

Proposal to increase Holmleigh Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) and to add special educational needs provision for language

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 October 2024'.

The proposal in this notice is to formally increase the intake at Holmleigh Primary School from 1 to 2 forms of entry and to add a Language Resourced Provision on 1 September 2025.

This notice is related to the separate notice outlining the Council's proposal to discontinue (close) Sir Thomas Abney School (Fairholt Rd, London N16 5ED) and amalgamate (merge) its student body with that of Holmleigh Primary School (Dunsmure Rd, London N16 5PU). That notice can be found at: consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/stat-notice-closure-merger.

These notices are published following a consultation which took place between 8 October and 19 November 2024. The proposed closure would take effect on 31 August 2025. The changes described in this notice would take place on 1 September 2025.

Together, these proposals would see:

- All pupils attending Sir Thomas Abney School able to transfer to the roll of Holmleigh Primary School.
- Holmleigh Primary School increase its intake from a one form entry school (30 pupils each year across all year groups), to two forms of entry (60 pupils each year across all year groups). The planned admission number for the school would be 420.
- A Language Resourced Provision (LRP) for up to 10 pupils established at Holmleigh Primary School.
- The pupils currently at the LRP at Sir Thomas Abney able to transfer to the new Holmleigh LRP.
- Pupils currently on roll at Holmleigh Primary School move to the site on Fairholt Rd, London N16 5ED (currently Sir Thomas Abney School's site)

This proposal to expand Holmleigh Primary School from 1FE to 2FE and to add special educational needs provision was published on 6 February 2025. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/stat-notice-closure-merger (scan the QR code below), 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 5 March 2025 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in April 2025, to take the final decision on the proposals in this notice and the linked notice.

This notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at: consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/stat-notice-closure-merger. If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

Terry Bryan



Assistant Director, Schools Estate Strategy

Publication date: 6 February 2025



Full Statutory Proposal to increase Holmleigh Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) and to add special educational needs provision for language

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:

Holmleigh Primary School (community school).
Dunsmure Road
London
N16 5PU
Tel: 020 8802 7420
Email: admin@holmleigh.hackney.sch.uk

2. Description of alteration and evidence of demand

Hackney Council proposes to increase the number of pupils at Holmleigh Primary School on 1 September 2025. The increase is to accommodate children from Sir Thomas Abney School which is proposed to be discontinued on 31 August 2025 and to amalgamate (merge) its student body with Holmleigh Primary School. A Language Resourced Provision would be added to Holmleigh Primary School ensuring no reduction in local SEND offer.

From 1 September 2025, Holmleigh Primary School would 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. A Language Resourced Provision (LRP) for up to 10 pupils would be added to Holmleigh Primary School, with the pupils currently in the LRP at Sir Thomas Abney able to transfer to the new provision.

This proposal is due to the fall in the number of children in the area whereby there are now considerably fewer pupils in Hackney primary schools. This has led to a number of schools not being able to remain financially viable, which then impacts on their ability to continue to provide quality education. The enlargement of Holmleigh Primary School would provide enough places for all of the 173 children displaced at Sir Thomas Abney as well as create a larger, more resilient and sustainable single school going forward, with no reduction to Hackney's specialist language provision.

Borough Position

At the January 2024 pupil census there were 2400 fewer children in the borough's primary schools when compared to January 2017, the year when numbers in our primary schools peaked. The number of children joining reception classes in Hackney's mainstream primary schools has, in fact, been falling since 2015. The reception numbers are predicted to continue falling over the coming years and could see the total pupil numbers in mainstream primary schools drop by a further 2700 or more by the mid-2030s.

At the October 2024 census there were 2065 children in reception in mainstream primary schools. This is well below the current reception capacity of 2675 places. This means that there were 610 (23%) unfilled reception places in Hackney. Across all year groups there were 4855 (24%) unfilled places in Hackney.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively, and aims to reduce surplus places in the borough to a sustainable level.

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 may well put schools at severe financial risk.

3. Objectives

The Council has consulted on proposals to reduce the number of vacant reception places by 31 August 2025, by:

- Discontinuing two primary schools (St Dominic's Catholic Primary School and St Mary's CofE Primary schools);
- Amalgamating (merging) Oldhill Community School and Harrington Hill Primary School, and;
- Amalgamating (merging) Sir Thomas Abney School and Holmleigh Primary School

This Statutory Notice and full proposal outlines a prescribed alteration to Holmleigh Primary School which would expand the school from 1FE to 2FE to accommodate pupils from the closure of Sir Thomas Abney School on 31 August 2025.

Holmleigh Primary School would be relocated to the merged school site at Fairholt Rd, N16 5ED. The change would come into effect from 1 September 2025. In addition, it outlines a further prescribed alteration to Holmleigh Primary School, namely to add to it, special educational needs provision - a Language Resourced Provision (LRP) - for 10 pupils, equivalent to the one currently at Sir Thomas Abney School.

4. The effect on other educational institutions within the area

This proposal forms part of a related proposal to discontinue Sir Thomas Abney School on 31 August 2025. These proposals seek to rationalise the number of surplus primary places in the area.

5. Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved

These proposals do not require any capital works to the current Sir Thomas Abney School site. The school could accommodate 2 forms of entry (60 children admitted each year across all year groups).

6. Implementation plan

Date on which it is proposed to implement the changes to the school: 1 September 2025

- Holmleigh Primary School would increase from 1FE to 2FE to accommodate the pupils from Sir Abney School due to a merger of the two student bodies;
- Holmleigh Primary School would admit up to 60 pupils in each year group (Reception to Year 6), increasing the PAN from 210 to 420, and,;
- A Language Resourced Provision (LRP) for up to 10 children would be established at Holmleigh Primary School for 1 September 2025.

If the proposal is agreed a joint steering group made up of Council officers and representatives from both schools, will oversee the transition and establish an agreed action plan that would enable the two schools to work together as much as possible over the remainder of the school year.

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 consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/stat-notice-closure-merger (scan the QR code below), 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 5 March 2025 at 5pm.



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We will consider your request and get back to you in the next five working days.

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- אויב ווילט איר וויסן וואס דער דאקומענט זאגט, ביטע טיק די פאסטיגע קעסטל, שרייב דיין נאמען, אדרעס און טעלעפאן נומער און שיק עס צוריק צו די אדרעס אונטן. (Yiddish)

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