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**Decision Maker:** **PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES**

**Date:** **For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee on 20 June 2023**

**Decision Type:** Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

**Title:** **SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING REPORT 2023-27**

**Contact Officer:** Robert Bollen, Head of Strategic Place Planning  
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**Chief Officer:** Director of Education

**Ward:** All Wards

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1. Reason for decision/report and options

- 1.1 This report asks the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Holder to consider the Council's School Place Planning Report 2023-27 that sets out how the Council's plans to meet the forecast need for primary, secondary and specialist places and seeks agreement to the recommendations of the School Places Working Party held on 26 April 2023.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Portfolio Holder agrees:

- 2.1 That pupil roll projections and other trend data set out in the report (Appendix 2) be noted.
- 2.2 That the continued increase in the number of children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), above demographic trends be noted.
- 2.3 That a planning margin of 5% above the GLA School Roll Projections continues to be implemented to provide for local variations in need and to meet parental preferences.
- 2.4 That the GLA School Roll Projections indicate a potential future reduction in the need for primary places and this position needs to be kept under review.

- 2.5 Whilst there are, currently, sufficient places available or planned to meet current and projected demand for school places, the Council will work with schools to safeguard the existing supply of school places as required.
- 2.6 That the Council will prioritise the needs of education within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- 2.7 That there are specific pressures for placements for pupils with an Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and that the Council works with local schools, trusts and the DfE to bring proposals forward to increase capacity and improve provision where necessary. The High Needs Funding and Estates Review will be a key route for identifying opportunities to bring forward additional capacity.
- 2.8 That discussions be undertaken with schools, multi academy trusts and the DfE, as outlined in this report, to ensure a sufficient supply of mainstream school places in the Borough, including through expansions and opening new schools.
- 2.9 That Members note the recent notification received from the Department for Education's Regional Director that the Harris Federation has withdrawn its application to open the Harris Kent House free school.
- 2.10 That whilst there has been delay in the delivery of Redwood Academy, the special free school, the Council is working proactively with both the Department for Education and operator Rivermead Inclusive Trust to open the school at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.11 That the Council should actively seek to increase the capacity of in-Borough specialist provision.
- 2.12 Where expansion is agreed, to implement through the education capital programme (subject to the availability of funds).
- 2.13 That officers continue dialogue with the DfE on amending the primary and secondary planning areas.

## Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

### 1. Summary of Impact:

53,262 pupils in state funded schools in Bromley, including children and young people in special schools, additionally resourced provisions and alternative provision.

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## Transformation Policy

### 1. Policy Status: Existing Policy

### 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority:

(1) For children and young people to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.

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## Financial

### 1. Cost of proposal: No Cost

### 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:

### 3. Budget head/performance centre: Education Capital Programme

### 4. Total current budget for this head: £105,124k

### 5. Source of funding: DfE Basic Need Capital, DfE Send Capital Grant

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## Personnel

### 1. Number of staff (*current and additional*):

### 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:

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## Legal

### 1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement

### 2. Call-in: Applicable: Portfolio Holder decision.

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## Procurement

### 1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not applicable

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## Property

### 1. Summary of Property Implications: Not applicable

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## Carbon Reduction and Social Value

### 1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not applicable

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## Impact on the Local Economy

### 1. Summary of Local Economy Implications: Not applicable

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## Impact on Health and Wellbeing

### 1. Summary of Health and Wellbeing Implications: Not applicable

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## Customer Impact

### 1. Estimated number of users or customers (*current and projected*):

53,262 pupils in state funded schools in Bromley.

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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

### 3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty for ensuring that there are sufficient school places locally to meet need in the Borough. The attached School Place Planning Report 2022 (Appendix 2) sets out the Council's proposals to meet this duty.
- 3.2 On 26 April 2022 the Council's School Place Working Group, a sub-group of the Council's Education, Children and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee, met to consider the Report and make recommendations to the Education, Children and Families Portfolio Holder. Minutes of the meeting are attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.3. The strategy focusses on the period 2023-27 but includes analysis beyond that date. The strategy reviews the projections of the future need for school places and other relevant demographic information to inform planning for school places. Information sources include:
- 2020 GLA School Roll Projections
  - DfE School Census
  - GLA population projections
  - ONS data on live births and migration
- 3.4 In common with most London local authorities, Bromley uses the GLA School Roll Projections produced by the GLA as the primary source for informing its planning for school places. These are based on the latest ONS population data and take into account information on school rolls and dwelling stock changes.
- 3.5 For the purposes of planning for primary school places, the projections in Bromley are split into 9 school place planning areas. For secondary planning there is a single planning area that covers the whole borough. The planning areas are agreed with the Department for Education (DfE) and are used by Government to calculate Basic Need capital allocations.
- 3.6 The School Place Planning Report provides analysis of the need for school places in Bromley at both at a borough-wide level and based on the 9 primary school place planning areas. The local analysis includes projections of the future need for school places, details of school developments and Free Schools that have been delivered and future proposals for school expansions and new schools.
- 3.7 Whilst over recent years the Council's main focus has been on meeting primary aged need, the focus of need has now changed with priorities now being ensuring that there are sufficient secondary school places and meeting the growing need for places for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- 3.9 In Bromley, providing additional school capacity has been delivered through a range of options; opening bulge classes, permanently expanding existing schools and the creation of new Free Schools. Whereas in the primary sector capacity was mainly added through the extension of existing schools, the provision of additional secondary capacity has primarily been delivered through the creation of Free Schools.
- 3.10 Two secondary Free Schools have opened in Bromley, Eden Park High School and Bullers Wood School for Boys. A further special free school, Redwood Academy, is in the pre-opening phase.
- 3.11 On 17 May 2023, following the meeting of the School Places Working Group, the Council received notification from the Department for Education that Harris Kent House was being withdrawn as a pipeline free school, citing that *"Sadly, the site difficulties could not be*

*overcome and subsequently, Harris Federation has decided to withdraw its application from the programme.”*

- 3.12 The requirement for places will continue to be kept under review and further reports will be made on a regular basis with an update of forecasts, actual rolls, financing and decisions about the opening and enlargement of schools. In this way it is hoped not only to secure sufficient places but to meet parental preferences so far as is possible.
- 3.13 In 2022, following recommendation from the Council’s School Places working group, the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Holder agreed that officers enter dialogue with the DfE on amending the primary and secondary planning areas. This dialogue is ongoing with proposals to amend planning primary areas so that they are co-terminus with ward boundaries and to move from a single to 2 secondary planning areas.
- 3.14 Following the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy in 2021, and loss of S106 funding for education schemes, consideration needs to be given with regards to the inclusion of education capital schemes within the Council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

#### **4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN**

- 4.1 The strategy supports vulnerable children by ensuring that sufficient school places are available to meet local need. Schools offer educational support to children, their parents and carers and can be the first port of call/point of identification when they need additional help and support

#### **5. TRANSFORMATION/POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Bromley Council has an established policy for the review and strategic planning of school places and related school organisation. The need to ensure sufficient school places, the quality of those places and their efficient organisation is a priority within the Council’s strategy Making Bromley Even Better 2021-31; ‘For children and young people to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.’ In seeking best value in the delivery of school places this proposal will be the priority; ‘To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley’s residents.’ The proposals contained within this report also contribute to key targets within the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council has a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to secure sufficient schools to meet demand in its area, ensuring that schools are sufficient in “number, character and equipment”. Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a statutory duty upon the Council to help children and young people achieve the best possible educational outcomes and keep under review the educational provision for children and young people who have SEN or a disability.
- 6.2 This report seeks approval from the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Holder to note the recommendations set out in the Council’s School Place Planning Report 2023-27 and seeks agreement to the recommendations of the School Places Working Party on 26 April 2023 to facilitate the Council to meet its statutory duties.
- 6.3 The role of Policy Development and Scrutiny includes:
1. The development of the Council’s plans within the policy framework that make up this portfolio and exploring whether such plans are being achieved effectively.

2. Receiving reports and making recommendations on performance monitoring of functions falling within the remit of this portfolio which include:
- a) all of the functions of the Council as an education authority under the Education Acts, School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and all other relevant legislation in force from time to time; and
  - b) all functions of the Council in so far as they relate to the provision of opportunities for education, training and learning outside the school environment including pre-school learning.
- 6.4 This report will be put before the Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Children, Education and Families Portfolio holder in accordance with the Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference and Appendix 1 to the Executive Procedure Rules.

**7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, in future reports to Committee, the financial impact of meeting the Council’s sufficiency duty will be included within reports on the Council’s Basic Need Capital Programme.

**8. CUSTOMER IMPACT**

- 8.1 The Council’s plans to meet its school places sufficiency duty will benefit 53,262 children and young people and their families.

<b>Non-Applicable Headings:</b>	<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b> <b>PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS</b> <b>PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS,</b> <b>IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY</b> <b>PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS</b> <b>CARBON REDUCTION/SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS</b> <b>WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS</b>
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[List any documents used in preparation of this report - Title of document and date]