaction with teachers at Baden Powell while other participants stated that “parents at Nightingale say they do not want our children to go there.”
- Participants questioned whether there would be enough space and facilities, such as playground space and swings, for all pupils on one site.

Other comments:

- Participants made a range of other comments including:
 - Stating that closing children’s centres and nurseries would make more sense.
 - Asking what the plan is for children with EHCPs.
 - Asking whether the Scrutiny Committee had reviewed the proposals.
 - Asking how parents can know whether their voices will be heard.
 - Suggesting the government could afford to keep schools open.

Comments about school places:

- Some participants commented that current nursery enrollment is not low, stating 2020-2022 nursery children are expected to go to Baden Powell. Participants stated that most years are full at Baden Powell currently. Other participants thought enrollment could increase with new house building.

Positive comments about existing schools:

- Participants stated that they were happy with Baden Powell and praised the education at the school. One participant stated “we want a small school.”

General statements:

- One participant stated that it felt like parents do not have a choice about the closure and amalgamation.

2. Workshop 2, 3 July 2023, 3:30 pm

The second Baden Powell workshop focused on questions around SEND.

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Multiple participants commented that they do not know what Nightingale is like as a primary school and requested an open day at Nightingale to view the school and meet the teachers. Some participants asked whether the schools could work together through the amalgamation.
- Participants largely wanted Baden Powell children to move to Nightingale with their friends, in the same classes and be taught by Baden Powell teachers. Some parents shared that their children are anxious about the move: “My child is anxious about some lessons and needs more help.” One participant was concerned about bullying at Nightingale.
- These concerns were particularly shared by parents of children with SEND. Participants asked whether their children will have EHCPs and asked about the impact of the transition on children with SEND’s CAT and SATs tests. One parent stated that it would be helpful for their child to visit Nightingale weekly.

- Some participants expressed the belief that Nightingale children and parents do not want Baden Powell children to join the school and are not welcoming. Other participants stated that they would not send their children to Nightingale.
- Participants were concerned about staff jobs, asking about the number of redundancies.
- Participants also commented on the size of Baden Powell.

General statements:

- Participants stated that the decision to close the school had already been made. Some felt that the decision had already been made by the council, others felt that there was no choice other than to close Baden Powell and wanted the process to be completed: "We would rather it was decided and we had longer to prepare."
- Participants also asked if alternative solutions had been considered.
- Multiple participants raised issues including increases in cost of living, affordable housing and gentrification, commenting that housing is unaffordable and "we are being forced out of Hackney." Participants felt that other issues affecting residents in Hackney were not being adequately addressed and are a more urgent issue than school enrollment.
- Some participants also suggested that information about the proposals had been unevenly shared between schools, stating that Nightingale parents knew about the proposals before Baden Powell parents.

Other:

- Participants raised a number of other comments including:
 - Questioning whether government intervention or funding could prevent schools from closing and asking how the school will be funded if the merger does not go ahead.
 - Other participants asked how involved the headteacher of Baden Powell would be at Nightingale.
 - Other participants wanted to explore alternatives to closing, one participant suggested only closing reception.

Randal Cremer Primary School

Workshop, 30 June 2023, 9am

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants commented on the negative impact of the proposals and transition to a new school for children, causing stress for children and their families.
- Two participants commented on the negative impact on children with SEND and the need for more support for children.
- One participant also talked about the costs associated with moving schools such as buying uniforms.
- One participant also commented on the negative impact on staff and the stress caused by the proposals.

Comments about school places:

- Participants wanted to know when they should move their children to a new school and whether they should wait for the final cabinet decision. Parents were worried about losing out on places at their preferred schools and being able to find a school that could accommodate siblings, and the impact on children with SEND and those with an EHCP.

- Participants also commented on the impact of the proposals on enrollment at Randal Cremer and concerns about moving children to a school that may be in scope for closure in the future.

Positive comment about existing schools:

- One participant praised the SEND support their child has received at Randal Cremer.

Other:

- One participant asked why academies have been opened while birth rates and enrollment has been declining, and the level of control Hackney Education has over the opening of academies.

Colvestone Primary School

Colvestone Primary School held two workshops, one for staff and one for parents.

1. Staff workshop, 27 June 2023

General statements:

- Staff stated that they should have had the opportunity to meet with Council representatives at an earlier stage.
- Participants also wanted more clarity about the proposals and what a merger would entail: "Is it a physical move to Princess May? There needs to be clarity."
- Participants also made broad statements such as "more needs to be done" and asked that learning be taken from this process, if further closures are proposed.

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants asked about the process for redundancy, pension entitlement, and whether there is scope for pay protection.
- Participants commented on the negative impact of the proposals and potential job loss on staff. One participant stated: "There has been a lack of professional respect."
- One participant also stated that unions had not been in contact with staff.

Comments about school places:

- Participants asked about enrollment data and why more schools have been built if enrollment and birth rates have declined.
- One participant also commented that parents have not been given enough time to look for a new school.

Positive comment about existing schools:

- Participants stated that the quality of education has not gone down at Colvestone and that staff are dedicated to pupils. Participants cautioned that messaging needs to be sensitive to the dedication of staff.
- Participants also alluded to the changes in leadership at Colvestone: "There has been no acknowledgment of the changes we have had."

2. Parent workshop, 27 June, 2023

General statements:

- Participants raised multiple questions about the data behind the proposals, challenging birth rate data in Hackney, asking about the budget for schools in

Hackney and future modelling. Participants stated that requests had been made for financial modelling data and requests were repeated in the session. Participants also stated that Colvestone had higher enrollment than other schools in scope. Participants stated that they had provided information to Cabinet and Hackney Education and felt that their contributions had not been reflected in the previous Cabinet report.

- Participants were critical of the consultation process, asking what the purpose of the consultation was and whether consultation responses would be considered in the decision making process. Participants also asked how local residents were being consulted, stating the belief that residents had not been included in the consultation.
- Participants were dissatisfied with the workshop approach, stating that they were not aware that the workshop had been planned with space for individual conversations. One participant also stated that parents had asked for a SEND specific meeting. Participants also stated that they wanted the opportunity to talk with Councillors.
- Participants asked what information they would need to present to stop the proposals from going ahead.
 - "What do you need to decide not to close the school?"
 - "If we could wipe the deficit out, would we not be in scope?"
- Participants also expressed frustration with communication and the provision of information. One participant stated that they hadn't received a reply to email requests, another participant asked if more information was available.
- One participant commented that other schools have closed across the country.

Comments about school places:

- Participants questioned why free schools and faith schools had not been included in the proposals and asked what Hackney Education will do in regards to faith schools.
- Participants asked whether Colvestone could be a school for pupils with SEND and asked whether SEND children will be provided with alternative places in the borough. One participant stated that as a small school, Colvestone supports their child with SEND.
- Participants stated that the proposals and consultation had a negative effect on enrollment at the schools, one participant stated that it had been a "death sentence because potential parents expect closure." Participants felt that the news prevented the school from improving its enrollment figures.
- Participants also asked whether more schools would be identified for closure, including secondary schools. One participant was concerned about sending their child to a school that could also close.
- Two participants also stated a preference for one form entry.

Positive comment about existing schools:

- Participants commented on the strengths of Colvestone. One parent stated "This school is a safe haven for my child, a mini heaven, comfort zone." Participants commented on the small class size, the environment and lower pollution levels.
- Participants were also positive about joining the Blossom Federation and asked for more time to improve under the federation: "Take us off the list for two years to allow the partnership to take effect."
- Participants also referenced developments in the area, specifically new housing developments.
- One participant also commented that the school has good transport links.

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants stated that they did not want to send their children to Princess May, with two participants stating that their children were scared of going to a new school. One participant was concerned about bullying if their child moved to Princess May.
- Participants also wanted to know when the decision would be made and stated that December 2023 would be too late for a decision.
- One participant commented on the impact on staff, stating that morale was low.
- One participant stated that closing the school would negatively impact the local community.

Nightingale Primary School

4 July 2023

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants were concerned about the negative impact on Nightingale families and stated that better communication was needed throughout the process. This included the need to communicate the benefits of the merger to parents and the details of the proposals. Participants also wanted the school to provide more information to parents. One respondent commented on support for non English speaking parents.
- Participants were concerned about the impact of stress and increases in responsibilities for staff and the headteacher following a merger.
- Participants also warned that the merger will be disruptive and impact Nightingale pupils' education. Participants asked how pupils will be supported and stated that a transition plan should be in place for all children.

Other:

- Participants made other comments related to:
 - Managing the merger: Participants wanted to ensure the merger would be managed for Nightingale and Baden Powell families alike. Some suggested that there should be an induction for new parents or events to help parents to transition. Participants also wanted parents to have information about and set expectations about education.
 - Activities, clubs and trips: Participants wanted to know whether activities and school trips would be available following the merger and commented on the cost of Forest School.
 - Funding: Participants asked whether the merger would provide more funding and whether parents would have a say on how additional funding is used.

Comments about school places:

- Participants also asked a number of questions about the process for selecting schools included in the proposals, including asking about the impact of falling birth rates, demographics, and the number of schools in the area:
 - "Was the birth rate a factor?"
 - "If the birth rate keeps falling, will there be another merger?"
 - "Has Hackney closed schools before?"
 - "Apart from capacity and numbers, which factors did you consider?"
 - "Were space, money, demographics considered?"
 - "Did you look at how many schools there were nearby?"
 - "Are potentially closing /merging schools taking children for 23/24/25?"
 - "Why were parents not directed to schools with low numbers?"

- Participants asked multiple questions about the process of amalgamating Nightingale and De Beauvoir:
 - "Is there a set number of SEND children you can take on?"
 - "How are places allocated?"
 - "Why are closing schools open for 24/25/26 applications?"
 - "Will Baden Powell applicant automatically go to Nightingale?"
 - "Will there be another meeting to tell us the merger is happening?"
 - "Will parents need to apply to other schools apart from Nightingale?"
- Participants also asked whether schools in scope could become academies.

General statements:

- Participants wanted more information on the benefits of the proposed merger with some participants expressing scepticism that there would be any benefits for Nightingale: "We are worried we will not get the benefits of merger."
- Participants asked about the next steps in the process, including the date of the Cabinet meeting following informal consultation and how soon parents would be informed of a Cabinet decision.
- Other participants questioned why falling enrollment had not been addressed earlier.
- One respondent stated that the proposal would go ahead, regardless of comments provided at the workshop.

Princess May

6 July 2023, 11am

There were fewer comments and questions at the Princess May workshop, reflecting a lower turn out of parents. Five questions were asked, primarily around SEND management and funding:

- The school's senior leadership team asked how additional children with EHCPs from Colvestone would be managed alongside children with EHCPs at Princess May and stated that a support plan is "most important for the children that need specialist provision as moving to a mainstream school is a huge transition for these children and their families."
- The team asked about funding, stating that funding is Princess May's main concern and asked if the school could move to a two-form entry to provide additional teachers to support the increased class sizes following a merger. It was emphasised that the financial question and avoiding a deficit is the most serious concern for Princess May.

De Beauvoir Primary School

14 July 2023, 9am

General statements:

- Participants were highly concerned about the use of the school site, if the school closes. This included concern that the school site could be sold and converted to housing or that a free school would be set up. One participant commented on house prices in Hackney.
- Participants stated that the views of children have not been gathered as part of the consultation and engagement process. However, in response the headteacher stated that children's responses had been gathered at the start of the process.
- Participants also asked how their comments would be included in the consultation

- and how information would inform the decision making process.
- Other participants felt that the decision had already been made

Comments about school places:

- Participants asked whether alternative options had been explored, such as merging with De Beauvoir with Princess May. Many participants were concerned about securing a place in a nearby school, stating that some schools in the area have full enrollment. Other participants stated that other schools were not in walking distance or felt that other school options were not suitable, for instance faith schools.
- Participants asked about the criteria for proposing mergers and the data used to select the schools included in the proposals. Questions included:
 - "Who decided which schools would merge?"
 - "What basis was used to decide which schools merge?"
 - "Why were parents not consulted about the schools chosen?"
 - "Do you consider all years when considering which schools to close?"
 - "Do you consider where children live when deciding on closure?"
 - "Have you considered pupil/parent satisfaction?"
- Participants also asked about the impact of the proposals and consultation on enrollments, which the headteacher addressed, stating that 20% of children have already left De Beauvoir.

Negative comment about other schools / process of moving:

- Participants were concerned about the impact on staff, asking whether staff will be supported to find jobs and asking how their mental health has been supported through the process. Participants commented on the role of staff in supporting the children. Other participants praised the support they received from the headteacher, one stated: "Every point I have raised has been dealt with properly by the Head."
- Some participants also commented on the impact on children, stating that moving to an "unwanted" school would affect mental health and children would be exposed to pollution when travelling to school.

Positive comment about existing schools:

- Participants stated that the school is a historic building and has existed for a long time. Participants asked why closing a newer school had not been considered.
- One parent stated that "the school has done a lot for my child."

6. Annex B: Summary of informal consultation findings, prepared by Kwest (Appendix P, Briefing Report, Informal Consultation)

Main Report – Final

Prepared August 2023

Hackney Council

Consultation On Amalgamation Or Closure Of
Six Hackney Primary Schools



**Kwest
Research**

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Appendix 1 - Report from the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Appendix 2 - Copy of the Questionnaire Used in the Consultation

1. Introduction & Background

During June and July 2023, Hackney Council undertook an informal consultation on the following proposals:

- Closure of De Beauvoir Primary in September 2024
- Closure of Randal Cremer Primary in September 2024
- Amalgamation of Colvestone Primary and Princess May Primary, onto the Princess May site, in September 2024
- Amalgamation of Baden Powell Primary and Nightingale Primary, onto the Nightingale site, in September 2024

The consultation ran for six weeks between 5th June and 16th July 2023 and aimed to gather feedback on the proposals, not just from parents and staff of the schools in scope, but also from wider categories of stakeholders that may be impacted by the decisions.

The consultation was hosted on Hackney's Citizen Space and was open to residents and stakeholders across the borough. A copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix two.¹

In addition, paper consultations and questionnaires were sent to the following numbers of staff and parents at each affected school:

- Randal Cremer - 400
- De Beauvoir - 250
- Baden Powell - 300
- Nightingale - 350
- Colvestone - 300
- Princess May – 350

In June 2023, Hackney Council commissioned Kwest Research to analyse and report on the results of individual paper and online forms returned during consultations on the proposals.

Additional responses to the consultation, not submitted through the consultation form are being collated by Hackney Council in a separate report and will be added, by the Council, as an appendix to this report. Similarly, responses and comments shared during consultation events will also be included in Hackney Council's report.

1.1 Response Rates

At the end of the consultation period, a total of 613 postal and online questionnaires had been received, three-quarters of which were commenting on the proposed amalgamation of Colvestone Primary with Princess May.

¹ <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-amalgamation-closure/>

The following table shows the number of responses to each proposal that were received by the time the consultation closed on 16th July 2023.

Proposal	Number of online replies	Number of paper forms	Total responses
Closure of De Beauvoir	117	37	154
Closure of Randal Cremer	98	8	106
Amalgamation of Colvestone with Princess May	400	63	463
Amalgamation of Baden Powell with Nightingale	116	41	157

Table 1 Number of responses per proposal

Some of the online questionnaires contained a paragraph of identical comments so a review of the IP addresses used to complete the forms was conducted to check for the likelihood of multiple submissions from the same source. The vast majority of online forms (403/467) were found to come from a unique IP address. There were three IP addresses where four forms in each case were submitted, one with three forms and 25 where two forms were submitted.

The source of these identical comments has been identified as the Save Colvestone Primary School website. This contains a link called “council consultation tips” which leads to a list of points that can be used when responding to the survey. ²

² <https://www.savecolvestone.com/council-consultation>

2. Overview Of Response To The Proposals

The proposals are universally unpopular, with 89% of respondents reporting that they disagree and 8% that they agree.

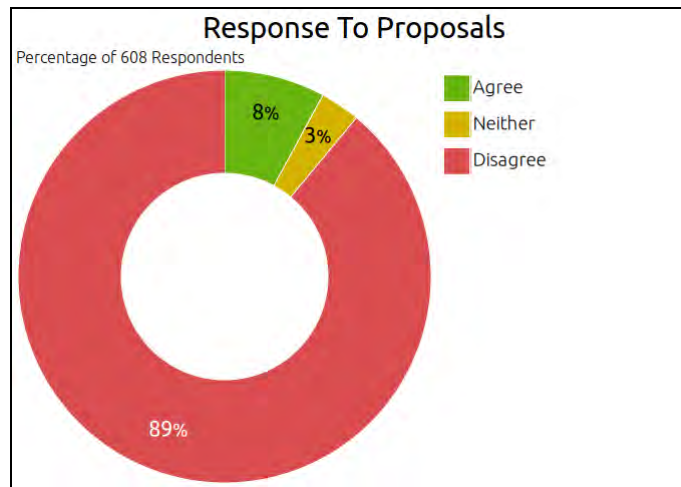


Figure 2.1

A breakdown of the results for each proposal is shown below.

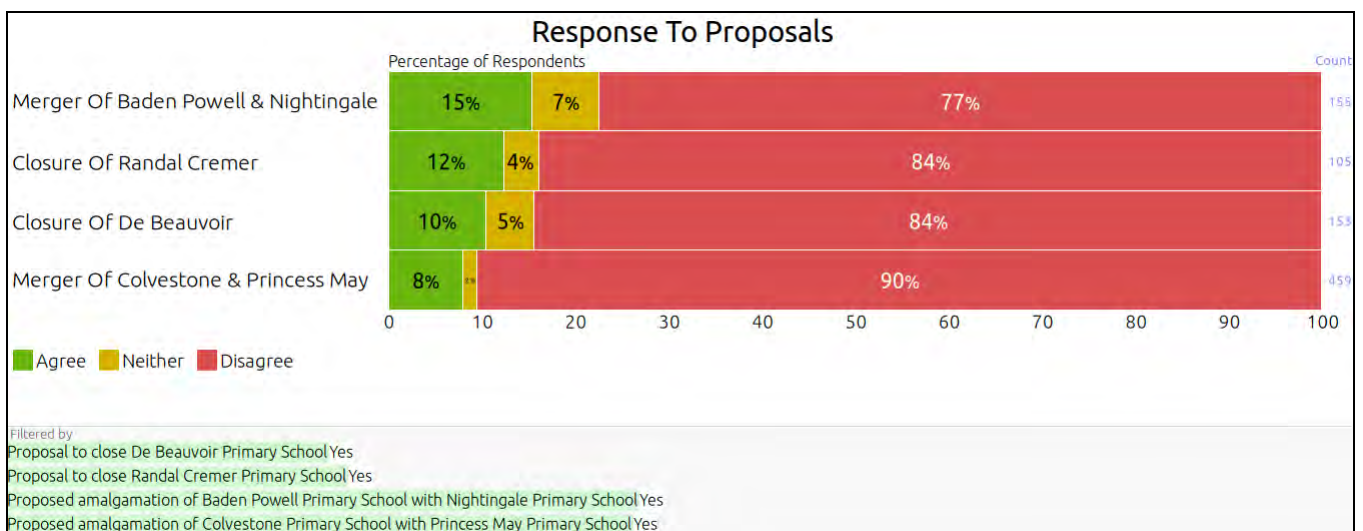


Figure 2.2

The graph below shows the results from the different respondent groups to the consultation. This is shown at an overall level due to the small number of responses in each group when broken down by proposal. It should be noted there were only 19 responses from staff or governors at schools included in the proposals and only 12 from those at another school in Hackney. Therefore, when looking at the percentage of these respondents who agree/disagree with the proposals the accuracy of the data is extremely poor.

Response To Proposals By Reason For Interested In Consultation

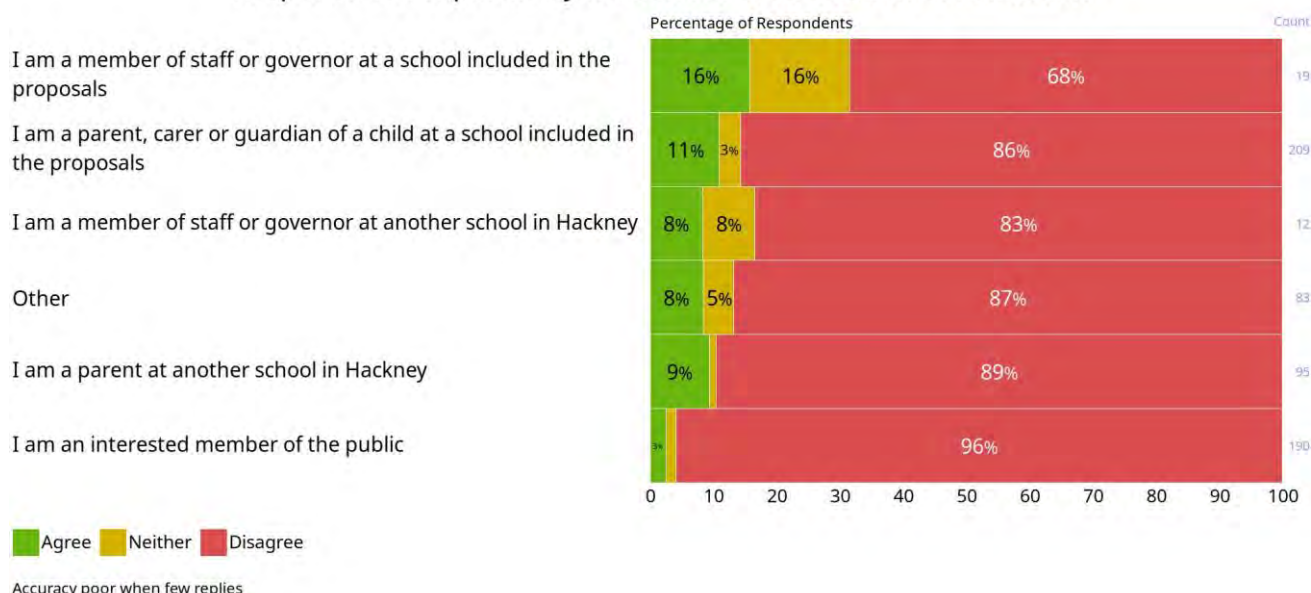


Figure 2.3

2.1 Strategic Themes In The Consultation Feedback

The consultation feedback received is wide ranging, including many testimonials from parents in support of their current school. The key themes in the comments are discussed in more detail in the sections on each individual proposal.

Some of the feedback received was more strategic in nature, offering alternative approaches to the issue of falling rolls and/or suggestions on how to move forwards, and the key points from these comments are discussed below.

Use Existing Schools To Address Borough-Wide Shortage Of SEND Places

A number of SEND professionals responded to the consultation making the case for keeping one or more of the schools open and working with them to expand the SEND provision on their sites. The feedback encourages decision makers to consult further with the EHCP and wider SEND team, as well as the Re-Integration Unit, with a view to building and expanding on the good practice of SEND provision in a mainstream setting that already exists in Randal Cremer, De Beauvoir and Colvestone. In addition, De Beauvoir and Colvestone receive extensive praise from parents of pupils with SEND who chose these schools due to their small size and worry about whether their children will be able to cope in larger schools.

More Mergers Instead Of Closures

Some respondents have asked why the Council is considering school closures, rather than mergers, since this would ensure friendship groups could stay together and potentially allow some staff to transfer alongside them, thus making the process slightly less difficult for children and parents.

Some respondents consider De Beauvoir and Colvestone to be schools with a similar ethos, and as they are located half a mile apart, several respondents suggest this would be a more suitable merger than Colvestone and Princess May.

Many respondents say they chose their children's existing school specifically because it was single form entry.

Future Use Of School Buildings

Respondents comment that some of the schools are listed buildings which are over 100 years old. A Buildings and Heritage Conservator responding to the consultation points out the fragility of listed buildings when left unoccupied. As an original Birkbeck school, Colvestone Primary is believed by some respondents to have a restrictive covenant meaning it can only be used for educational purposes.

There is a perception amongst respondents that the buildings are likely to be sold off for development, into further unaffordable housing, increasing the perceived "gentrification" of Hackney.

One respondent to the consultation states that they work in "child-friendly urban planning and design", advising cities across the world. Their comments are shown below.

Falling school roles and forced school closures can be an indicator of systematic problems making cities hostile to families and children. Hackney and London are not alone in this struggle and there are innovative and valuable examples to learn from in the international context especially around municipalities and councils retaining real estate even if schools close, to be repurposed to generate income for the municipality and also to be held for use in the event that populations swing upwards in the future.

The loss of the existing schools and school communities is challenging and emotional for all involved. The loss of these buildings forever I believe could be a strategic error on the part of the councils, which will have further negative impacts on the viability of cities for children and families in the short, medium and long term.

A respondent from the Orthodox Jewish Community makes the point that Charedi schools in Stamford Hill are oversubscribed. Referring specifically to Baden Powell primary school, they suggest:

Given these circumstances and considering the proximity of this site to the Stamford Hill Jewish community. I request that the council explore the possibility of leasing or selling the school premises to one of the Jewish schools in the area as part of this consultation process. This would alleviate some of the overcrowding issues faced by the Charedi schools and help accommodate the increasing number of students more effectively.

Impact Of Extended Consultation Process On Trust & Confidence In The Council

Many respondents to the Schools Consultation suggest the decision to close or merge these schools has already been made. There are concerns among respondents about the process exacerbating the sense of disempowerment amongst communities already feeling marginalised and neglected in local planning decisions taken as part of the perceived 'gentrification' of Hackney.

There are questions raised in respondents' comments about the data being used and the lack of answers provided by Hackney Education. Respondents express frustration at being "refused all meetings" with officials in charge of the process, about the lack of data and financial modelling provided, and the lack of Council engagement with the local community.

The following comment encapsulates the feelings expressed by these respondents.

*There's no point me reiterating all the many reasons why closing Colvestone is a bad idea because I don't think you're really listening anyway. But I will tell you this. My daughter, a student at Colvestone, was getting frustrated when I dragged her to yet another meeting related to trying to get the Council to listen to our arguments. She told me making all this effort to engage with the Council was a waste of my time and hers because no matter what we do the Council was going to close the school anyway. She's *** years old. At such a young age she is already cynical, already has no faith in democratic institutions and processes. She still believes in unicorns, but she doesn't believe in you. This is the lesson you are teaching hundreds of children across the borough, that elected officials lie, that democratic processes are phoney, that engagement is fruitless and that they are powerless. So when they grow up and they don't want to vote or get involved with local government or when they turn to more extreme means to respond to societal problems you can know that you helped contribute their sense of hopelessness.*

3. Response To The Proposal To Close De Beauvoir Primary

At the start of the consultation period, 250 forms were given out to parents and staff at De Beauvoir primary school, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 154 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close the school.

32% of respondents are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 27% are interested members of the public, 21% are parents at another school in Hackney and 6% are staff or governors at the school.

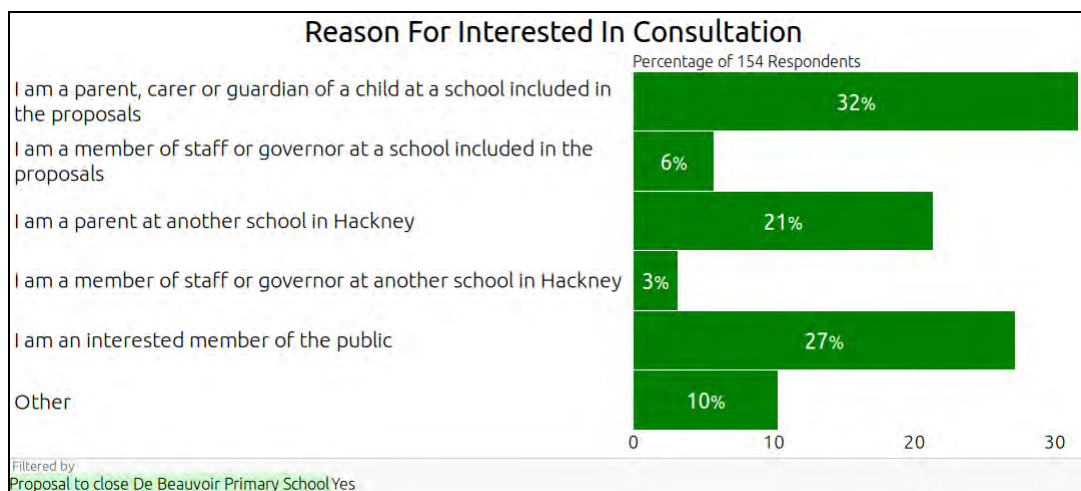


Figure 3.1

Overall, 10% of respondents agree with the proposal to close De Beauvoir, whilst 84% disagree.

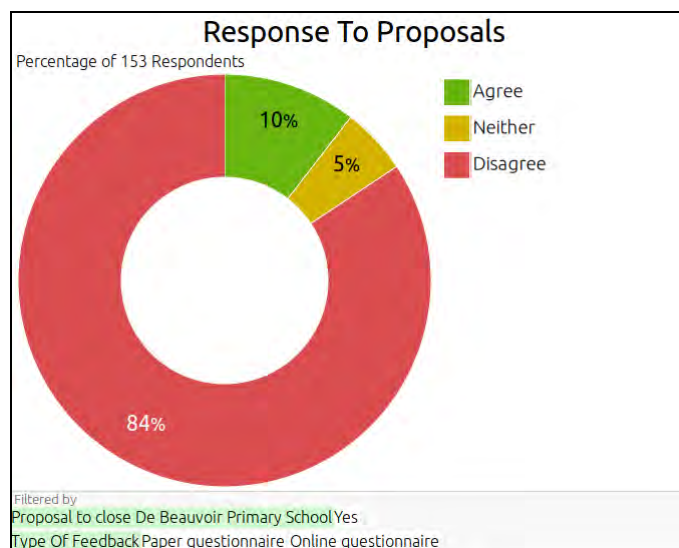


Figure 3.2

6% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 12% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the small numbers of respondents.

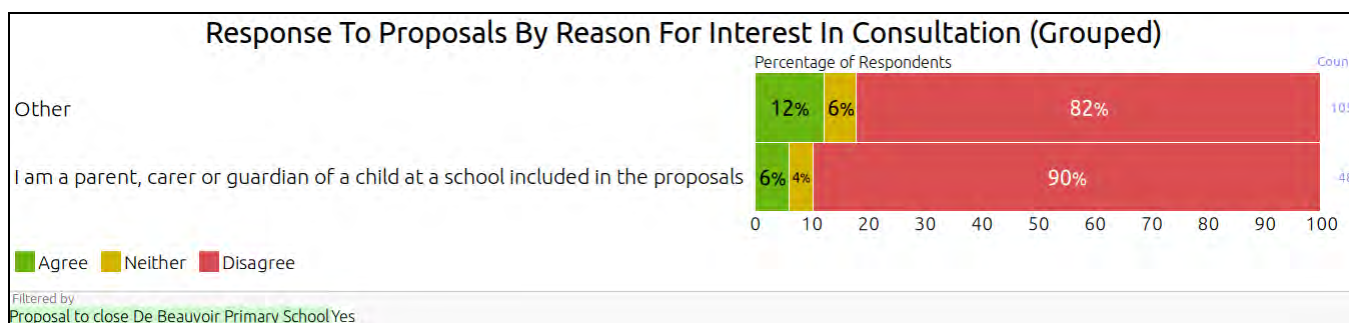


Figure 3.3

3.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Close De Beauvoir

Respondents were able to comment on the proposals and the feedback received has been classified into a number of broad themes. 43% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 26% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 24% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 23% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

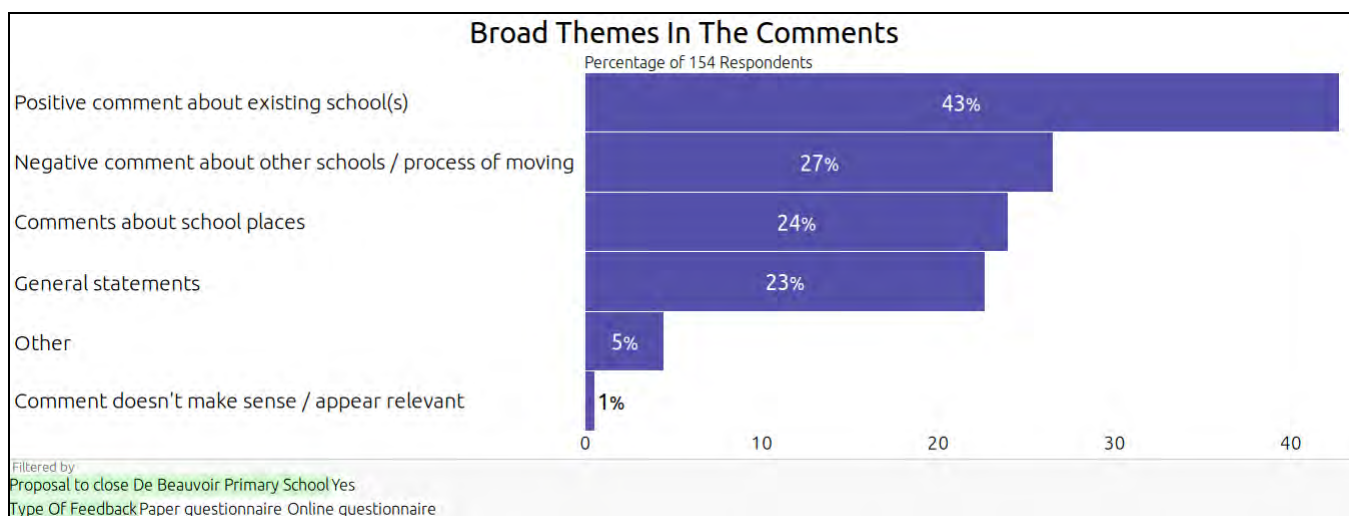


Figure 3.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes, which are shown in the graph below and discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

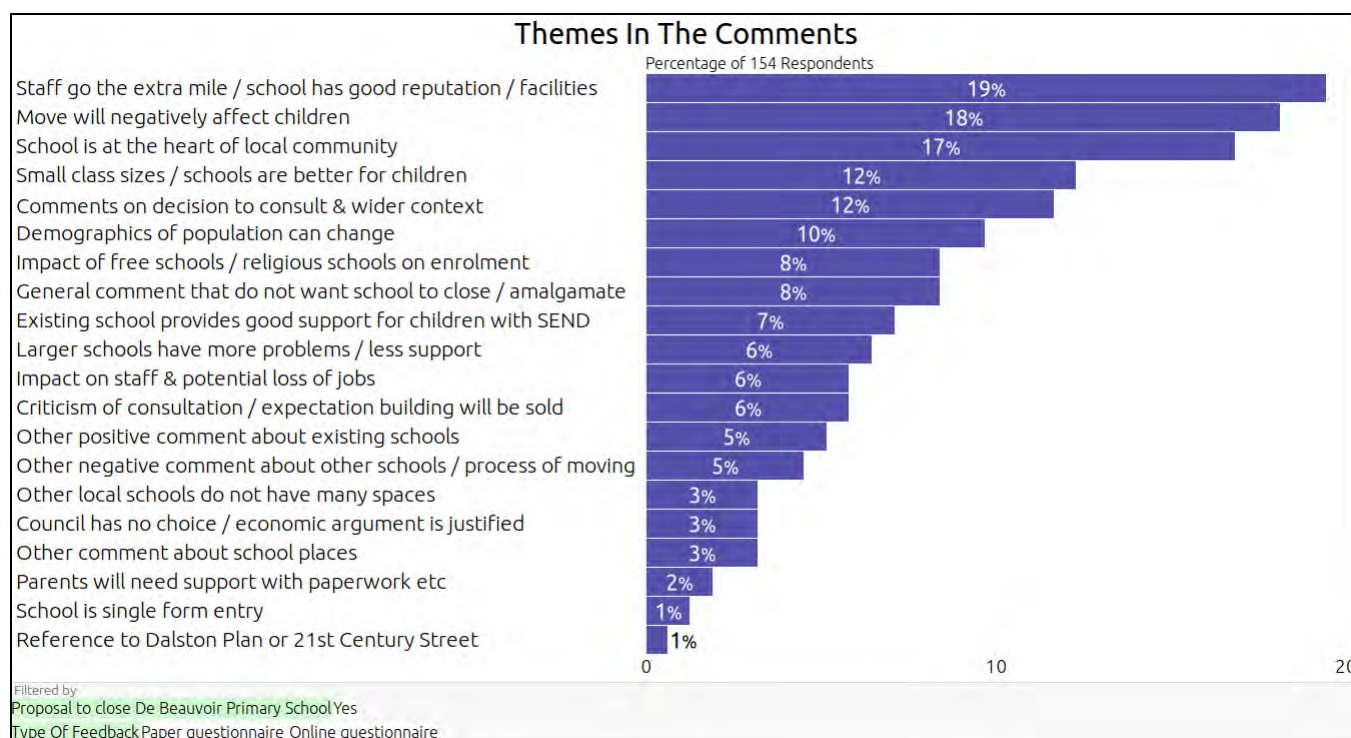


Figure 3.5

3.2 Positive Feedback About De Beauvoir

19% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

17% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

12% think that small class sizes are better for children

Some specific points raised by respondents in their comments include the following:

- The latest OFSTED inspection (2022) is cited by respondents, one of whom points out that this rated De Beauvoir as 'Good with Outstanding Features', despite approximately 65% of children being in receipt of pupil premium and a similar proportion living in homes where English is not the first language.
- The school is currently believed by respondents to be operating with a surplus budget.
- A high proportion of children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) attend the school (one respondent puts the figure at 35%). Concern was expressed, by several respondents, about the lack of specialist places for such children in the borough. A health and social care professional responding to the consultation urges the Council to consider the loss of this resource to the community, scope the SEND work the school is currently providing and carefully consider how these needs would be met in other settings. They consider De Beauvoir to be a model of good practice and excellence in this regard.
- Alternatives to closure were also suggested by respondents, including amalgamating with one of the other schools in the consultation.

The comments also include many testimonials from parents about how they and their children love the school and feel well supported by staff. A selection of this feedback is shown below.

Four of my children have attended this school. [Name] and the teachers and staff at this school have been extremely supportive when I have had health and personal issues. My children love coming to this school and are devastated about the possible closure. This school is one big, supportive family. It is not just bricks and mortar. I highly doubt that I will have this support from another school.

The staff are caring and nurturing and have successfully adapted teaching and learning styles to suit all types of learners. As a parent who is unable to drop off and pick up my child regularly, I have been able to reach out to staff whenever needed, including sending late night emails which have received instant replies. During the Covid 19 lockdowns, the school was quite quick in implementing online learning which many private schools still have not been able to implement.

*My children are at the school and have learning disabilities and struggle with transitions who is to support them or me, I have my own health I have ***, ***, ***. Who will support me with a new setting for my children? De Beauvoir was a decision I made thoroughly I put a lot of thought into choosing a school for my boys and now it's closing. I will keep them in there until the last day and probably won't get them back into a school until something magical happens and a school pops up like De Beauvoir small, intimate, family friendly environment, everyone knows everyone, everyone feels safe.*

3.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

18% think the move will negatively affect children

6% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

6% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments are shown below:

- Respondents believe that walking to school is encouraged by the Council. However, if De Beauvoir closes and parents want to keep their children in local authority maintained schools, respondents fear there may be insufficient places to allow children to walk to school. The only nearby non-voluntary primary school not proposed to close is Princess May, and it is mentioned by respondents that this is also included in the consultation process and so may not be attractive to parents.
- Respondents make a comparison between one of the nearby free schools, Hackney New, which does not have a playground, and De Beauvoir, which has ample outdoor space and is on a quiet side street with no through traffic.
- Concern was also raised by respondents about the potential impact on local traffic flows as they feel that large schools in busy urban areas can be overwhelming for residents at pick up and drop off times.
- Staff members taking part in the consultation report a deterioration in their own well-being as they try to help children manage their anxiety.

Some parents and school staff submitted anecdotal evidence of how their children have been or will be negatively affected by the move. A selection of this feedback is shown below.

Moving [my son] will make him feel alienated and in a completely new environment and I know this will affect his mental wellbeing as it will be difficult to handle this change and will be a completely new academic curriculum which will in turn worsen his grades.

*Since this proposal has come to light, my eldest [child] has been feeling very anxious and upset as some of * friends have left during this process.*

Uprooting all these kids in the middle of a key development phase will not only cause distress to the child, but add more financial pressure onto each parent from having to buy new uniforms for their children and additional travel costs, which in this day and age is one more nail in the coffin

I have direct access to children crying and emotionally drained as their peers leave for another school one by one. I have direct access to children as young as 4 only having 1 day to process that it would be their last day with their friends and favourite teachers; as parents frantically do in-year applications. I have direct access to parents who struggle with the English language asking for support and guidance on how to do transfer applications.

*My wellbeing is deteriorating as I have to constantly readjust and support my children as their friends leave randomly week by week. The anxiety in my class of *** year olds is completely unfair and out of their control*

3.4 Comments About School Places

10% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

8% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

3% believe that other local schools do not have many places

3% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

Examples of specific points raised by respondents in their comments include:

- There is confusion amongst some respondents about why there is now a surfeit of primary school places when permission was given recently for Hackney New Primary school, in De Beauvoir's catchment area.
- Respondents consider it unfair that free schools, academies and faith schools cannot be included in action taken by the Council to address falling rolls. There are questions in the feedback about the rationale behind closing and amalgamating so many local schools, whilst leaving the voluntary sector out of the equation, particularly when any future new schools in the borough would have to be free schools.

- Other local schools are believed to be mostly full already following the proposals being publicised. One respondent makes reference to a government website that they say shows many local schools, particularly those to the south of Dalston Lane, have been largely unaffected by the fall in pupil numbers, with some having as little as 2% of spaces free, despite an overall maximum pupil number of 500+.
- Respondents comment that some children at De Beauvoir are resident in Islington and may have a preference for relocating to an Islington school, where they believe they will have no priority in terms of waiting lists.
- There is doubt amongst respondents about the evidence for the predicted decline in demand for school places. Brexit, covid and cost of living, all cited as possible influences, are perceived as recent events, whose longer term impact may still be unknown.

Some examples of the comments received on these topics are given below.

Hackney council have told parents that De Beauvoir school should close because pupil numbers are falling and will continue to do so in the future. The council cited three driving factors; Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis; all of which were pushing families out of London. [...] Brexit, covid and the cost of living crisis are all recent events. Although they have had an impact on pupil numbers recently, there is no evidence that these trends will continue in the long term. In fact shortly before these events, pupil numbers in Hackney had been rising.

A school does not go from being oversubscribed in several year groups 6 or 7 years ago meaning my children had to wait until nearly the end of the school year for a place, to virtually empty now in comparison, as has happened with De Beauvoir. When this has happened elsewhere it has taken decades. I do feel like the council have somehow pursued an internal unwritten policy of diverting potential pupils whether they are reception age or in year admissions for older year groups, away from De Beauvoir and into other neighbouring schools, to keep pupil numbers up at the other schools so they don't have to consider closing more schools and the council admitted at a parent's meeting that they have no power to close free or academy schools and religious schools, so siphoning children into those schools saves the headache of trying to reason with those schools to close of their own accord.

There is low public confidence in the data interpretation. Many parents are sceptical, and cite examples such as the closure and reopening of Hackney schools previously.

Whilst the school has had a falling roll for a number of years, the opening of Hackney Free School severely impacted the number of children applying. When the area was already suffering with many unfilled Reception places, Hackney's decision to allow an additional Free School to be built is baffling. The closure of De Beauvoir, we believe, is related to this decision and seeing as the school has recently achieved a good Ofsted, the timing of the proposed closure is devastating for everyone involved.

I'm worried about the pressure the closure of De Beauvoir Primary will put on other schools in the area. Our most local school (Hackney New) has no outside space so it is important to us to have other options with outside space when our son starts reception in Sept 2025. We're worried if De Beauvoir Primary closes that not only takes that option away but possibly others as the other schools will be full with children who would have gone there.

3.5 General Feedback

12% commented about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

8% just said they do not want the school to close, with little additional detail

6% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some specific points raised in the feedback from respondents around these topics include:

- There are questions in the feedback about the slow response to the problem of falling rolls and the pressure this has placed on schools. Respondents believe that other local authorities took action sooner to address the issue.
- The feedback suggests many parents feel they are not being listened to, that the Council has already given up and the outcome of the consultation is a foregone conclusion. There are references to the ‘gentrification’ of Hackney as well as other council consultations where the proposals have subsequently been adopted despite a majority expressing disagreement.
- There are concerns in the comments about the perceived lack of answers from the Council to questions raised during meetings about the proposals. Additionally, there are reports of low public confidence in the data being used to inform decisions.

Examples of comments around these issues are shown below.

I do wonder if filling this form is merely a process with no clear facts that it would be read and understood. This is because I cannot believe we are even at this stage considering the comments and issues raised at the first stage and the lack of answers and explanations provided by Hackney Council.

Hackney in general pushes people out the borough through, for example, their own housing schemes, increase in rental properties, lack of initiative to encourage people to come and live in the borough, road closures where many consultation processes showed more voted "no" to closure than "yes" but they still proceeded. They have not factored in their own conduct as a borough into this decision.

There are few spaces for children and young people. The school is a much valued community resource for families. I'd argue that the tokenistic closure consultation process has served to further disempower local residents who perhaps already feel marginalised and neglected in local planning decisions. The decision of the council to close the school will have a social impact beyond the disruption of those children who are currently being educated.

I think it would be wise for a third party to check the data informing the school closure policy. There is low public confidence in the data interpretation. Many parents are sceptical, and cite examples such as the closure and reopening of Hackney schools previously

I understand the rationale for the consultation for the closure of schools in Hackney. My concern is the length of time it has taken the Local Authority to address the problem of falling rolls - it has been clear London, including Hackney, was likely to be put into a difficult position. Other LAs adjacent to Hackney acted sooner.

4. Response to Proposals To Close Randal Cremer Primary

At the start of the consultation period, 400 forms were given out to parents and staff at Randal Cremer primary school, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 106 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close the school.

35% of respondents are interested members of the public, 25% are parents at another school in Hackney, 17% are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school included in the proposals, 6% are a member of staff or governor at another school in Hackney and 3% are staff or governors at the school.

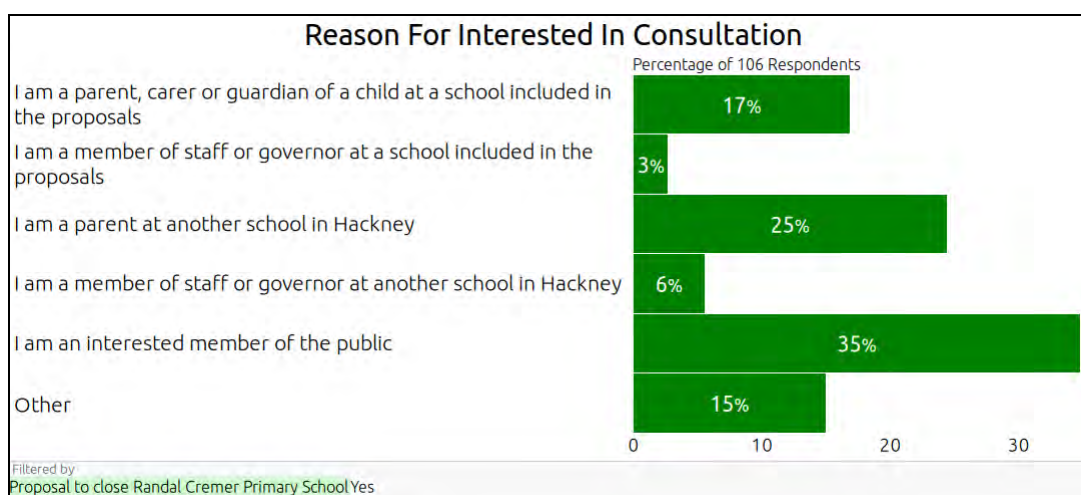


Figure 4.1

Overall, 12% of respondents agree with the proposal to close Randal Cremer, whilst 84% disagree.

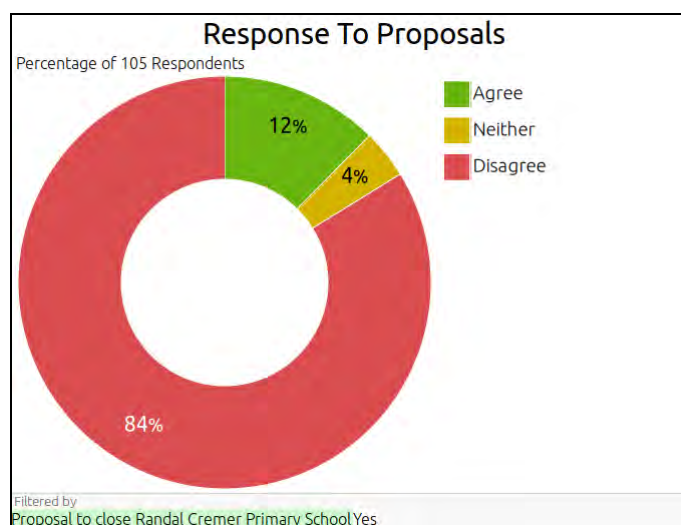


Figure 4.2

6% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 14% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the very small numbers of respondents.

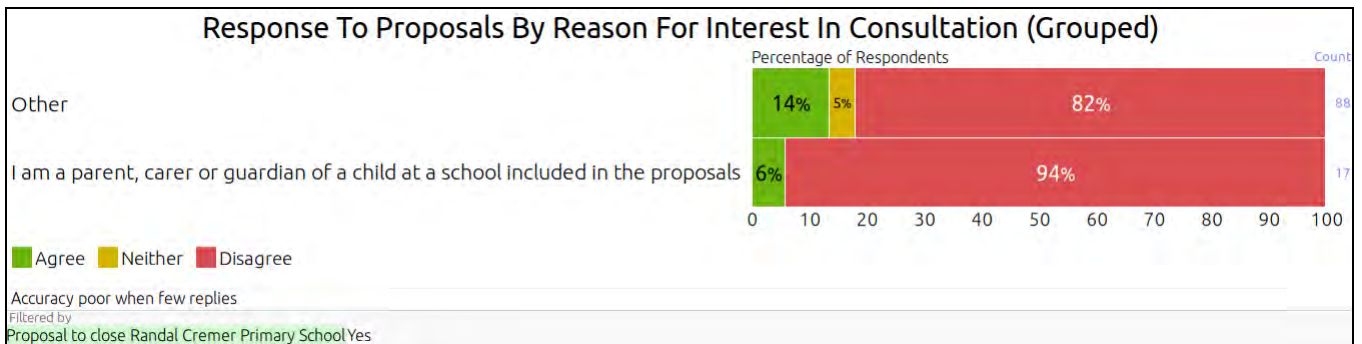


Figure 4.3

4.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Close Randal Cremer

32% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 25% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 22% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 18% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

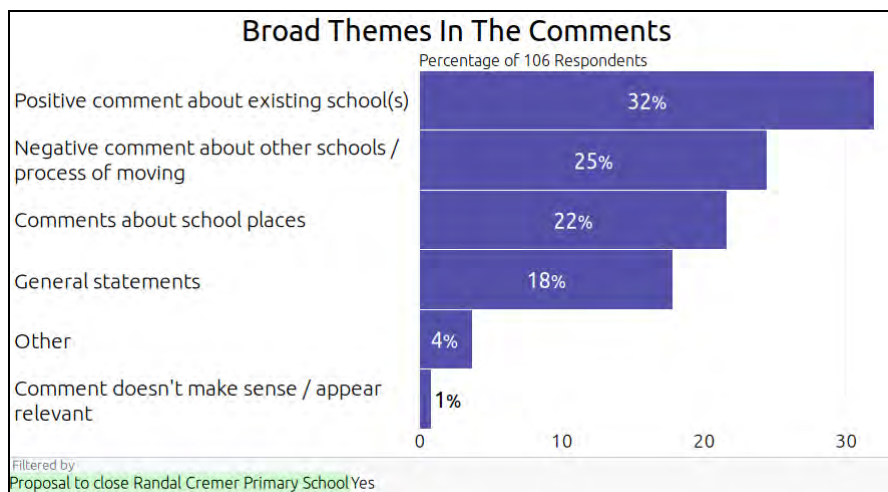


Figure 4.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

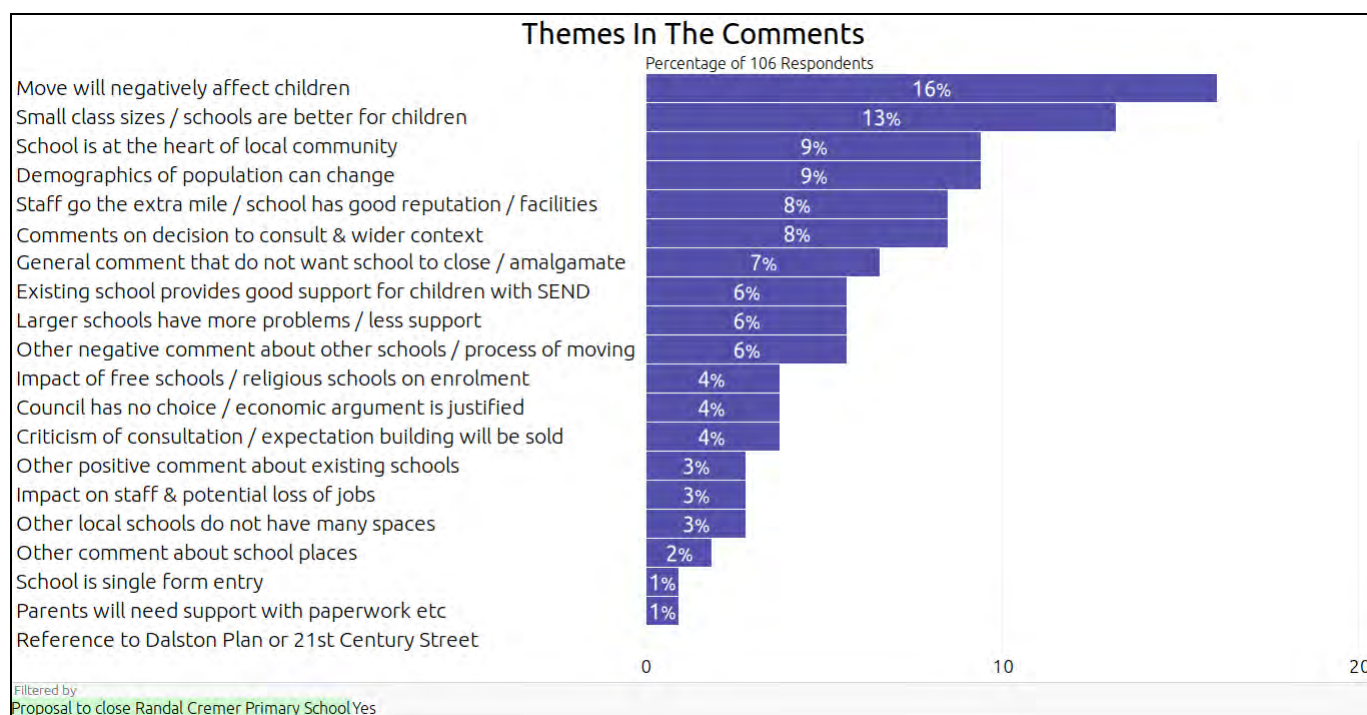


Figure 4.5

4.2 Positive Feedback About Randal Cremer

13% think that small class sizes are better for children

9% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

8% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments include the following:

- An Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team has responded to the consultation to raise concerns about the closure from a SEND perspective.
- Randal Cremer is also seen as a hub for refugee families as well as other minority groups.
- Additionally, the school is described by respondents as being somewhere that accepts those who have been excluded from other schools.
- Alternatives to closure were also suggested by respondents, including amalgamating with one of the other schools in the consultation.

The Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team highlights the very significant challenges the borough faces with the inclusion of such pupils in mainstream settings. With specialist settings and ARPs full, and more requests for placements than space available, “an extraordinary amount” is spent on out of borough independent provision.

Due to the inclusive, nurturing environment at Randal Cremer, the respondent feels that the children with SEND are less on the local authority's radar because their needs are being met, whereas this is likely to change if these children are required to move to a larger, less inclusive environment. There are concerns that these children may then require more costly specialist settings. The respondent expresses concern that "the proposal has not sufficiently considered both the distress and cost implications of closing our most inclusive primary schools". This could be avoided by working with Randal Cremer to expand on its current SEND provision. The respondent encourages decision makers to consult more widely with the ECHP, wider SEND Team and the Re-integration Unit.

Randal Cremer is also perceived to be a hub for refugee families. A respondent cites the latest Ofsted report, which confirms that pupils who do not speak English as a first language are well supported, helped by the partnerships the staff have formed with their families. There are concerns expressed by respondents about what will happen to these children if the school closes.

A selection of the positive comments about the school is shown below.

Randal Cremer is the only school in the borough that will take pupils who have been excluded from other schools. It provides absolutely essential services for pupils who are our most vulnerable, and they have been directly impacted by the Hackney New School opening nearby - but this school won't address the needs of the very disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils served by Randal Cremer.

They are a fantastic support for children with SEN and other needs. They have also been a hub for Refugee families and other minority groups within the area. The loss of this school will be an incredible blow to an already marginalised community with no thought to where these families will be sent across the borough.

I feel that Randal Cremer is a strong community school which works well with marginalised families and children with high levels of SEND - perhaps it would be of great benefit to offer more funding to increase and extend this work.

4.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

16% think the move will negatively affect children

6% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

3% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

The feedback collected in the consultation includes testimonials from parents about the negative impact the situation is having on their children.

Everyone in the school is stressing about this proposal. I have two special needs kids. You are not thinking about us at all. Kids are struggling

*I have had to move *** of my children to a different school and leave *** at Randal Cremer until they go to Secondary school. This is not because I wanted to or because it is a bad school but because I had to give my kids some stability in the situation that Hackney Council have created. There are children still at Randal Cremer seeing their friends leave because their parents, like me, want to give them stability. I have no faith that Hackney can meet their promises of supporting parents to find appropriate places. Moreover, I have seen the staff at Randal Cremer lose heart and although they are all doing amazingly to support the children, who is supporting them? They are about to lose community that can't be replaced and jobs that are hard to find elsewhere. To top it off, [teacher] is visibly heartbroken each week to see more kids leave. And then there are many kids left with SEN, who have no easy way to stay or move to somewhere else as places are so limited.*

Not enough thought has been given to the long distances children will have to travel, what will happen to the vulnerable children who rely on Randal Cremer and the divide that is opening up between schools serving middle class pupils and those from working class families.

4.4 Comments About School Places

9% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

4% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

4% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

3% believe that other local schools do not have many places

A selection of the comments on this topic is shown below.

Birth rates and population rates rise and fall. What evidence does the council have that birth rates and population of Hackney will continue to decline? History says this is unlikely to be the case as dips in birth rates often follow a rise.

These are public local authority schools. Once closed, because of government policy, they can only reopen as academies, which are secretive schools outside democratic control. Many problems have recently come to light in Hackney academies. Working class and black students are less likely to thrive.

Unfortunately these schools have falling numbers of children attending. No fault of the schools - a problem across London. But the way schools are funded, it's unfair to disproportionately spend money on these few children when this money could be spread out amongst all Hackney schools.

4.5 General Feedback

8% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

7% just said they do not want the school to close, with little additional detail

4% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some specific points raised in the feedback from respondents around these issues are:

- Many parents feel that the decision has already been made and the outcome of the consultation is a foregone conclusion.
- There are references in the comments collected during the consultation to the ‘gentrification’ of Hackney and concerns that long-standing council policies have created the current situation.
- Respondents suspect that the land will be sold to developers.

Some of the comments illustrating these points are shown below.

The closure of schools in Hackney seems to be a foregone conclusion. We found out about it earlier this year but I feel this has been years in the making, especially given the council’s gentrification of Hackney in recent years.

This is not a consultation process. The decision has already been made. There seems to be no opportunity to amalgamate. Parents and staff have not been given adequate notice. It is opportunistic as undoubtedly the building will be sold to developers to turn into private housing for large amounts of money. Children will have to attend new schools, siblings may have to attend different schools, which amalgamation would have avoided.

5. Response To Proposals To Merge Colvestone & Princess May Primaries

At the start of the consultation period, 300 forms were given out to parents and staff at Colvestone primary school and 350 to those at Princess May, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties.

In total, 463 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to close Colvestone and merge with Princess May.

Colvestone parents have created a website setting out their “case for Colvestone” with a link to the consultation and tips for what to say in response. Many comments received in response to the proposals appear to have been copied and pasted from the website.

40% of respondents are interested members of the public, 21% are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 19% are parents at another school in Hackney and 1% are staff or governors at the school.

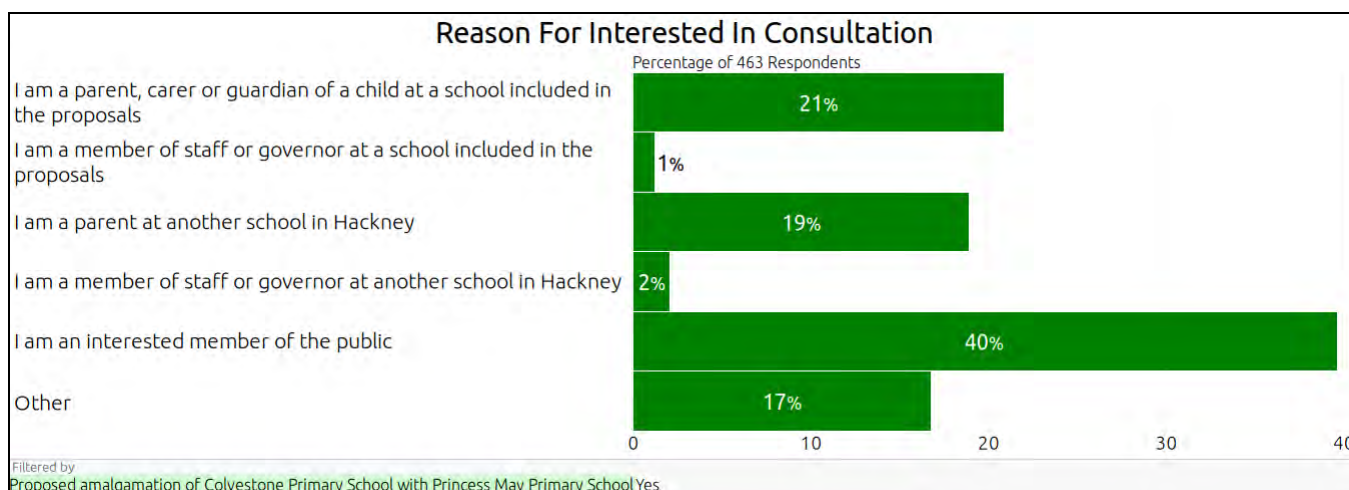


Figure 5.1

5.1 Response To Proposals

Overall, 8% of respondents agree with the proposal to merge Colvestone and Princess May, whilst 90% disagree.

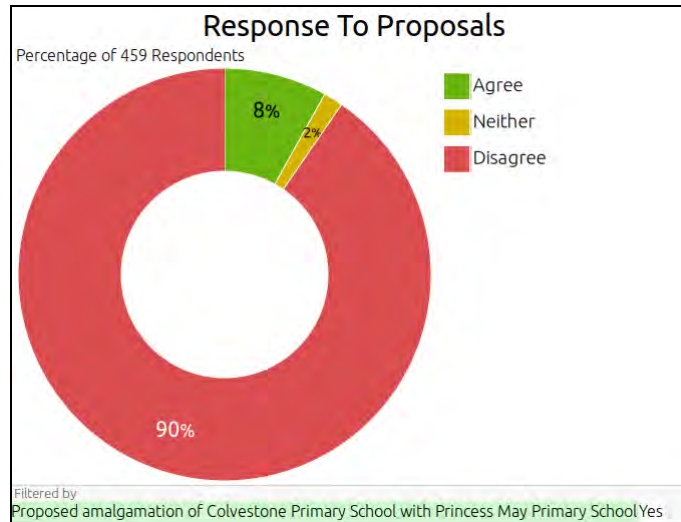


Figure 5.2

Due to the larger number of responses to the Colvestone consultation compared to the other proposals, it is possible to break results down in more detail by 'reason for interest in the consultation'.

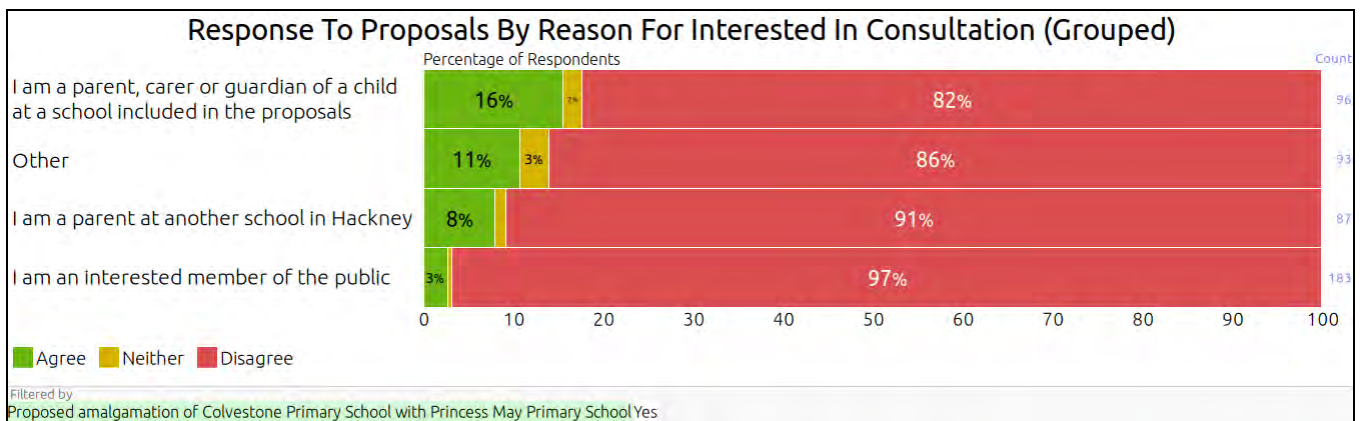


Figure 5.3

5.2 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Merge Colvestone & Princess May

58% of respondents gave positive feedback about the school, whilst 24% made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving. 26% gave broader feedback about school places in general and 19% discussed the wider context of the consultation.

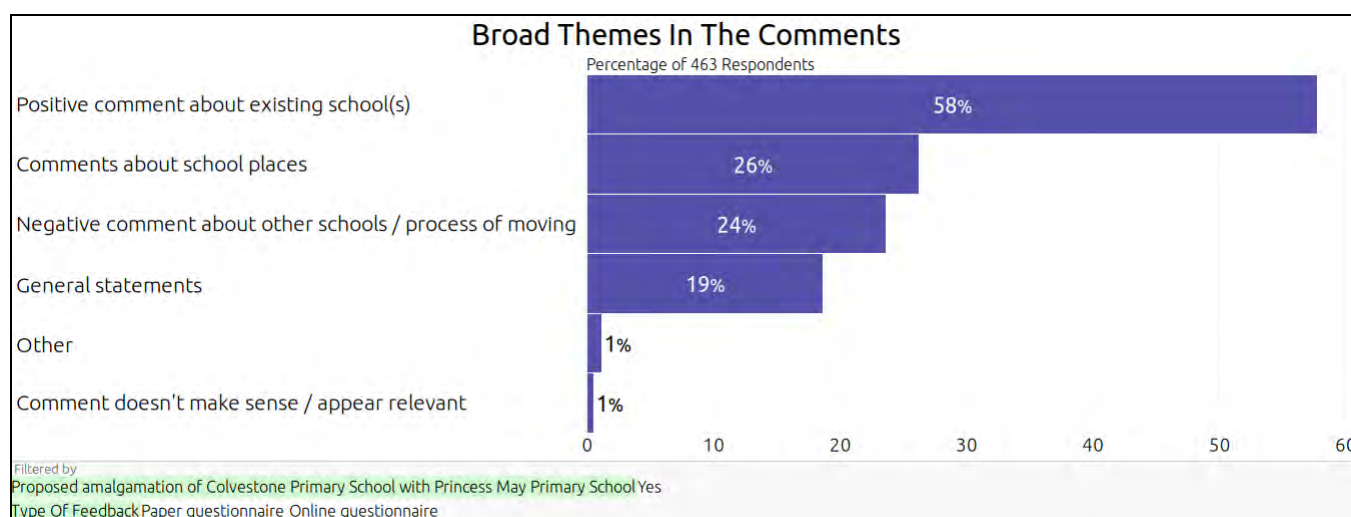


Figure 5.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

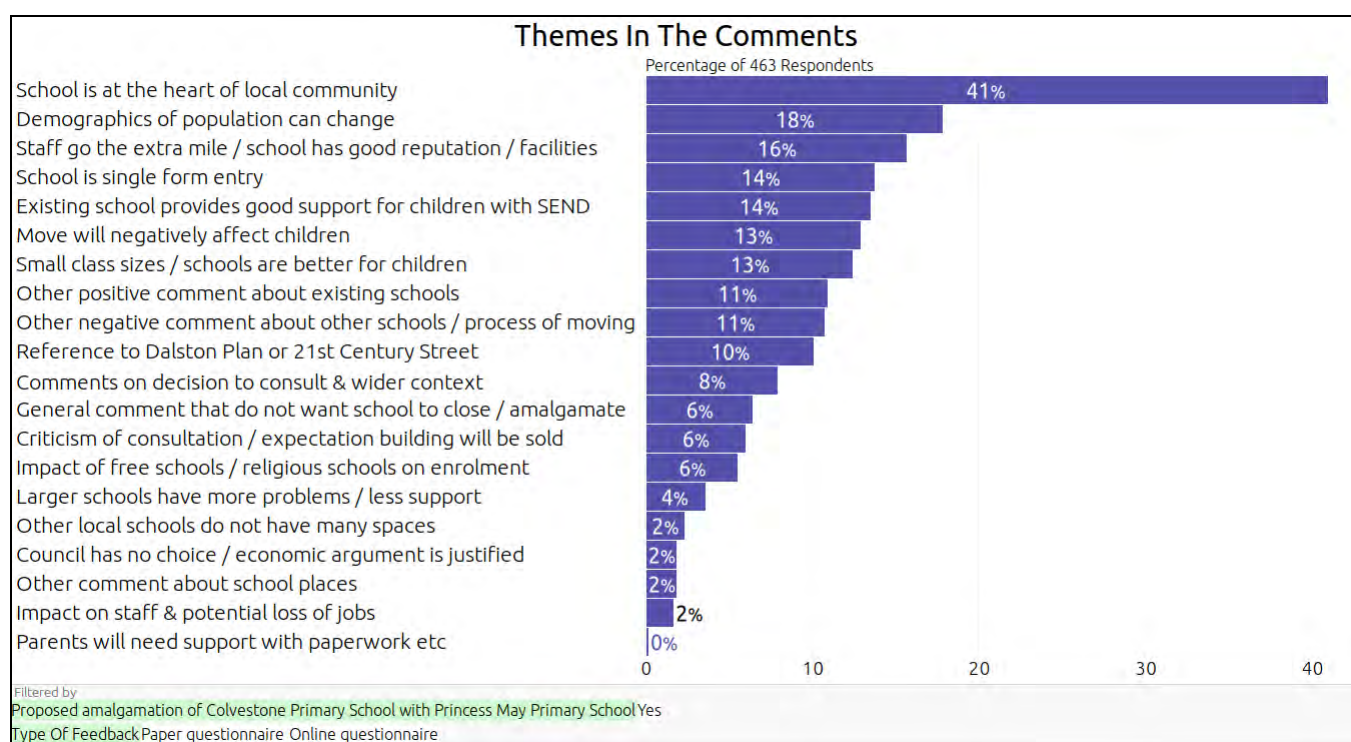


Figure 5.5

5.3 Positive Feedback About Colvestone

41% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

16% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

14% mention that the school is single form entry

14% feel the school provides good support for children with SEND

Some specific points raised by respondents in these comments include the following:

- 10% of respondents mention the Dalston Plan and/or the 21st Century Street that is to be created in Colvestone Crescent, the area around the school.
- The comments suggest that the school has strong links with the local community. Traders in Ridley Road market responded to the consultation expressing concern about the reduction in footfall as the parents and children of the school are currently regular customers.
- Respondents state that 7% of Colvestone students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), well above the 4.3% average across the borough. In addition, a number of SEND and Inclusion professionals responding to the consultation express concern about the merger. They consider the small, single form entry school to be “exactly what local authorities need right now to tackle a number of growing problems in our student population”.
- The grade two listed school buildings are believed to be of historic significance, being part of the original Birkbeck Schools founded by William Ellis. Some respondents believe there is a restrictive covenant on the building, barring its use for anything other than education provision. Respondents report that the building has also recently undergone an extensive restoration process.
- Respondents feel that joining the Blossom Federation in September 2022 has had a positive impact on Colvestone. The introduction of the new leadership team has been well received and the school is perceived by respondents to be on an upward trajectory with proactive steps being taken to address its budget deficit, including running an in-year surplus for 2022. Respondents believe this partnership deserves to be given more time.

Dalston Plan & 21st Century Street

The Dalston Plan aims to shape the future of the area by building over 600 affordable new homes. A key feature of the Plan involves turning Colvestone Crescent into the borough's first 21st Century Play Street. As the primary school is located at the end of Colvestone Crescent, a number of respondents to the consultation feel it is an integral part of the creation of the Play Street. This is viewed by respondents as being the case as the Plan aims to create a child-friendly, safe environment. Similarly, Colvestone is the closest primary school to the main location proposed for the new homes.

A selection of comments about the Dalston Plan and 21st Century Street is shown below.

The school is pivotal in the plan to turn Colvestone Crescent into a 21st Century Street, the borough's first permanent play street. This will not only be an incredible community asset, but will make Hackney an example for other boroughs to follow in the necessary move to make cities more human-friendly and sustainable, which is all key to ensuring improved mental health across our city communities.

Whilst pupil numbers have dropped, the local area has huge plans for residential development so I strongly believe this to be a temporary issue.

The 21st Century Street by Hackney Council is a brilliant plan and demonstrates everything Hackney is and what the residents want it to be like in the future. Colvestone Primary School is at the centre of this plan. The vision for such a street is built on creating a child-friendly safe environment. Closing the school makes no sense, whilst the plan itself is funded to go ahead. Without a school in that street, this investment is entirely pointless and a misuse of public finance.

The Dalston area has a Plan to build more housing very nearby. The proposed closure feels extremely short-signed in light of this - will families have the choice they deserve? Or will families even choose to live there if there is no community school nearby

Colvestone is in the centre of the Dalston Plan, which includes the commitment to building 600 new homes, including 200 affordable family homes. Shutting Colvestone - the closest school to this development - is a short-sighted action, that will negatively impact the community. This is part of an important move to try and get families to stay in the borough and keeping this local school is a huge part of that.

SEND Provision

An Education, Health and Care Officer from the Hackney SEND team has responded to the consultation to raise concerns about the closure from a SEND perspective, highlighting the very significant challenges the borough faces with the inclusion of such pupils in mainstream settings. They state that as specialist settings and ARPs are full, and there are more requests for placements than space available, “an extraordinary amount” is spent on out of borough independent provision. Due to the inclusive, nurturing environment at Colvestone, the respondent feels that the children with SEND are less on the local authority’s radar because their needs are being met, whereas this is likely to change if these children are required to move to a larger, less inclusive environment. There are concerns that these children may then require more costly specialist settings. The respondent expresses concern that “the proposal has not sufficiently considered both the distress and cost implications of closing our most inclusive primary schools”. They feel this could be avoided by working with Colvestone to expand on its SEND provision. The respondent encourages decision makers to consult more widely with the ECHP, wider SEND Team and the Re-integration Unit.

These comments are echoed by a CAMHS social worker responding to the consultation, employed by another borough, whose children went to Colvestone. They consider the school to be a “huge resource precisely because it is small and nurturing” and suggest it would be waste of resources to close the school. Their suggestion is to use money from the SEN budget that is currently spent on alternative provision, out of borough, and work to enhance the SEND provision already offered by Colvestone. Similarly, an Inclusion Expert responding to the consultation suggests converting the currently vacant school keeper’s house into a resource base for children with SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs) and Neurodiversity. They believe this could be staffed with specialist teachers and teaching assistants who work to support children in mainstream classes.

Many parents of children with SEN included testimonials within their feedback about how happy and well-supported their children are at the school. Some examples are shown below.

*My older [child] with [SEND] went to *** schools in Hackney, including outstanding schools. * was facing being out of mainstream education and Colvestone showed * love, acceptance and support which totally changed things around and * is now at a mainstream secondary. The fact that Colvestone accommodates for so many children with additional needs and keeps them in mainstream schools saves Hackney a lot of money. My younger [child], like so many other children, is on a 2-3 year wait list for a diagnosis with CAMHS and therefore is not part of the SEN stats*

*My child has SEN and needs to be educated in a small, calm school. It has taken * *** years to settle at Colvestone, so any disruption to* routine will harm * health and education.*

*We have chosen Colvestone Primary school for our little [child], who is *** years-old and [SEND] because it provides a required quick journey access to school (5 minutes), a safe and happy environment (that a small one form school offers) and a wonderful SEN support ([my child] has an experienced SEN one to one). These are the 3 fundamental poles for [my child] to access education. It has taken time and great effort for [my child] to be happy and settled in * school (*** years now) and changing school at this stage will have an incredibly difficult impact on * and it will be practically impossible for * to access education, and this also will have an enormous impact on * mental health.*

Historical Significance & Future Of The Building

Colvestone has been a school since it was built in 1852 as one of the six Birkbeck schools. Respondents report that there has recently been investment in the fabric of the building: the exterior has been sand blasted and the lead on the roof replaced.

Campaigners believe there is a restrictive covenant on the site, which prohibits its use for anything other than education. The example of Hackney Downs School is cited in the feedback with respondents suggesting it closed and then had to re-open as a school (Mossbourne Academy) due to restrictions preventing the site being used for anything else.

Council figures are cited by respondents in reference to the cost of maintaining an empty listed building: £1m to close the school and £250-£300,000 each year to maintain the closed buildings. In addition to these costs, respondents comment that the Council would have to absorb Colvestone's historic debt, which respondents believe is currently being reduced under the new management.

Local residents of Colvestone Crescent responded to the consultation expressing concern that an empty, disused building could increase the risk of anti-social behaviour in the area. Many stated that they feel the school is an integral part of the community.

Examples of comments about the historical significance and future use of the building made in response to the consultation are shown below.

The site has multiple protections - two Grade 2 listings and an outdoor classroom / playground that is an Asset of Community Value - it is not a building easily repurposed but it is an excellent building purpose-built as a school. We also strongly suspect that it has protected educational use and are searching for the deeds.

Colvestone is the beating heart of Dalston. It creates natural surveillance in the area and makes Dalston the vibrant, diverse, friendly community that it is. Without it I believe we would soon see a rise in the levels of anti social behaviour.

The decision to close a school without any plan for the future of the site is bizarre. I understand it is to be a community asset, but this is vague and without a clear plan and funding will likely see the site lay vacant for a long time, draining further resources. This lack of plan is compounded when you consider the very recent (and long overdue) capital works to the buildings.

I believe that writing off Colvestone's deficit, and paying for security costs whilst the school is mothballed, is an egregious use of public funds.

Impact Of Joining Blossom Federation

Respondents to the consultation are very positive about the stability, new leadership and improved facilities Blossom has brought the school since it began in September 2022 and they believe the school is now running an in-year budget surplus and can start to reduce its financial deficit.

Feedback has also been provided in the consultation about the previous partnership with Thomas Fairchild primary as part of the Soaring Skies Federation. Substantial criticism is levied by some respondents towards the previous leadership of the school and the oversight from the Learning Trust. Respondents feel the new leadership and partnership with Blossom has seen the school turn a corner and they feel this should be given further time to develop to fulfil its potential.

Some of the comments about the new partnership with Blossom are shown below.

This year has seen huge developments at Colvestone since the Blossom Federation partnership, which can clearly be recognised in all the ODR and SIP reports - yet we need more time to be given a chance to develop further (and build a new reputation under the new leadership) to attract new families, increase our numbers of children, and therefore really begin to lower the deficit again.

It seems as though we are in this process mostly due to the large historic debt but Hackney Education supported the school to choose Blossom Federation as new leadership going forwards and they are taking proactive steps to address the deficit. YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN THEM A CHANCE.

The Federation has turned a budget surplus - despite a low pupil roll - in its first 6 months in charge. So doing Blossom Federation has shown that the school can be financially viable under its new leadership. We, as parents, carers and students, love the stability and improved facilities Blossom Federation has brought the school.

Being on the list to close (or merge - which essentially means our school will close), completely diminishes our chances of attracting more families - and yes, if we were not on the list, with all the work that Blossom have helped the school to do this year, we would have absolutely taken a lot of the surplus school children in the area looking for Reception places because that's how much we believe in the impact they have made to our school!

5.4 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

13% think the move will negatively affect children

11% comment on other negative aspects of moving

4% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

The feedback from respondents in the consultation suggests that many Colvestone parents are unhappy at the idea of sending their children to Princess May. Some say they will chose another school, even if they have to move out of the area. Their comments cite a number of specific reasons for this:

- Several respondents mention a poll of parents that revealed that over 90% did not include Princess May as one of their original options when applying for a school place for their child. 13 respondents explicitly state that they will not be sending their child to Princess May and many others express concern about doing so.
- There are multiple references in the feedback to a meeting on 27th June 2023 with Paul Senior (Hackney Education) who confirmed that Princess May is on the list of schools to be considered for consultation next year. Thus, there is a fear amongst some respondents that sending children here may result in them being subject to a second school closure or amalgamation in the future.
- Many comments make reference to Princess May being on the A10 with its playground backing directly onto the main road. Additionally, to get to the school, respondents say many children would have to walk directly up the main road, which they believe is very polluted and congested, and would be particularly difficult for children with SEND.

Examples of the comments on these topics are shown below.

The pollution levels at Princess May Primary were 40% higher than Colvestone Primary School in 2021 due to the extremely busy main road that the school sits on. With 70% of eligible roads in Hackney becoming LTNs and the council's drive to promote LTNs in the borough, the diverted volume of traffic is only going to increase this pollution.

If the pupils currently at Colvestone are forced to move to Princess May, I feel the care afforded to children and the educational options available to their parents will suffer a serious deterioration, as they would likely be forced to disturb their children's education and transfer them to a school exclusively for SEND children.

It has become clear that many of the wonderful staff from Colvestone will not be transferred to Princess May and based on this information and the survey that was carried out, many, if not most of the families (ourselves included) will not go to Princess May. So the result would be that Princess May will still suffer from low numbers and also face closure in the not too distant future.

Had you chosen to merge De Beauvoir and Colvestone this would have been a different matter as they are very similar in ethos and size but going to Princess May is not an option for us.

5.5 Comments About School Places

18% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

6% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

2% believe that other local schools do not have many places

2% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

Many of the comments about future changes to the demographics of the population refer to the Dalston Plan and the intention to build 600 new affordable homes by 2031. Colvestone is believed to be the closest primary school to the main site earmarked for this development so many respondents argue that closing it is short-sighted.

Other specific points about school places raised by respondents in the consultation feedback are shown below.

- Merging Colvestone with De Beauvoir is suggested as an option by some respondents, since otherwise children may have to travel long distances, if parents reject Princess May, as they believe that many other schools in south Hackney are oversubscribed.
- Without Colvestone, many respondents believe there will be a lack of future parental choice as those schools that remain are religious, academy or free schools. The comments mention the perceived unfairness that only community schools can be included in any consultation.
- There is concern amongst some respondents about the loss of the maintained (free) nursery facility on the site, which currently enables seamless transition to the main school.

A selection of comments about school places is shown below.

Colvestone as a merger school for De Beauvoir. They are a much better fit and are not far geographically. Initially there may have been too many pupils at De Beauvoir but many of these have now transferred to other local schools. In fact we understand that as families have moved away from Randall Cremer and De Beauvoir in light of the proposal many of the schools in that part of the borough are now FULL and these families need another option.

I do not want to send my child to a religious school (especially as a gay parent) or a free school (the funding of which is cloaked in secrecy) therefore there are no other options available to us a family in this area. The schools we would otherwise choose are full.

Out of interest I looked at the reception intake for 2023 and saw that all the schools in my locality have a full allocation for this September, the only exception being Princess May. This was not on my list of schools and I would not send my child to this school. I'm concerned about the lack of parental choice if Colvestone closes. Also given that a high percentage of current Colvestone parents will not send their child to Princess May, would there be capacity in the other non faith (and potentially non free) schools in the area to accommodate these children?

It seems that it is only certain parents who fundamentally prefer the aesthetics of the school that are insisting on it remaining open. This preference is to the detriment of properly funded education for the pupils. The council is not to blame for the way in which education is funded, and it is not within the Council's gift to modify the national system of education funding. Wishing that it were different does not address the present problem. Amalgamation of the schools will deliver better outcomes.

The closures planned are unfairly hitting Dalston, with too many community schools close together being affected. You have not put any faith schools in this plan, which means there is nowhere left to go for pupils who do not want to go to faith schools. Leaving the one school with a strong community to continue, as a single form school, would be a fair way to rectify this problem.

5.6 General Feedback

8% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

6% just said they do not want the schools to merge, with little additional detail

6% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

Some respondents mention that they have formed a campaign group, Save Colvestone Primary School, but say that they do not feel the Council is listening to them. Criticisms from respondents of both the wider context and the Council's approach to the consultation include the following points:

- Respondents comment that despite being told that Hackney Education is one system, that has to meet the needs of all the borough's schools including academies, free and faith schools, the perception is that local authority schools have been unfairly targeted in the proposals. Their argument is that "if there is ONE system - then it needs to be considered as A WHOLE".
- Respondents believe that the threat of closure makes it impossible to increase numbers on Colvestone's roll. However, they think that the campaign has raised the school's profile and those involved feel it would be possible to increase numbers if the school is removed from the list.
- These respondents do not see the proposals as a merger but rather a closure of Colvestone with a presumption that children will transfer to Princess May.
- Campaigners believe they have articulated the reasons not to close Colvestone using facts, data and numbers, whereas, in their opinion, the Council has not taken this approach. For example, respondents say that financial modelling has only been provided by the school itself and the campaign group, rather than by the Council.
- Respondents describe officials as reluctant to discuss the proposals, with meetings with councillors said to have been blocked, although the comments also make frequent references to meetings, including with the Director of Education & Inclusion. Campaigners argue that a genuine consultation requires the Council to respond to the information received and that to act "on weak data or inertia or an ill-thought through proposal would be an act of gross dereliction of duty".
- The perception of respondents is that the Council has not engaged with the wider community, such as the market traders, neighbours and other local residents.
- Many comments from the campaign group express increasing cynicism as well as concern about how the experience is affecting their children's view of the democratic process.

The graphical documents provided to the Council alongside this report include all the comments submitted as part of the consultation. Extracts from the campaigners' responses to the consultation are shown below.

I feel that the consultation 'process' as a whole has been completely unfair to the six schools thrown into the melting pot with no solid reasons given as to why they have been singled out. If this was a fair and considerate consultation all schools in the borough would have been included in the 'process' from day one. The six schools chosen are now having to fill their enrolment quotas for the coming school year with the shadow of closure hanging heavy above them. This is obviously going to have a massive negative influence on their success. If this was a 'consultation' I do not understand why Hackney Council would put a small number of the borough's schools at such a debilitating disadvantage.

It is hard not to despair at the lack of response we have been getting, at how badly the documents from the council are prepared, at the lack of data, research, or even just answers, at the fact that there is no discernible scope of the actual consultation that has been outlined, and how much this process reveals a broken democratic process and a dysfunctional education department. The only financial modelling has been provided by the school itself and our group of parents, and as it emerges that clearly closing the school will be more expensive to the tax payer than keeping it open one wonders if anyone really cares what a decision like this one is being based on.

The plans have not been properly thought through. The 'term' merger does not fool anyone. It is a closure of Colvestone with a presumption that our pupils will transfer to Princess May. This is not borne out in our consultation with parents and carers at Colvestone - and betrays a real lack of understanding behind parental choice. There is a real demand for a single form entry Local Authority school in Hackney. That need should be respected and met. Colvestone IS that school.

6. Response To The Proposal To Merge Baden Powell & Nightingale Primaries

At the start of the consultation period, 300 forms were given out to parents and staff at Baden Powell primary school and 350 to those at Nightingale, although replies were also accepted from wider stakeholders and interested parties. In total, 157 responses were received to the consultation on the proposal to merge the schools.

40% of respondents are a parent, carer or guardian of a child at the school, 24% are interested members of the public, 20% are parents at another school in Hackney and 3% are staff or governors at the school.

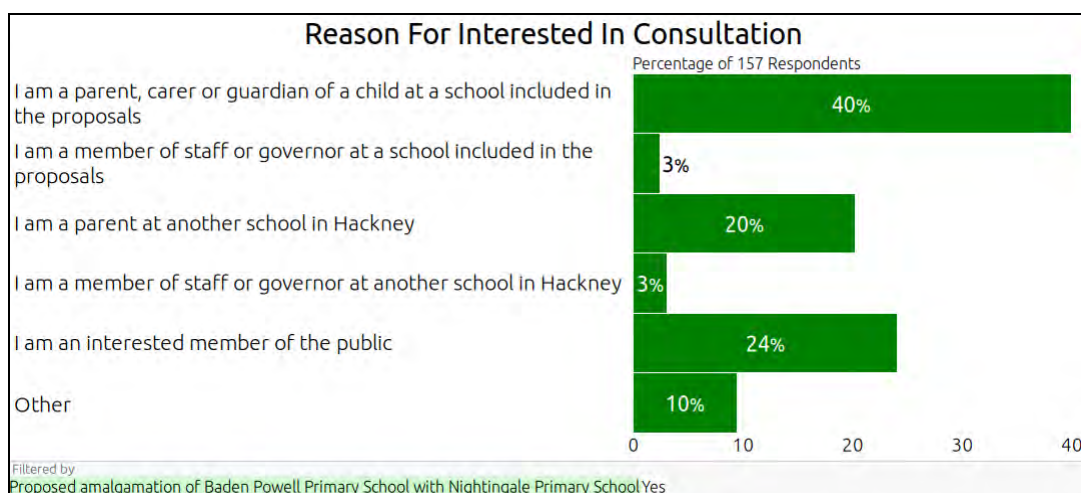


Figure 6.1

Overall, 15% of respondents agree with the proposal to merge Baden Powell and Nightingale, whilst 77% disagree.

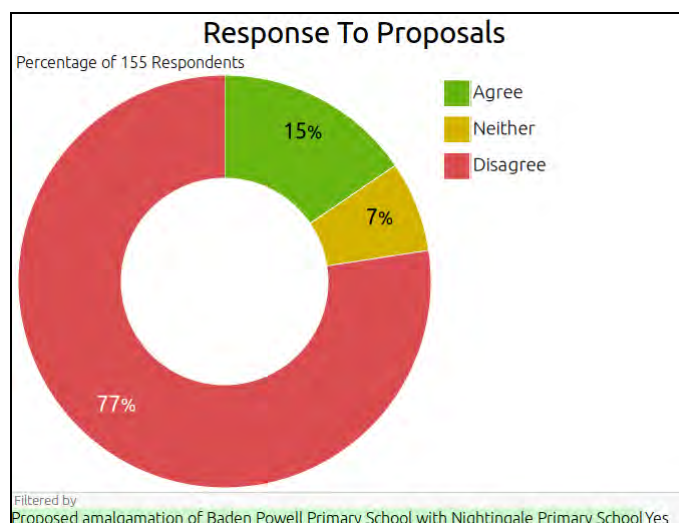


Figure 6.2

11% of parents, carers and guardians agree with the proposals to close the school, compared to 18% of other respondents. Caution must be used when interpreting these results due to the small numbers of respondents.

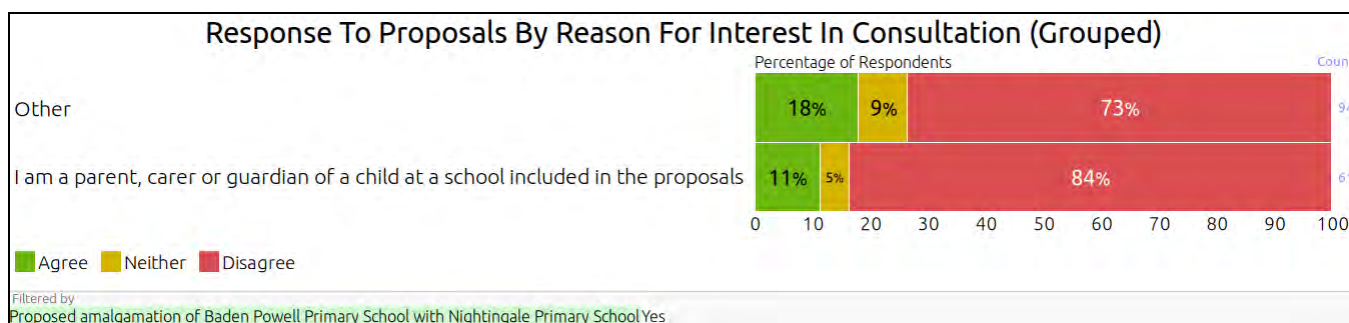


Figure 6.3

6.1 Analysis Of Comments On Proposal To Merge Baden Powell & Nightingale

31% of respondents made negative comments about other schools or the process of moving, whilst 27% gave positive feedback about the school. 20% discussed the wider context of the consultation and 17% gave broader feedback about school places in general.

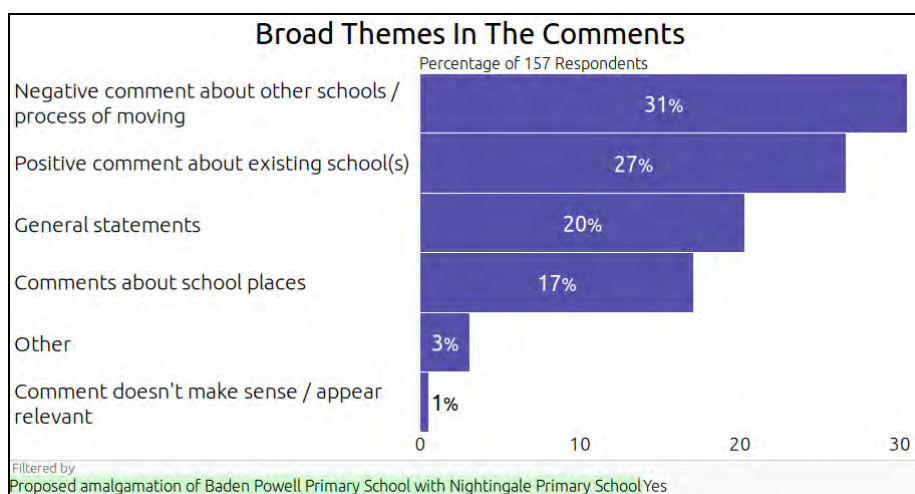


Figure 6.4

The qualitative feedback was further analysed to identify more specific themes in the comments, these are shown in the graph below and are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

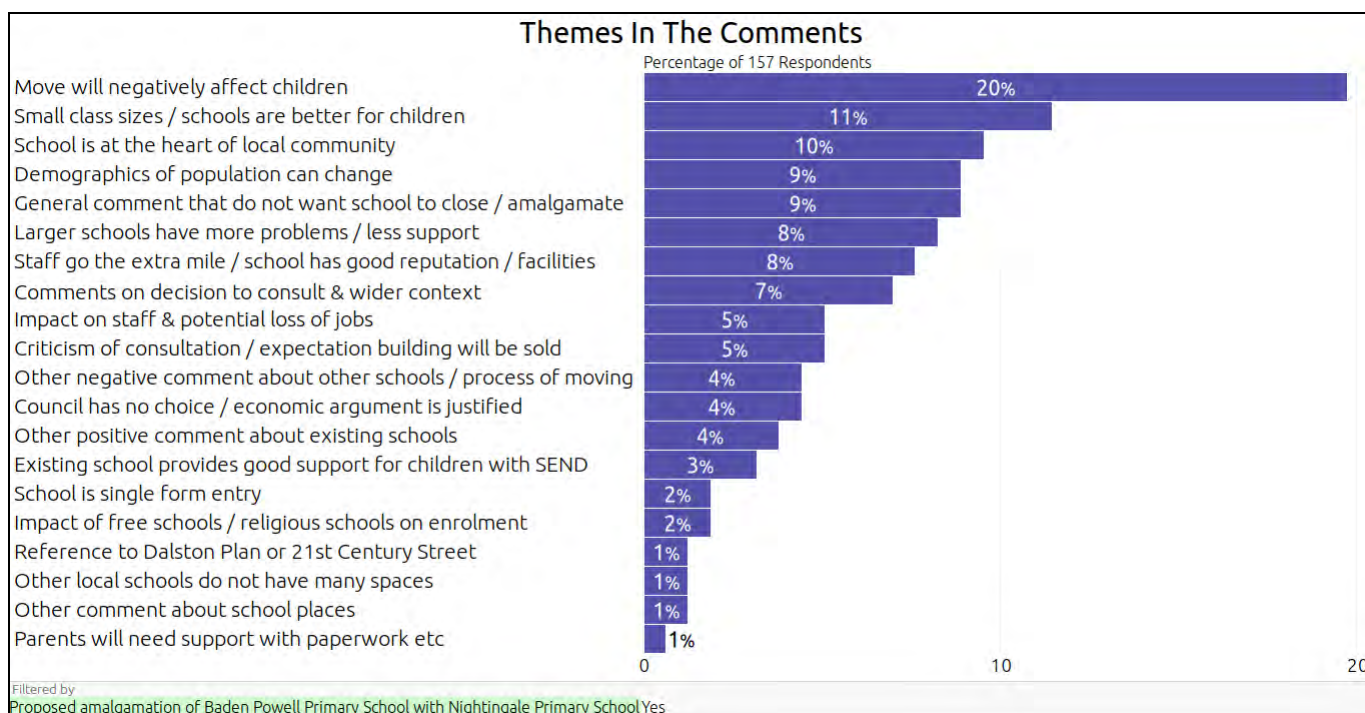


Figure 6.5

6.2 Positive Feedback About Baden Powell

11% feel small class sizes / schools are better for children

10% say that the school is at the heart of the local community

8% think that staff go the extra mile, the school has a good reputation and/or good facilities

Many comments included testimonials from parents about the school as shown below.

BP school is over 30 years old, staff are very friendly and dedicated to their jobs and pupils. They take responsibilities really seriously: looking after the kids, helping them with classwork and encourage to achieve the best grades of education. Teachers give regular updates to the parents on how their kids have been in the classroom that day. At this moment the school has two amazing young pianists, a few talented chess players, 2 wonderful violinists etc.

Generations and generations of children have been attending this school and Baden Powell has been in the heart of the community of Hackney for many, many years with nothing but good things to say about it.

We are all very happy in our school and we love our little community. Children are learning, playing and growing up in a close and peaceful environment. I deliberately have chosen a one entry form school for my child.

*I have an [SEND] child and one with needs in years ** & **. They both don't like change and do not like too many children around them. It took more than a year for each of them to get settled in Baden Powell. It is going to be so unsettling for them to change into a large school with so many pupils. I chose Baden Powell as it was small for both their needs. We love all staff. All staff know the pupils and parents. Please don't merge. If you do I will move them to a smaller school like Baden Powell.*

Although there are only a small number of responses that were clearly from families of Nightingale pupils, their comments also related to the benefits of small schools, as shown in these examples.

Nightingale is already a relatively small school, which also benefits from a distinctive admissions process that prioritises children in care and those subject to a child protection plan. There is a delicate ecosystem and one that will be particularly destabilised by the sudden arrival of so many additional pupils. Proximity should be just one measure of the suitability of a potential merger.

*Many of us picked Nightingale because it's a small school. As a parent of a SEN child, I am worried how a busier school will affect * day. I also hope that the kids won't be torn apart as they are a lovely little community with many friendships already formed.³*

³ Nightingale has capacity for 60 children per year group but currently operates to 30 children per year group.

6.3 Negative Comments About Other Schools / Process Of Moving

20% think the move will negatively affect children

8% feel that larger schools have more problems / less support

5% comment on the impact on staff / potential job losses

Many respondents are worried that children will struggle to adapt to the change, especially those with SEND. There are also concerns expressed by respondents about whether all Baden Powell staff will be offered a job at the merged school.

Examples of the comments on this topic are shown below.

Moving to a new school, some pupils will develop anxiety and stress, friendships between kids would be broken, some teachers would lose their jobs and Baden Powell Primary School structure would be shattered.

*It's going to be devastating for year * children to move once in year * and then move to a secondary, which is a huge change in their life in general. My [child] has [SEND] and * struggles to cope even with little changes during * daily routine. This will completely mess * up.*

I feel Nightingale will not be able to handle the extra children and will also not be able to employ everyone to come over either. Their after-school clubs do not tie in well with working single mums as well and it will cause a real disruption to my work as well as my son's schedule. I do not see the point of this merger and can only see Nightingale being overwhelmed by the extra students.

I would like all Baden Powell staff offered a job at Nightingale to ensure a smooth transition for the children. I would like there to be extensive collaborative work between Baden Powell and Nightingale in the lead up to September 2024 to ensure that this is a proper amalgamation of systems & ethos and not just Baden Powell becoming taken over by Nightingale. I would like the leadership at Baden Powell to move with us as the leadership in Nightingale.

6.4 Comments About School Places

9% think the demographics of the population can change and are concerned about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places.

4% feel that the economic argument is justified / the Council has no choice

2% discuss the impact that free schools and faith schools have on enrolment

1% believe that other local schools do not have many places

Many of the comments received on this topic are general in nature, as shown in the examples below.

Firstly, I do not understand why the school budget has been cut and they have to merge schools. What happens when they agree to close the school and the birth rate goes back up?

I am a parent of a 2 year old in Hackney Downs that would likely have enrolled in one of the 4 schools involved in the merges. I was not aware of the falling enrolment numbers but agree Hackney council should protect the funding and quality of the school provision by merging. My only concern is whether there will be enough places in future years if numbers start to rise again and the closed school buildings have been repurposed/sold to developers.

My concern is that no information was given about birth rate projections for the future and the level of confidence the council have that numbers will not rise again in the foreseeable future that would impact on these proposals. I am also concerned about the loss of publicly provided nursery places, I do feel this is a loss to the local area and that alternative provision will not have the same outcomes for the children that they currently get being on the same site.

6.5 General Feedback

9% report they do not want the schools to merge, with little additional detail

7% made comments about the decision to consult and the wider context of falling school rolls.

5% are critical of the consultation and/or fear the building will be sold to developers

There are concerns amongst respondents about what will happen to the school buildings if the merger goes ahead. A representative of the Orthodox Jewish community taking part in the consultation suggests the Council should consider the possibility of selling or leasing the school to one of the local Jewish schools as there is extensive overcrowding in these establishments.

Examples of the comments received about the building/repurposing are shown below.

I am worried if Baden-Powell is closed that Hackney council will build a tower block in its space blocking out light and scenery, making it harder to find a parking space due to more people living on this road. And you will probably only provide a minimal amount of social housing.

This has the makings of landgrab. i.e. Hackney council are very aware of the increasing land value in the area, and closing Baden Powell is an easy way to sell off valuable land to the next property developer waiting in line.

I would also like to see the former Baden Powell site used for something that would benefit the community.

Merging schools and selling off public land to developers is taking the interest away from residents and is more of a money making scheme.

The loss of the existing schools and school communities is challenging and emotional for all involved. The loss of these buildings forever I believe could be a strategic error on the part of the council that will have further negative impacts on the viability of cities for children and families in the short medium and long term.

7. Feedback - Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

The Hackney Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission met on 27th June 2023 to scrutinise the proposals and has submitted a short summary of its conclusions in response to the consultation.

The Scrutiny Commission's role is strategic and, therefore, its submission to the consultation avoids commenting on the proposals for specific schools. Instead, it aims to highlight issues that can positively contribute to decision-making. The summary report, which is presented in full in Appendix 1, makes the following key points:

- Any decision to close a locally maintained school is likely to be irreversible, as the 2011 Education Act requires future demand to be met by the academy or free school sector.
- The impact of falling rolls is a long-term policy issue, as GLA modelling does not suggest a stabilisation until the end of the decade. Therefore, the Commission suggests conducting broader engagement with stakeholders and the public across the borough about the implementation of the School Estates Strategy. This would also provide an opportunity for the Council to clarify the restrictions of the existing legal framework, which does not permit them to effect direct change equally across all schools.
- The Commission acknowledges that the 20% pupil vacancy rate across the borough's primary schools is not sustainable and the Council needs to act to maintain the quality and integrity of education in Hackney.
- A number of concerns with the approach used in the consultation are highlighted in the Commission's report. In particular, it was not clear to the Commission how the information would be analysed and used to develop proposals for the next stage of the process, given the volume and wide ranging nature of the feedback likely to be received.
- Whilst accepting the financial impact falling school rolls is having, the Commission would have welcomed the provision of further evidence to demonstrate this impact on schools. More details from the affected schools would have helped those responding to the consultation to understand the implications of the situation and the Commission believes this could assist the case for change.
- The Commission also considers that it would be helpful for the Council to provide further information, going forwards, on the number of school places that need to be removed and a more detailed review, with costs, of possible alternative models for delivering the required reduction. For example, other local authorities have chosen a merger-led approach rather than school closures.
- Falling school rolls impact the wider community. In addition, they are an indication of a loss of children and families from the area, which will need the Council to make maximum use of all available options to deliver on its broader aims to create diverse and sustainable communities.
- Financial viability is clearly a key factor to be considered when determining the future of schools with falling rolls. The latest figures indicate the number of local schools carrying forward a budget deficit at the end of 2022/23 will rise from 11 to 13. However, the picture for the schools in the consultation is mixed, with some managing to maintain a surplus whilst others have a substantial deficit.
- If all the proposals go ahead, the cost to the Council is estimated to be £3.4m, of which £1m will be ongoing (for security of the vacant sites).
- The provision of further information on the additional support that may be made available to help children with SEND transfer to new schools might give some reassurance to parents.

8. Demographic Profile Of Respondents

Postcode Areas Of Respondents

Responses were received from postcodes across the borough and further afield.

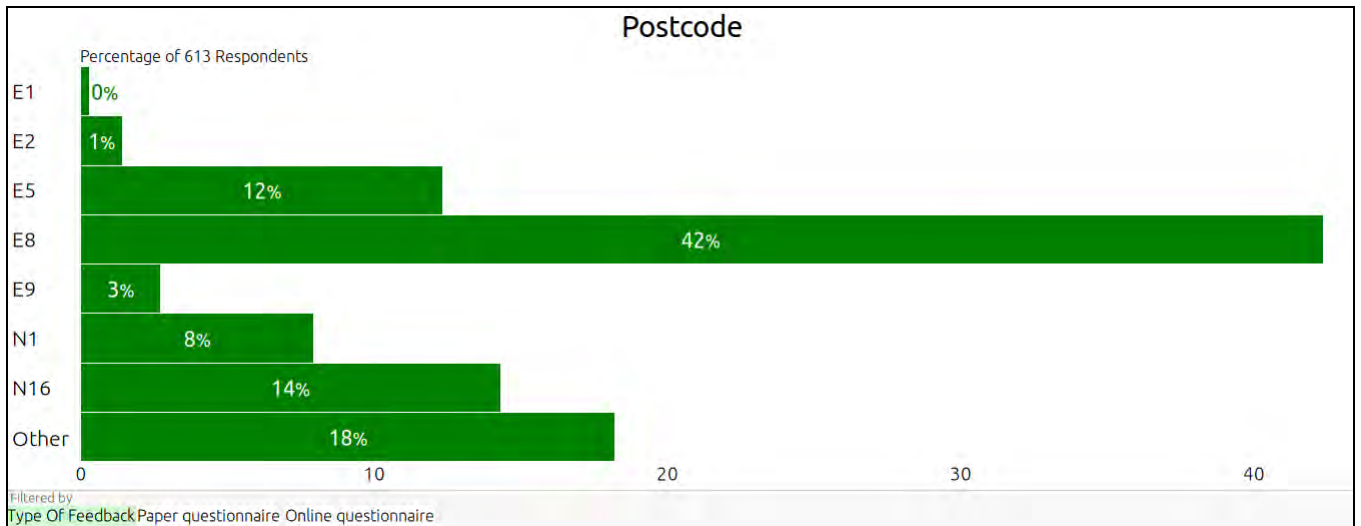


Figure 8.1

Gender Of Respondents

68% of respondents were female and 29% are male. 1% describe themselves as non-binary and a further 1% using another term.

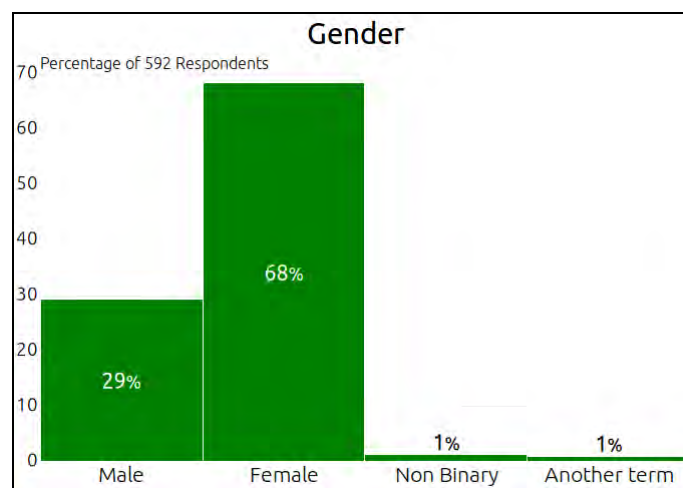


Figure 8.2

Age Profile Of Respondents

Responses were received from a broad cross section of age groups. Eight in ten respondents are under the age of 55, whilst the remainder are aged 55 or over.

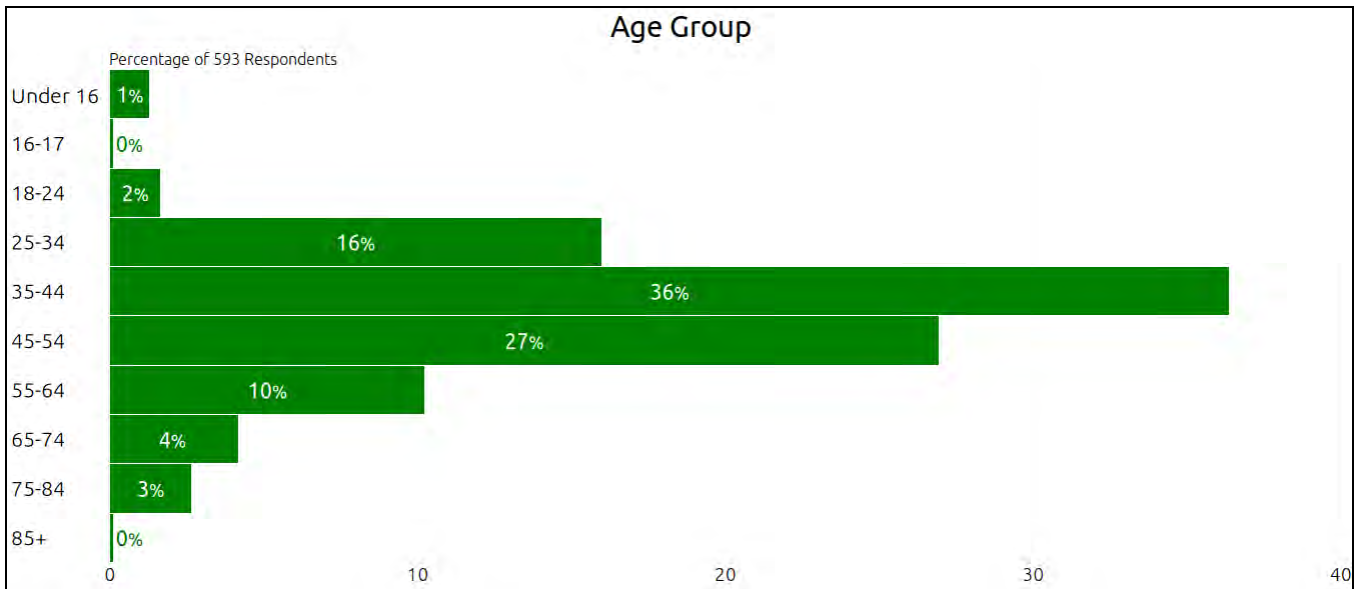


Figure 8.3

Disability

10% of respondents have a disability and 18% have caring responsibilities.

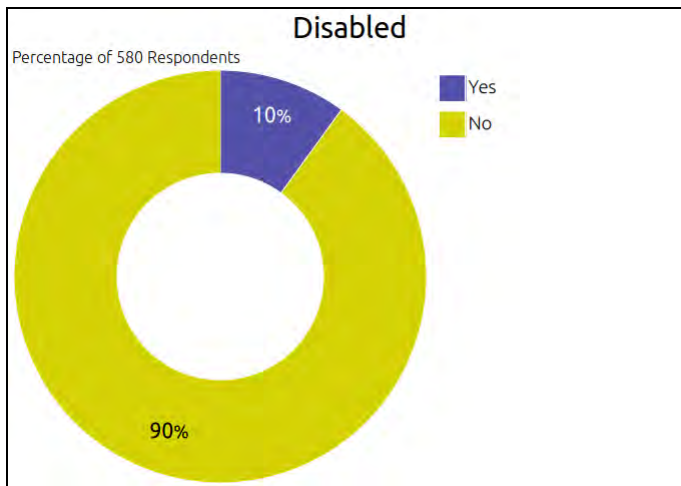


Figure 8.4

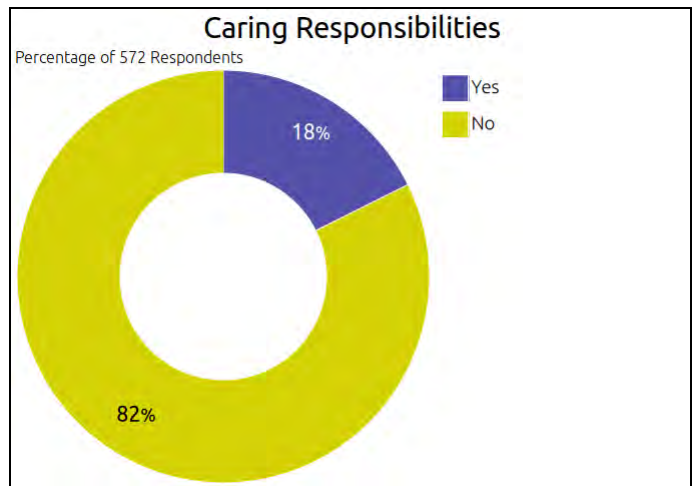


Figure 8.5

Ethnicity Of Respondents

58% of respondents are White, 15% are Black and 8% are Asian. 17% of respondents describe themselves as being from another ethnic group and 1% say they are from a mixed background.

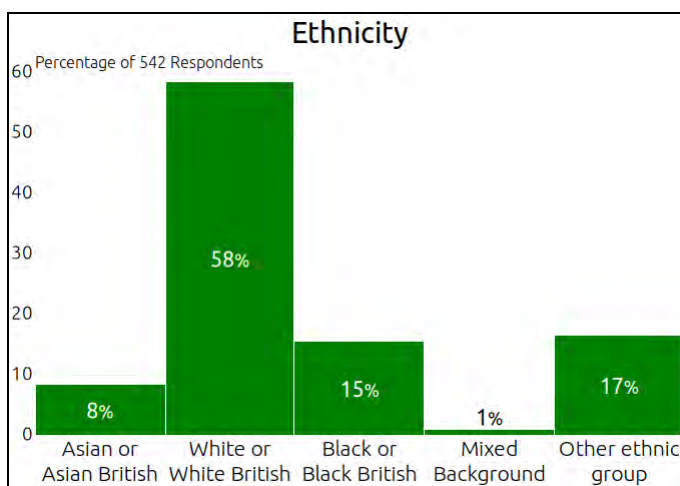


Figure 8.6

Religion Of Respondents

46% of respondents describe themselves as being atheist/having no religious belief.

27% of respondents are Christian and 13% Muslim. Smaller proportions are Jewish (2%), Buddhist (1%), Hindu (1%) or Sikh (1%). 6% describe themselves as having another belief or religion.

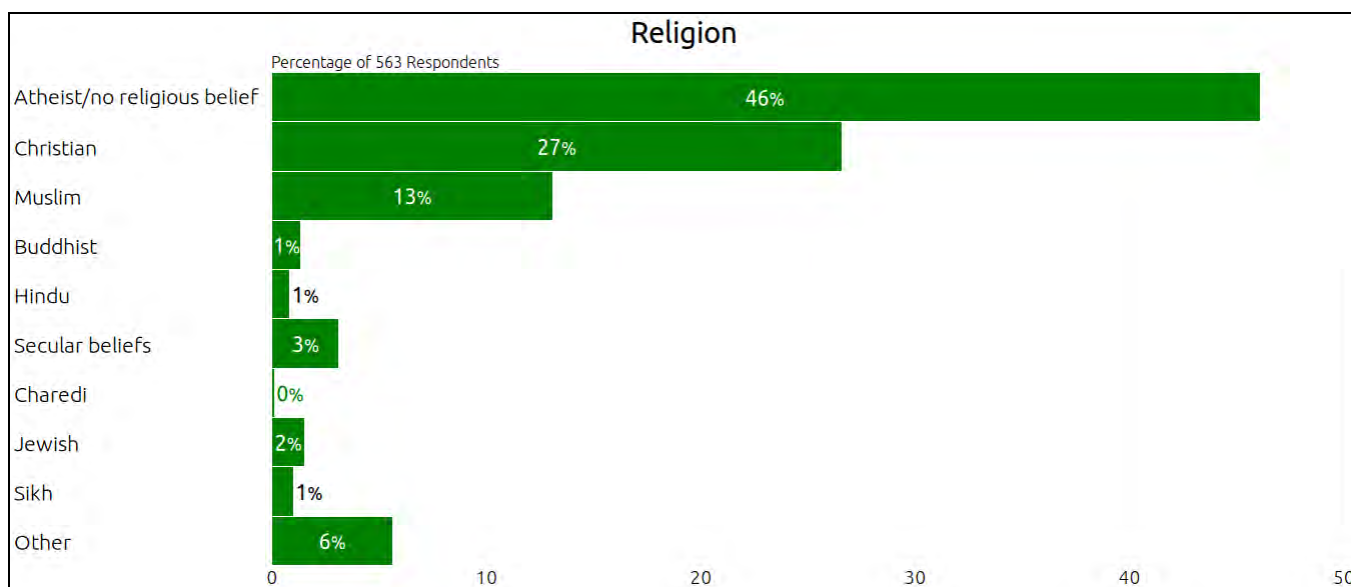


Figure 8.7

Sexual Orientation Of Respondents

19% of respondents reported that they prefer not to answer the question about sexual orientation.

74% say they are heterosexual, whilst 2% are bisexual. 1% in each case describe themselves as a gay man, lesbian or gay woman, pansexual or queer.

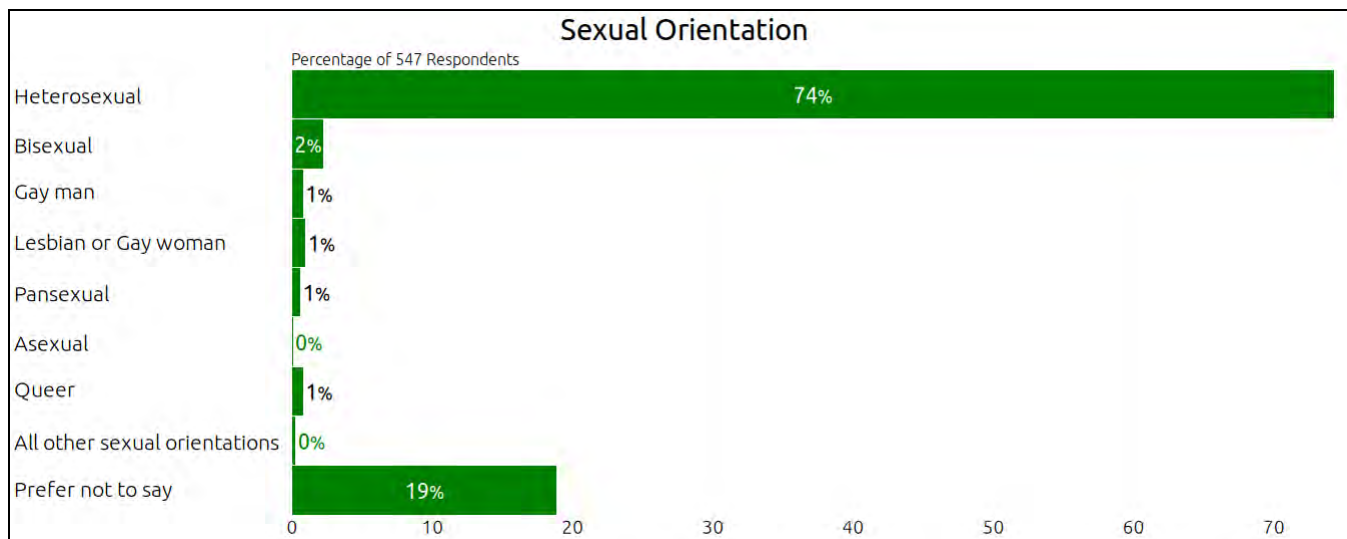


Figure 8.8

Housing Tenure Of Respondents

67% of respondents are in rented accommodation. 24% rent from the council and 16% from a housing association, while a further 27% rent privately.

23% of respondents own their home outright, whilst 3% have a mortgage. 6% are in a shared ownership property.

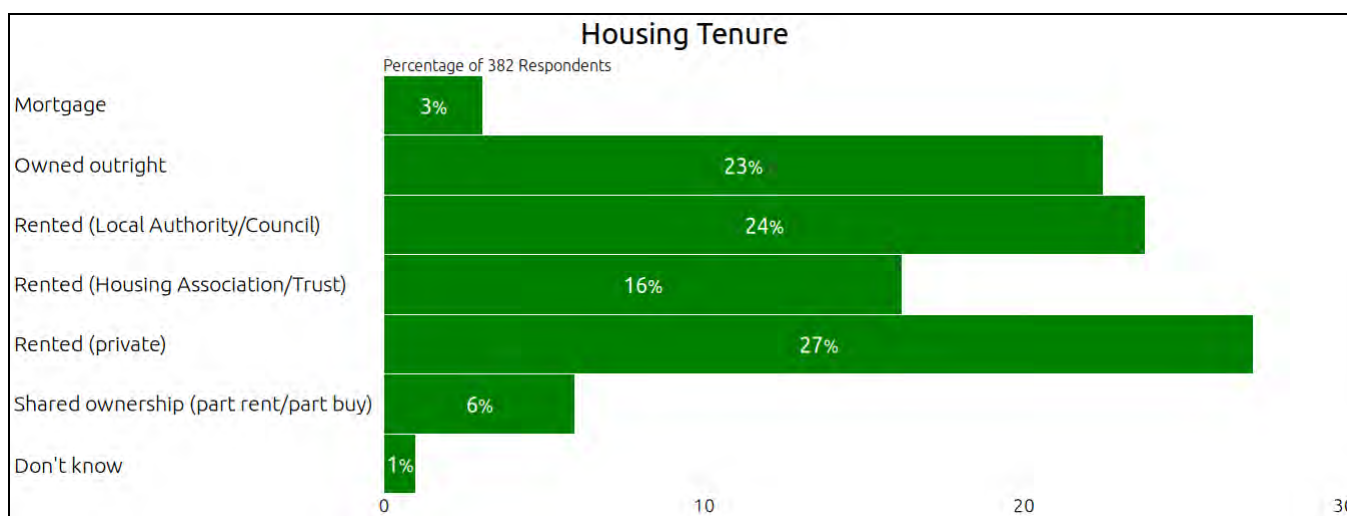


Figure 8.9

Appendix 1

Report from the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

**Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission**

Room 118, 2nd Floor
Hackney Town Hall
Mare Street
London, E8 1EA

15th July 2023

martin.bradford@hackney.gov.uk

Cllr Anntionette Bramble,
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education,
Young People and Children's Social Care
London Borough of Hackney.

Dear Cllr Bramble

School Estates Strategy (Falling School Rolls) - Informal Consultation Response

At its recent meeting on the 27th June 2023, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission scrutinised proposals emerging from the School Estates Strategy to close two primary schools (De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer) and to merge a further four (Baden-Powell with Nightingale and Colvestone with Princess May). At this meeting, members of the Commission agreed to submit a short summary of its conclusions which were to be submitted to the informal consultation on these proposals (ending 16th July 2023).

The Commission is grateful for the support and contributions from local parents representatives (from Colvestone Primary School and Baden Powell Primary School) as well as those officers that attended the meeting and who responded to questions raised by members. All these contributions have helped to shape and inform the Commission's response to the informal consultation which is attached to this letter. A full record of this meeting is provided through the [audio visual recording](#) and the [draft minutes](#).

Schools are anchors within local communities. As well as being a hub for learning, creativity and inclusion schools are also commonly the centre of community and social networks of local children, families. Children over multiple generations have often attended these same local schools which help to create long-standing bonds and ties to the community, therefore changes to the local school establishment undoubtedly raises concerns among local children and families, school staff and among the wider community. With a 20% pupil vacancy rate across local primary schools the Commission acknowledges that the current position is not sustainable

Overview & Scrutiny

and there is a need for the Council to act to preserve the integrity and quality of local educational systems.

The Commission understands the difficulties and challenges of falling school rolls and accepts that there are no easy pathways ahead in making such difficult decisions about the future of our local schools. The existing legal framework for education provision by the local authority compounds the difficulty of such decisions, which whilst placing a duty on local authorities to ensure that there is sufficient education does not give them jurisdiction to effect *direct change* equally across *all* educational settings. Furthermore, the Commission is all too aware that any decision to close a locally maintained school now is likely to be final as any future increase in local demand for education provision will need to be met through the academy or free school sector (*the academy and free school presumption* as set out in the Education Act 2011).

Scrutiny can play a positive and constructive role in local decision making, particularly where decisions might be difficult and challenging. Engaging and bringing local stakeholders together helps to bring a shared understanding of the issues and challenges at hand and can help to identify a common way forward. Scrutiny, where proposals are challenged and tested in public can also provide assurance to both local decision makers and the local community that subsequent decisions are taken in the public interest.

Attached is the submission of the Commission to the informal consultation to the School Estates Strategy (Falling Rolls) and the proposal to close two primary schools and merge a further four which we hope will prove helpful. As the focus of scrutiny is strategic it has necessarily avoided commenting on individual proposals for specific schools but has sought to draw together issues which can positively inform current and future decision making in this area.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Sophie Conway

Chair, Children and Young People Scrutiny
Commission

Cllr Margaret Gordon

Vice Chair, Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission

Cc:

- Jacquie Burke, Group Director Children and Education
- Paul Senior, Director of Education and Inclusion
- school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission Submission to the Informal Consultation on the Proposals to Close Two Primary Schools and Merge a Further Four

Consultation

1. The Commission welcomes the ambitions of the informal consultation as an opportunity to engage and involve a wide range of local stakeholders ahead of any statutory consultation and formal decision making process on the future of local schools. Given that the consultation is likely to cause concern and anxiety among children and families likely to be impacted by the proposals to close or merge local schools however, it is important that there are clear and unambiguous expectations of the information which is required from contributors in this consultation.

The [consultation documentation](#) sets out just one question (whether contributors agree or disagree with the proposals) and one open-ended invitation to comment on the proposals more broadly. Alongside some stakeholders, the Commission wish to highlight a number of concerns with this approach:

- a) The agree/ disagree questioning infers that there is some form of ballot on the proposals which may inflate expectations arising from this consultation.
- b) Whilst understanding there is genuine desire to garner wide ranging feedback on the proposals, with little guidance as to what information is being sought through this open-ended questioning, stakeholders may be confused as to what practical, useful or meaningful information might be required which may influence or provide mitigation for the proposals or future subsequent plans.

In relation to above, given the volume and wide ranging nature of contributions likely to be received through the consultation, it was not clear to members of the Commission as to how this information would be analysed and used in developing proposals for the next stage of this process. In this context, further clarification was needed.

2. GLA modelling forecasts that school rolls will continue to decline in Hackney over the medium to long-term with rolls not expected to stabilise until the earliest in 2029/30. Given that the impact of falling rolls is a long term policy issue and likely to impact on a growing number of schools across the borough, the Commission suggests that this might be the basis for broader borough wide public conversation on the *implementation* of the School Estates Strategy. Such a process with broader stakeholder and public engagement may help to further develop overarching principles and guidance which can inform future proposals in relation to school place planning. Equally importantly, this would also be a further opportunity for the Council to clearly again set out its duties and obligations in respect of school place planning and in maintaining high quality education for all young people across Hackney, but to also highlight the limitations and the legal framework in which it can act to reduce provision, which is perhaps less widely understood.

Falling School Rolls - Impact and Evidence

3. The Commission acknowledges the financial impact that falling school rolls is having across the local education system and indeed the wider community. In Hackney Education's own estimate, falling school rolls has meant that local schools are missing out on up to £30m of central government funding due to places going unfilled in local primary schools. In making the case for proposed primary school closures and mergers, the Commission would have welcomed further evidence to illustrate how falling school rolls have begun to impact on the delivery of local education. In particular further evidence would have been welcome in respect of the following:
 - The number of teaching and other support staff (classroom assistants) lost in the local educational system;
 - Impact on extra -curricular activities on local schools (visits and after school clubs etc);
 - Impact on building maintenance and other physical investments.

A more detailed narrative from schools themselves would help stakeholders and the wider community to fully understand how falling school rolls impacts on schools, teachers and of course the educational support and development provided to children themselves. Such data would help stakeholders understand the impact of falling school rolls and assist the case for change.

4. Officers presented evidence to the Commission that local proposals to close or merge schools were delayed to ensure that the impact of those local interventions to help maintain the viability of local schools were fully tested and evaluated. Whilst officers noted that a number of actions that local schools had taken to help improve financial viability and long-term sustainability (e.g. shared leadership, vertical classes, clustering/ Federation) the Commission felt it would have been useful to share further evidence of the impact of these interventions.

Understanding that the issue of falling school rolls is likely to be an ongoing issue for the medium to long-term in Hackney and other central London boroughs, it is important that there is a open and transparent evidence base about what actions are effective, not only to inform future policy and decision making but to also ensure that there is greater community awareness and understanding of the reasonings behind future decision making.

5. Recognising that falling rolls is a London wide issue where a number of other boroughs are having to make similar difficult choices about the future of local schools, the Commission believe that in future decision making, it would be helpful to understand more about the different approaches taken across these authorities (for example, why Lambeth has adopted an approach which is more focused mergers rather than closure of schools under its jurisdiction). This underlines the importance

of the need for London boroughs to work collectively and to develop and share local innovations and solutions to the challenges of falling school rolls which can help develop and extend best practice across London. The work of London Council's on this issue is noted by the Commission as this can provide a conduit for such intelligence and information sharing.

Objectives of the Proposals and Possible Alternatives

6. Whilst the need to remove surplus places in the primary sector has been made clear to the stakeholders, further clarification was perhaps needed as to the *numbers of places* that are needed to be removed to ensure the ongoing sustainability of local education systems. Whilst assessment criteria used to assess and identify which schools fall into scope (based on financial viability, falling school rolls etc) it is not apparent if there is a 'target' figure which the planned closures or mergers aimed to achieve in reducing school places through this process.
7. The Commission would also welcome further clarification as to possible alternative models and options to reduce vacancies in the local school system. In particular, the Commission is keen to understand why it may be preferable to close rather than merge schools and why (for example) [other authorities](#) have opted for a predominantly school merger approach rather than a mixed model of closures and mergers. Given the possible liabilities to the Council, it would also be helpful to have financial assessment of the different options (noting that London wide documentation suggest that school mergers may be preferred by some authorities as the liabilities to the Council could be minimised (particularly in relation to staff redundancy costs)).

Going forward therefore, the Commission felt it would be helpful in further delivery stages of the School Estates Strategy to have a clearer understanding of the number of places that need to be removed (for sustainability) and a more detailed appraisal (with costs) of the different options which may deliver the required reduction in places.

Coordinating a cross-department local response

8. Falling school rolls is a clearly systemic issue in which a range of national and regional issues (e.g. falling birth rates, Brexit and the housing crisis) have interacted to precipitate widespread migration of families from inner city areas. Whilst the Commission accepts that there is no easy solution which will resolve this problem at either national or local level, it does believe that a more coordinated and consistent local approach which seeks to utilise and align those levers over which the local authority does have control, may help to *mitigate* some of the impact of falling school rolls.

The Commission suggests that there are a number of local processes over which the Council does exert some control, which albeit on their own may appear to have

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limited impact, but if aligned to this purpose may have some cumulative impact.

Examples noted by the Commission include:

- Further promotion of inclusive schools and education to ensure that more children are supported in mainstream local education settings;
- Minimise the loss of pupils through cross-border flows where neighbouring authorities may have comparatively better borough wide offers (e.g. FSM provision, wraparound school provision or holiday programme activities);¹
- Ensure that there is effective, regular and ongoing engagement with parents whose children are receiving Elective Home Education and that they are aware of the pathways back to mainstream education;²
- Further assurance that Housing and Education services are working closely together so that where possible, families can be supported to stay within the borough (e.g. particularly in relation to placements of Temporary Accommodation)
- Ensuring local development plans and other planning policies reflect the need to develop family accommodation.³

In this same vein, the Commission wishes to emphasise that falling school rolls is not an issue solely for local education and children services as the impact and repercussions of such closures and mergers are likely to be felt much more widely across the community and across the wider family of council services. Falling school rolls is an indicator of the loss of children and families from local communities which will need the local authority to maximise the use of all those levers at its disposal if it is to deliver on broader local ambitions for genuinely diverse and sustainable communities.

Plans to Support Local Secondary Schools Against Falling School Rolls

9. Falling school rolls in the primary sector will inevitably soon impact on secondary education. With demand for primary places peaking in 2019 it is likely that demand for secondary schools will peak this or next academic year. The Commission notes that there have already been recent reports of secondary school closures in other parts of London - 2 of these in Lambeth.

[Local admissions data](#) suggests that, without any reductions in PAN, surplus places in the secondary will begin to accumulate in Hackney from 2022/23. This data estimates that surplus places will increase year on year, so that in 2028 there will be an estimated 367 surplus places in secondary schools across Hackney (which is the equivalent of 12 Form Entry).

¹ 2022 [admissions data](#) suggest that **135** children were offered reception places outside of Hackney.

² Currently over **200** children (excluding those from the Charedi community) are in EHE.

³ Data submitted to the Cabinet report suggests that 70% of planned new homes for the borough comprise 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation.

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The authority's ability to act to address growing numbers of pupil vacancies in the secondary sector will however be more limited, as the majority of schools in the secondary sector in Hackney are academies, free schools or faith schools (16 out of 18 schools) over which the Council has no direct jurisdiction (in terms of reduce PANs or decision to close). In this context, the Commission is concerned that measures to reduce local places may fall disproportionately on the small number of local maintained secondary schools. The Commission would therefore welcome further assurance on how local secondary schools are being engaged in preparation for prospective falling school rolls and how the authority intends to protect the local diversity of provision in secondary settings.

Managing school deficits

10. Financial viability is clearly a key determinant in the future of local schools facing challenges from falling school rolls. Data submitted as part of the Cabinet report suggests that this is a complex and varied picture however, where some schools in the scope for closure or merger have managed to maintain a significant budget surplus whilst others have accumulated substantial deficits. Whilst wishing to avoid comment on any singular schools financial situation it was not clear to the Commission how the authority had allowed a school to have an ongoing budget deficit of around £500k for the past three financial years and what support had been provided to turn around this position. This clearly presents a financial risk / exposure to the wider DSG budget if proposals are confirmed.
11. The scale of the financial challenges facing schools is clear. The most recent data published at Schools Forum suggest a deteriorating financial position across local community schools which indicate that the number of schools carrying forward a deficit revenue balance at end 2022/23 has risen from 11 to 13 local schools and where the total budget deficit across these schools has risen from £2,254,228 in 2021/22 to £3,463,813 in 2022/23 (a 53% increase). Nine of these schools will carry forward a revenue budget deficit in excess of £200k.

In the context of the above, the Commission welcomes the establishment of a dedicated schools strategy team to support schools in face of ongoing falling rolls and make sure schools are making appropriate plans to mitigate against falling rolls, and working together to minimise disruption and for the continuation of education. In addition however, the Commission is seeking further assurance as to what specific business planning and financial support will be made available to local schools to help contain and manage budgets, and there are effective plans in place to reduce budget deficits. The Commission is also keen to understand if there will be any additional capacity within the existing business support/financial planning function in Hackney Education, given that demands upon this service are likely to increase.

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Budget impact for Hackney Education and Council (General Fund)

12. Should the proposals to close two schools and merge a further four be confirmed by Cabinet later this year, it is estimated that this will result in an estimated £3.4m cost of which £1m will be recurring (for security of vacant sites). There are a number of uncertainties about the projections and accountabilities within this budget for which the Commission would like further reassurance:
- a) How confident are officers that the projected costs and financial liabilities in administering the proposed closures and mergers are realistic given the i) expected deteriorating financial positions of schools in scope as roll numbers may decline ii) the unknown contracted liabilities of the schools in scope?
 - b) Further clarity is also needed as to the financial responsibility of these costs and which local budgets will be accountable for any occurring losses/liabilities (e.g. which will be met by Direct Schools Grant and those by the Hackney Council General Fund).
 - c) The Commission is particularly concerned about those liabilities from the proposed closure and mergers which may fall within the Council General Fund, not only in the context of the broader pressures this budget is under, but also if this may impact on the Hackney Education budget (where discretionary spending is limited and budget savings adversely impact a small number of services).

Mitigations - SEND

13. Accepting that what has been presented thus far are just proposals for school closures and mergers, along with other stakeholders, the Commission would welcome further details in respect of the possible mitigations which *may* be put in place to support affected children, families and schools should these be approved.

The impact of prospective school closures and amalgamations on children with SEND has been a key feature in many of the consultation responses, with many parents anxious about the upheaval that a school move would have on their child. In particular, parents were concerned that they would be required to move their child with SEND from a one form entry school (which had been their preferred choice) to a larger two form entry school which may be a more challenging experience.

At present, documentation proposing the closure and merger of schools notes that 'additional provision' will be provided to support children with SEND, with no illustrative examples of what that might look like. In the context of the above, further details of the mitigations which might be put in place to support transition of children with SEND to new schools may provide some reassurance to parents impacted by this change.

Impact on the diversity of schools

14. A long-standing area of interest to the Commission has been diversity of children within local schools. The Commission believes that a key aim of local education provision is not only to ensure that there is diversity of schools in terms of range and type of settings available for parents to choose from, but also to ensure that there is diversity of children within local schools which reflect the rich and vibrant social, economic and cultural mix of local communities in Hackney. [For example the Commission notes that with the exception of one school in scope for proposals for closure or amalgamation, all have significantly higher rates of Free School Meal entitlement than the Hackney average (36%) for primary schools.]

Accepting the supremacy of parental choice in this matter, the Commission is keen to understand what assurance can be provided that current and future school place planning (or admissions processes) can protect and promote ambitions for diversity *within* and across local schools.

Appendix 2

Questionnaire Used in the Consultation

Consultation on the amalgamation/closure of 6 Hackney primary schools

Introduction

1. (Optional) Your name:

2. Which of the following best describes your interest in this consultation?

(Required)

- I am a parent, carer or guardian of a child at a school included in the proposals
- I am a member of staff or governor at a school included in the proposals
- I am a parent at another school in Hackney
- I am a member of staff or governor at another school in Hackney
- I am an interested member of the public
- Other

If other, please specify:

3. Which of the proposals do you wish to comment on?

Select all that apply

(Required)

- Proposal to close De Beauvoir Primary School
- Proposal to close Randal Cremer Primary School
- Proposed amalgamation of Colvestone Primary School with Princess May Primary School
- Proposed amalgamation of Baden Powell Primary School with Nightingale Primary School

Response to the proposals

4. Do you agree or disagree with the proposals?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. Please comment on the proposal(s) in the space below:

About you

This information will help us to understand our service users and residents, allowing us to establish if the response to the questionnaire is representative of the borough. All information is used under the strict controls of the 1998 Data Protection Act and the 2016 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

This information is optional and will not be used in a way that identifies you.

6. Postcode: Please provide the first half of your postcode followed by the first number of the second half

For example, if your postcode was E8 1DY, you would write E8 1. If your postcode was N16 5HB, you would write N16 5.

Postcode:

7. Gender: Are you...

- Male
- Female
- Non Binary
- Another term

If you prefer to use your own term please provide this here:

8. Age: what is your age group?

- Under 16
- 16-17
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+

9. Disability: Under the Equality Act you are disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

- Yes
- No

10. Caring responsibilities: A carer is someone who spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a family member, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone?

- Yes
- No

11. Ethnicity: Are you...

- Asian or Asian British
- White or White British
- Black or Black British
- Mixed background
- Other ethnic group

Other (please state if you wish):

12. Religion or belief: Are you or do you have...

- Atheist/no religious belief
- Christian
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Secular beliefs
- Charedi
- Jewish
- Sikh

Other (please state if you wish):

13. Sexual orientation: Are you...

- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Gay man
- Lesbian or Gay woman
- Pansexual
- Asexual
- Queer
- All other sexual orientations
- Prefer not to say

Other (please state if you wish):

14. Housing Tenure: Which of the following best describes the ownership of your home?

- Being bought on a mortgage
- Owned outright
- Rented (Local Authority/Council)
- Rented (Housing Association/Trust)

- Rented (private)
- Shared ownership (part rent/part buy)
- Don't know



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EXECUTIVE DECISION CALL-IN REQUEST

Part Four, Section E Council's Constitution

Key decision reference number	CE S283
Decision title	Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy
Date of decision	11 December 2023
Decision maker	Cabinet
Date of publication of decision	11 December 2023

<p>Are you requesting a call-in of the entire decision, or part of the decision.</p> <p>If you are requesting a call-in of part of the decision only, please explain which part.</p>	<p>Cabinet agree to:</p> <p>3.1 close (discontinue) De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024</p> <p>3.2 close (discontinue) Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.</p> <p>3.3 close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.</p> <p>3.4 close (discontinue) Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.</p> <p>3.5 increase the published admission number of Nightingale Primary School by adding an additional form of entry to all year groups. This proposal is related to the recommendation at 3.4.</p> <p>We are calling in decision 3.3 and 3.4 regarding Colvestone Primary School and Baden Powell Primary School.</p>
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In accordance with [Part Four, Section E](#) of the Council's Constitution, the power to call-in an executive decision should only be used in exceptional circumstances in a number of circumstances specified in paragraph 1.2 of that Section.

A request for a call-in must be made within **5 working days** of the decision being published.

Upon receipt of the completed call-in request form, the Monitoring Officer will assess whether the request meets the requirements for call-in. The Monitoring Officer's decision is final, although there is a presumption in favour of the request being valid.

Pending consideration by the Monitoring Officer, the decision is suspended and no action may be taken upon it. If the Monitoring Officer determines that the call-in is valid, the decision will remain suspended until consideration of the call-in has taken place.

The completed request form will be published as part of the report to the Scrutiny Panel, alongside a copy of the report relating to the called-in decision.

Which of the following circumstances for call-in, specified in the Council's Constitution, do you believe applies to the decision in question (please mark with an 'X' in the relevant box):

The decision-maker did not make the decision in accordance with the principles of decision-making, namely:

1. Proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome).
2. Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers.
3. Respect for human rights.
4. A presumption in favour of openness.
5. Clarity of aims and desired outcomes.
6. Relevant matters have been ignored.
7. Consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions.
8. Due regard to the statutory framework, guidance and Codes of Conduct.

Please list those which apply:

2. Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers.
 5. Clarity of aims and desired outcomes.
 7. Consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions.

The decision maker did not act in accordance with the Council's policy framework.

Article 4.7 of the Council's Constitution provides that the following documents comprise the Council's policy framework:

- Local Transport Plan
- Local Development Framework documents
- Local Area Action Plans
- Licensing Statement
- Gambling Statement
- Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy
- Youth Justice Plan
- Strategic Plan

- Housing Strategy
- Equalities Statement

The decision maker did not act in accordance with the Council's budget.

The decision maker failed to consider relevant evidence when making the decision.

The decision would not be in the interests of the borough's residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted.

If you believe that the decision-maker did not make the decision in accordance with the principles of decision-making, please provide details of why you consider this to be the case.

2. Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers.

The approach taken has undermined the consultation as the early announcement of the schools "at risk" made schools vulnerable, as high numbers of families transfer their children to alternative schools. For instance, De Beauvoir had 118 pupils in Jan 2023 but this has dropped to just 48 pupils by November 2023.

There has also been no information about the decision for some children to have guaranteed places (together as a school) and others did not.

There have been three engagement/consultation periods as part of this process and the responses have been overwhelmingly against the proposals. Most recently these were analysed and presented to the council by a commissioned organisation, Kwest.

However, none of the feedback has impacted the proposal or the decision.

No information has been provided about how the consultation was going to be used and how stakeholders could provide information which might influence the decision.

Therefore, due consultation has not been undertaken.

5. Clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

The stated aim of these proposals is to bring surplus vacancies towards a target level of 5-10% based on initial data of 600 surplus Reception places (21%) in January 2023. The May Cabinet report states that it will remove 135 Reception places. However it fails to acknowledge a number of key issues;

- Schools are reducing surplus places by unofficially capped their Published Admissions Numbers (PAN) to respond to falling rolls and to avoid financial deficits. November vacancy data shows that surplus Reception places has already reduced to 439 places but the report still focuses on the formal PAN figures.
- 134 of the vacant Reception places (31% of the whole amount) are in just eight faith schools but no faith schools were in scope - the target cannot be achieved without addressing this and the Council does have the power to close these schools if it wants to.
- The proposed closures have limited impact on surplus spaces as schools in scope have already capped their PANs - the closure of these four schools actually means a further reduction of just 60 places.

A cost-benefit analysis has been requested and not provided.

Different criteria have been used to make and justify the decision for each setting and this has not been consistent or in line with the stated aim e.g. historic debt, falling role, rationalising school estate.

The stated desired outcome of two school mergers has subsequently been revealed as an impossibility and in fact this framing of a merger confused the process and the consultation and gave false hope to staff and parents that staff would be carried over into the absorbing schools.

The PAN is 30 for Baden Powell and 30 for Nightingale. The May Cabinet report states that the amalgamation of these two schools would reduce overall PAN by 30 places. However, if two single-form schools amalgamate into one two-form school then there is no reduction in overall places. This is acknowledged in the September Cabinet report as the PAN for Nightingale increases from 30 - 60 so no overall reduction.

7. Consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions.

We understand that a long-list of schools was under consideration but only the short-list was published and put to consultation. Bringing parents and the community in earlier, to discuss the long-list would have included all stakeholders in the decision making process and helped the council to protect the things important to residents. We appreciate that this approach is not available now given where we are in this process but we'd like to see this considered for any future decisions regarding school closures.

The consideration and evaluation of alternatives has been limited throughout this process. The decision regarding the four schools was initially presented as one decision with very limited information about why these schools had been chosen, particularly why the particular 'mergers' were being proposed.

There was no analysis or alternatives considered on a school by school basis during the consultation, and there has been no account of any context-specific issues.

The September Cabinet report highlights a small number of alternatives that were considered for each school in scope and the reasons for their dismissal. However, it acknowledges that pupil numbers have changed and that options that were dismissed are now viable but this is then rejected on financial grounds (even though financial projections are based on pupil numbers). The report additionally adds that 'Amalgamating into a one form entry school is not financially preferable.' No financial grounds for this new claim are offered, nor is a rationale for the prejudicing of single form schools in the Council system supported by the Estate Strategy.

During the consultation periods, a number of alternative options were suggested but not considered, explored or adequate responses provided for their dismissal:

- To close and guarantee places at different schools
- Use spare space to develop a SEN unit to expand the school
- Enact substantial efficiency savings identified in the independent School resource

	management advisers (SRMA) commissioned by Colvestone.
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<p>If you believe that the decision-maker did not act in accordance with the Council's policy framework, please list which of the documents from within the framework you consider to be relevant and why you consider that the decision-maker has not acted in accordance with it / them (providing page / paragraph references where possible).</p>	N/A
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<p>If you believe that the decision-maker did not act in accordance with the Council's budget, please provide details of why you consider this to be the case.</p>	N/A
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<p>If you believe that the decision-maker failed to consider relevant evidence, please explain what evidence you believe has not been considered.</p>	<p>PAN versus capped data</p> <p>The December Cabinet report concludes that there are sufficient vacancies across the borough to accommodate pupils from the four schools to close. However, the analysis is based on the official PAN not the capped PAN which is the vacancy information that parents looking for alternative places actually receive.</p> <p>The four proposed school closures are concentrated in central/south west Hackney, with pupils competing for the same places in an area where two larger schools (Holy Trinity and Princess May) have both unofficially capped their PAN from 60 to 30. A detailed analysis of the vacancies for each of the proposed school closures shows that these proposals are forcing parents in this area to make very difficult decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some schools in the area have very few vacancies so families with children in different year groups cannot get in. - Many of the vacancies are at faith schools which many families are not choosing
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(evidenced by falling demand and a Council survey).

- Some of the closest schools with vacancies are out of borough in Islington or Tower Hamlets.

The current proposal to close Colvestone and guarantee pupils a place at Princess May is flawed. The aim is to reduce PAN from 90 to 60 (PM is 60 and Colvestone is 30) by closing Colvestone. However, Princess May has unofficially capped their PAN at 30 already so the closure of Colvestone will not reduce overall PAN any further. This proposal will force Princess May to accept an unknown number of pupils, which will destabilise their new one-form financial model. Even if all Colvestone pupils transferred, it would not be a full two-form school so would have to introduce vertical groups and mixed classes. Under the current criteria for school closures, it would be under-subscribed creating a similar environment to the ones the council is directly trying to avoid with these proposals and may be at risk again in the future (potentially affecting families for a second time).

Further, Hackney Education is the authority that can set PANs for Local Authority schools (with limited consultation: the raising of Nightingale Primary School's PAN from 30 to 60 was added to this consultation at the 'Formal Consultation' stage without pre-announcement).

Deeds

Hackney Council has not released the historic deeds for the Colvestone buildings (despite FOI requests) that it is believed contain covenants that would greatly restrict the re-purposing (and potentially, ownership) of the buildings were the school to be closed. This due diligence is required before the decision proceeds.

Dalston plan - homes being built in the area

As stated on the council's website (<https://hackney.gov.uk/dalston-spd>) "This draft Plan...sets out how, over 600 new homes, 700sqm of community space and 14,000 sqm of commercial and workspace (including retail and office space) can be delivered across 10 sites in Dalston."

When asked what impact this will have on the number of children in Dalston, the council has stated it will have 'no impact' on medium to long term demand without providing any analysis or workings for this assumption.

Using figures from the Council's published housing volume and mix data for the Dalston Plan sites and the GLA's population yield calculator / data sets: the development is projected to bring 100 children of primary school age (and 150 aged 0-4 downstream) to the centre of Dalston in the short to mid-term.

For all of these major sites, Colvestone is the nearest primary school provision. This far exceeds the claimed 'no impact' on medium to long term demand claimed in the Council's consultation documents, and is clear evidence of the 'future demand for places' that is the Statutory consideration for closing or maintaining Local Authority schools.

Note: Any housing market assessment using solely GLA housing projections will not reflect any impact of the Dalston plan as the developments have not passed planning (the criteria for inclusion) even though the plan (LP33) has been adopted by Hackney Council.

The Colvestone Story

After a period of instability, Hackney Education supported Colvestone to enter into partnership with Blossom Federation in August 2022. The successful arrangement saw a rapid improvement in all areas: leadership; new website; quality of education; financial management and more attractive interior. Hackney Council have also invested nearly £1m in the school building with complete transformation of the grade II listed railings in front of the school and roof repairs. Colvestone now looks amazing but for many months the building was surrounded in scaffold, with temporary fencing at the front and the beautiful School Hall was not in use for nearly two years.

Unfortunately these changes all occurred in Winter 2022/23, whilst parents were viewing and choosing primary schools so the Reception preferences for Colvestone for September 2023 were low.

	Council data also appears to show that Reception numbers in 2023 were further suppressed by the misallocation of non-preference places.
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<p>If you believe that the decision is not in the interests of the borough’s residents, please explain why you consider this to be the case.</p>	<p>The December Cabinet report concludes that there are sufficient vacancies across the borough to accommodate pupils from the four schools to close. However it acknowledges that they make a number of assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They keep using ‘statutory walking distance’ which is 2 miles for children aged 5 - 8 and 3 miles for children aged 8+. However this is guidance on when to provide free school transport - not the basis on which to decide what is an appropriately ‘local’ school. This is clearly not within the best interest of residents as it will make the journey to / from school and therefore the school day more difficult for families. - There is no obligation to provide a range of schools so it does not matter what type of school has vacancies. This does not take into consideration what is important to families (such as one-form entry, secular schools).
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<p>If you believe that a preferable alternative decision could be adopted, please explain what you consider that preferable alternative to be.</p>	<p>Retain Colvestone Primary School so that the school is able to take in children from other schools and is given the opportunity to exhaust all options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efficiencies identified from SRMA - Time for the improvements (the hall being open, new technology, £1m investment into exterior) to attract families - Continue the transformational and committed partnership with Blossom Federation <p>It would maintain a school in a historic Grade ii listed building, which is a cornerstone of St Marks Conservation Area and identified as key infrastructure in the Dalston Plan and a core element of the 21st Century Street on Colvestone Crescent.</p> <p>Pause and review the closure of Baden Powell and Colvestone Schools, looking at the wider picture and involving parents and staff of other schools that may come into scope at an earlier stage.</p>
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<p>Please provide any other additional information you</p>	
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would like to submit in support of the call-in (please note that this additional information must relate to the reasons under which a call-in can be made).

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Details of Councillors making the call-in request (unless otherwise indicated, the first Councillor listed will be taken to be the 'lead requester')

Councillor Zoë Garbett
Councillor Alastair Binnie-Lubbock
Councillor Grace Adebayo
Councillor Simche Steinberger
Councillor Hershy Lisser

In the event that the request is determined to be valid by the Monitoring Officer, does the lead requester wish to make a statement or representation at the meeting when the call-in is considered by the Scrutiny Panel? [please select an option from the drop down list]

Yes

Date: 18 December 2023

Once completed, this form should be returned to the Council's Monitoring Officer - monitoringofficer@hackney.gov.uk

Part Four - Procedure Rules

Section E - Call In Procedure Rules

A [call-in](#) is the process whereby [Councillors](#) who are not members of the [Cabinet](#) can request that executive decisions are considered by the [Scrutiny Panel](#).

Scope of the rules

- 1.1 All Councillors have the ability to call-in the majority of “executive decisions”, and this is a fundamental aspect of the Council’s scrutiny processes. This includes decisions taken by the [Elected Mayor](#) and Cabinet, or [Officers](#) acting under [powers delegated](#) to them.
- 1.2 The power should only be used in exceptional circumstances where the Councillors calling-in the decision have evidence to suggest that:
 - (a) The decision maker did not make the decision in accordance with the principles of decision making, namely
 - proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome).
 - due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers.
 - respect for human rights.
 - a presumption in favour of openness.
 - clarity of aims and desired outcomes.
 - relevant matters have been ignored.
 - consideration and evaluation of alternatives and reasons for decisions.
 - due regard to the statutory framework, guidance and Codes of Conduct.
 - (b) The decision maker did not act in accordance with the [policy framework](#).
 - (c) The decision maker did not act in accordance with the Council’s [budget](#).
 - (d) The decision maker failed to consider relevant evidence when making the decision.
 - (e) The decision would not be in the interests of the borough’s residents and a preferable alternative decision could be adopted.

Requirements for call-in

- 2.1 In order to ensure that call-in is not abused, nor causes unreasonable delay, the following requirements must be fully satisfied before a matter will be considered for call-in:
- (a) At least five Councillors who are not members of the Council's executive (one of which will be the named signatory) must request a call-in of the decision. The Councillors requesting the call-in will decide who will be the 'lead requestor'.
 - (b) The request for call-in must specify the reason for the call-in based upon paragraph 1.2 above and provide sufficient detail to enable the decision to be scrutinised.
 - (c) The request for call-in must be received by the [Monitoring Officer](#) within 5 working days of the decision being published. The request for call-in should be submitted electronically. The lead requestor must complete and submit a form and each of the other Councillors supporting the call-in must send an email in support. All emails must be sent from the Councillors' individual Council email addresses.
 - (d) The decision for which call-in is requested must not have been subject to a prior call-in request.

Suspension and publication of the decision

- 3.1 Decisions made by the Cabinet, a Cabinet Member or an executive decision made by an officer under delegated powers, will be published on the working day following the decision being made.
- 3.2 The decisions will include the date of publication and will specify that it will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiration of 5 days after publication unless the decision is called-in.

Assessing the call-in request

- 4.1 Upon receipt of any call-in request, the Monitoring Officer will assess the call-in form and the information supporting the request to decide whether it meets the requirements set out in these Rules.
- 4.2 The Monitoring Officer will have the final say as to whether the request is a valid call-in, with the presumption in favour of it being valid.

- 4.3. The decision will remain suspended until the Monitoring Officer has completed their assessment of the request. If the call-in request is deemed valid, the decision will remain suspended to enable the consideration of the call-in to take place, as detailed below.

Consideration of the call-in

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer shall notify the Elected Mayor and Cabinet of any call-in that they determine to be valid.
- 5.2 The call-in shall be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Scrutiny Panel. However, if there is no meeting of the Scrutiny Panel scheduled to take place within 10 working days of the Monitoring Officer's decision, the Monitoring Officer shall arrange for a special meeting of the Scrutiny Panel to be held as soon as reasonably practicable, taking into account the existing calendar of Council meetings.
- 5.3 A report for the Scrutiny Panel shall be prepared, which shall include a copy of the decision called-in and a copy of the call-in request form.
- 5.4 The Scrutiny Panel will hear from the lead requestor, the Councillor of Cabinet within whose portfolio the decision rests and, in the case of a delegated officer decision, the officer who took the decision. The [Chair](#) of the Scrutiny Panel has the discretion to enable other persons to be heard at the meeting.

Outcomes of call-in

- 6.1 When considering the call-in, the Scrutiny Panel has the following options:
- a) Uphold the original decision: In this case, the original decision stands and can be implemented.
 - b) Uphold the call-in: In this case, the decision will be referred to either:
 - (i) The original decision maker for reconsideration.
 - (ii) The Cabinet for its consideration where the original decision was taken by an officer under delegation.
 - (iii) [Full Council](#), if the Scrutiny Panel concludes that the decision was contrary to the Council's Policy Framework or contrary to (or not wholly in accordance with) the approved Budget.

NB: In relation to (i) and (ii) above, the matter may not be called-in a second time.

Protection from call-in

- 7.1 The call-in procedure shall not apply where the decision being taken has been protected from call-in by the [Chief Executive](#). A decision may only be protected if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process, would seriously prejudice the interests of the Council or the public interest.
- 7.2 The Chair of the Scrutiny Panel must be consulted before any decision to protect is taken. In the absence of the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel, the [Speaker](#) is to be consulted.
- 7.3 To allow the protection to take place the Chief Executive must indicate their reasons for the decision to protect, this should be published online alongside the decision in question.
- 7.4 Any protection from call-in decision must be reported to the next meeting of the Full Council, including the rationale.
- 7.5 The operation of the protection provisions shall be monitored annually and a report submitted to Full Council if it is considered that any review of the provisions is necessary.

Referral of decisions contrary to the Policy Framework or the Budget

- 8.1 Where the Scrutiny Panel concludes that the decision called-in is, or if made would be, contrary to the Policy Framework or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with, the Budget then as indicated above, the decision will be referred to Full Council.
- 8.2 The Monitoring Officer will prepare a report for Full Council, consulting with the [s151 Officer](#) in cases where the Scrutiny Panel concludes that the decision is contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget. That report will include the original decision, the call-in request form and the minutes of the Scrutiny Panel. The Monitoring Officer, and s151 Officer as required, will include their findings as to whether the decision is or is not contrary to the Policy Framework or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with, the Budget.
- 8.3 The Monitoring Officer's report will be submitted to the next available meeting of Cabinet for their consideration and to determine what action it wishes to take having regard to the Monitoring Officer's findings.
- 8.4 At that meeting, Cabinet must decide upon the action it wishes to take, if any, having regard to the Monitoring Officer's findings and will prepare and submit its own report to Full Council.

Part Four - Procedure Rules

Section E - Call In Procedure Rules

8.5 When Full Council considers the Call-In and associated reports on the matter it has the following options:

- a) Endorse that the decision falls within the existing Policy Framework or the Budget. In this case no further action is required, and the decision of the Full Council will be recorded in its minutes and circulated to all Councillors in the normal way.
- b) Amend the existing Policy Framework or the Budget to encompass the decision of the body or individual responsible for that “Executive” function, and agree to the decision with immediate effect. In this case, no further action is required, and that decision of the Full Council will be recorded in its minutes and circulated to all Councillors in the normal way.
- c) Uphold the view that the decision is contrary to a Policy Framework Document or the Budget and choose not to amend policy to accommodate it, requiring the Cabinet to reconsider the matter further in accordance with the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

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Scrutiny Panel 9th January 2024 Item 5 – Exclusion of the Press and Public	Item No 5
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Note from the Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums:

Item 6 allows for the consideration of exempt information.

Proposed resolution:

That the press and public be excluded during discussion of the remaining items on the agenda, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 & 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Scrutiny Panel 9th January 2024 Item 6 – Exempt Appendix	Item No 6
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Appendix C from Supplementary Cabinet Report is exempt by virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

By Virtue of Paragraph 1
Information relating to any individual.

By Virtue of Paragraph 2
Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

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