

## Appendix C: Demand for reception places in Hackney

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### 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).

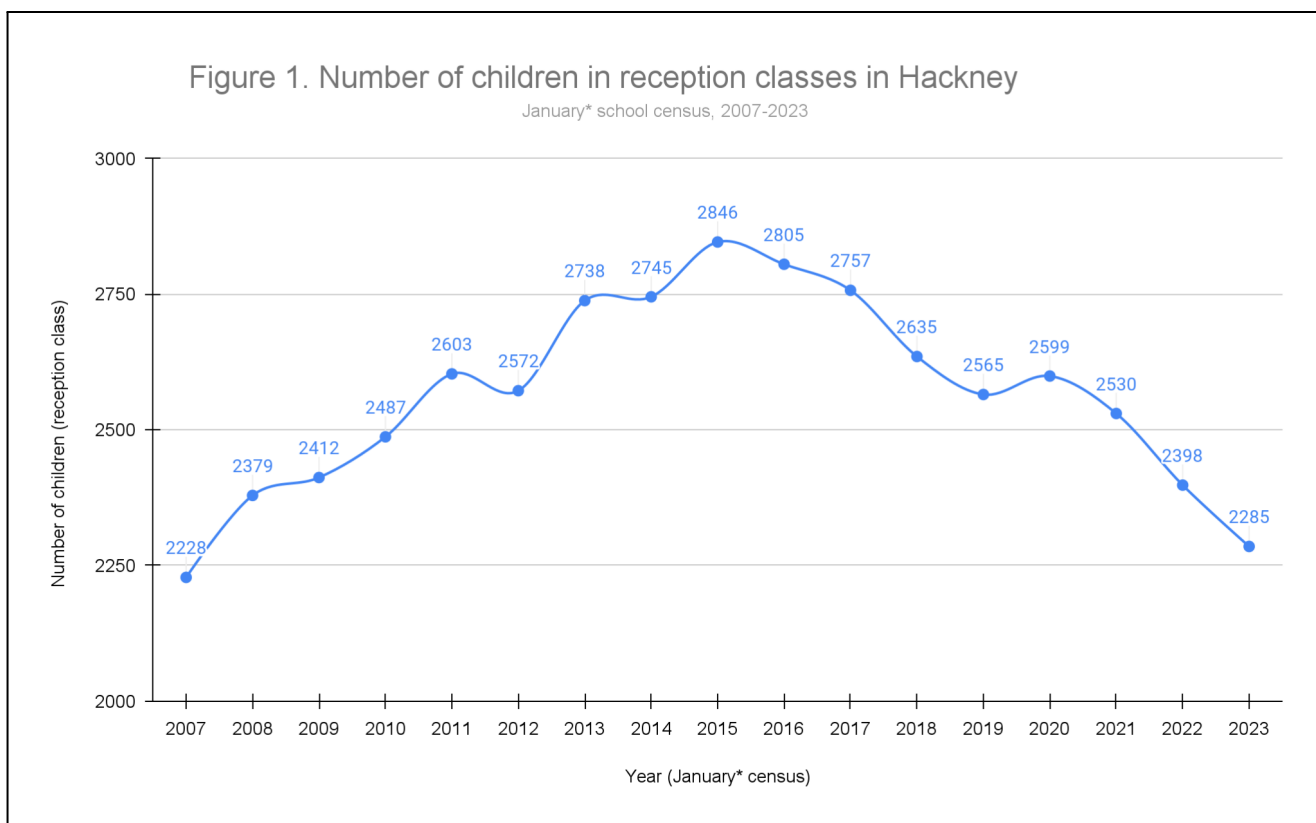
**Table 1. Primary and secondary schools by type**

School type	Primary	Secondary
<b>Community schools</b> ( <i>schools which are controlled and run by the local authority</i> )	38	1
<b>Voluntary aided schools</b> ( <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
<b>Academies</b> ( <i>state funded schools outside of LA control. Many of these schools converted from maintained to academy.</i> )	5	9
<b>Free schools</b> ( <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
<b>Total</b>	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)**

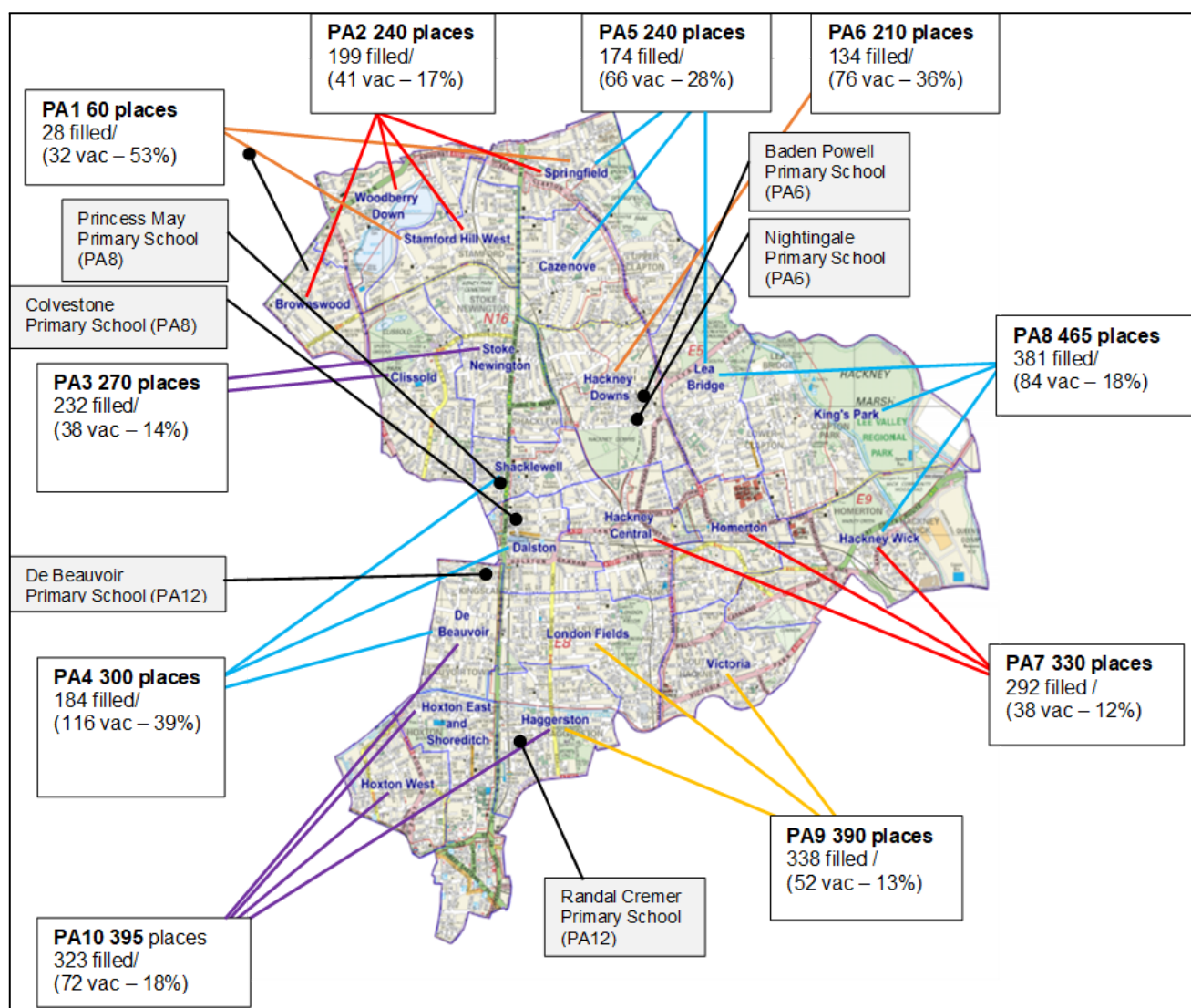
Academic Year	Children on roll (January census)	Number of places available based on PANs	Surplus places based on PANs	% surplus places based on PANs
2015/16	2805	3080	275	9%
2016/17	2757	3170	413	13%
2017/18	2635	3155	520	17%
2018/19	2565	3155	590	19%
2019/20	2599	3035	436	14%
2020/21	2530	3035	505	17%
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 Authority<sup>1</sup> to provide an annual school rolls projection output based on January school census data in the year that the projections are produced.<sup>2</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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
<b>Total number of places removed</b>				<b>120</b>

\*= 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
<b>Total number of places removed</b>				<b>135</b>

**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
<b>Total number of places removed</b>				<b>120</b>

\* = 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*
<b>Total</b>			<b>240-330*</b>

\*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.*