

Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue (close) Oldhill Community School including the Additional Resourced Provision for autistic children and amalgamate (merge) the student body with Harrington Hill 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. This notice is published following a consultation which took place between 8 October and 19 November 2024. The proposed changes would take effect on 31 August 2025 and 1 September 2025.

Hackney Council proposes to discontinue Oldhill Community School (Oldhill Street, London N16 6LR), and merge the student body with Harrington Hill Primary School, (Mount Pleasant Lane, London E5 9JG).

The reason for publishing this proposal is the significant fall in pupil numbers across Hackney, and at Oldhill Community School in particular.

This proposal is linked to a proposal to expand Harrington Hill Primary School from 1 form of entry to 2 forms of entry and to establish an Additional Resourced Provision (ARP) for autistic children at Harrington Hill. This proposal can be viewed here: consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/stat-notice-closure-merger

Together, these proposals would see:

- Oldhill Community School discontinued on 31 August 2025;
- Harrington Hill Primary School expanded from 1 form of entry (30 pupils admitted each year), to 2 forms of entry (60 children admitted each year) on 1 September 2025;
- All children attending Oldhill Community School offered a place at Harrington Hill Primary School should parents/carers want one, and;
- An ARP for up to 12 autistic children opening at Harrington Hill Primary School on 1 September 2025

This proposal was published on 6 February 2025. Within four weeks of 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 all 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 202



Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Oldhill Community School including the Additional Resourced Provision (ARP) for autistic children, and amalgamate (merge) the student body, including those attending the additional resourced provision, with Harrington Hill 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:

Oldhill Community School (community school)
Oldhill Street
London
N16 6LR
Tel: 020 8806 4130
Email: admin@oldhill.hackney.sch.uk

Name and address of school to amalgamate with Oldhill Community School:

Harrington Hill Primary School (community school).
Mount Pleasant Lane
London
E5 9JG
Tel: 020 8806 7275
Email: admin@harringtonhill.hackney.sch.uk

This proposal is linked to a proposal to expand Harrington Hill Primary School from 1 form of entry to 2 forms of entry and to establish an ARP for autistic children at Harrington Hill. This proposal can be viewed here:
consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/stat-notice-closure-merger

2. Implementation

Date on which it is proposed to close the school: 31 August 2025

It is proposed to implement the closure as follows:

- No reception year pupils will be admitted for the 2025/26 school year. Parents and carers who have expressed a preference for this year have been informed of the proposal for closure in 2025, before the closing date for applications on 15 January 2025.
- Current reception, Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 pupils on roll at Oldhill Community School on 31 August 2025 (including those attending the ARP for autistic children) will transfer to the roll of Harrington Hill Primary School from 1 September 2025.
- Pupils in Year 6 will transfer to secondary school for the start of the 2025/26 school year.
- The Additional Resourced Provision (ARP) for 12 autistic children at Oldhill Community School will be established at Harrington Hill Primary School to accommodate those children currently attending this provision.

3. Reason for Closure

The proposal arises due to a fall in pupil numbers and the associated impact on the educational and financial viability of the school. The school is being proposed for closure due to underlying sustainability issues relating to its unrecoverable cumulative budget, which is projected to reach a deficit position of £1,733,509 by the end of the current financial year (2024/25). The number of pupils enrolled at Oldhill Community School has been steadily declining, 368 at the October school census in 2019 to 228 at the time of the latest school census in October 2024:

Pupil Roll (Oct Census)	Roll	Capacity (R - Y6)	% Surplus
2019	368	420	12
2020	332	420	21
2021	296	420	30
2022	273	420	35
2023	243	420	42
2024	228	420	46

The current pupil roll numbers are now less than half its originally intended planned capacity for 420 pupils. The Council is proposing the closure of Oldhill Community School because the school is no longer sustainable.

Having reviewed the school's financial position against its reducing pupil roll the Council has concluded that the budget position is very likely to further deteriorate. To reach a sustainable financial position it is likely to compromise the quality of education and standards at the school. This would also have a direct adverse impact on children with the highest level of need

Borough Position

The January 2024 pupil census showed that 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 primary 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.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

Oldhill Community School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 60 all year groups, giving a total of 420 places. At the October 2024 census, the school had 228 children on its roll .

	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
October 2024 census	29	20	24	41	38	37	39	228

The following table shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the October 2024 pupil census.

Published Admission Number, roll and unfilled places (October 2024 census)

	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
PAN 2024/25	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	420
October 2024 census	29	20	24	41	38	37	39	228
No. of unfilled places	31	40	36	19	22	23	21	192
% of unfilled places	52%	67%	60%	32%	37%	38%	35%	46%

The October 2024 census reports two children in the nursery at Oldhill Community School.

SEND characteristics of children at Oldhill Community School are included in section 11 below.

5. Displaced pupils

Should the proposal be agreed, the council would make arrangements for all children from Oldhill Community School to attend Harrington Hill Primary School. Children currently attending the Additional Resourced Provision (ARP) at Oldhill would transfer to the ARP that will be established at Harrington Hill Primary School.

Should parents not wish their children to transfer to Harrington Hill Primary School, 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, and will be given extra priority for places at nearby schools (where the local authority is responsible for admissions).

The reported number of children at Oldhill Community School at the October 2024 census is outlined in section 4 above. 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. The October 2024 census reports that two children were on roll in the nursery (N2 class). These children would be of statutory school age when the proposal to merge the student body is implemented. Parents will be supported to apply for a reception place for their children for the start of the academic year 2025/26.

No interim arrangements are required for pupils.

6. Impact on the community

Schools are more than just places for children to receive education, as they play an important part in their local community. 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 it is evident that over time it is becoming increasingly more difficult for them to continue to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

A merger of the student bodies of Oldhill Community School and Harrington Hill Primary School would bring the following benefits:

- Enable the students at Oldhill to remain together, rather than being displaced across a number of schools in the area.
- Enhance the leadership and build capacity to ensure the continuity of strong educational outcomes for both sets of pupils.
- Secure the continuity of the school’s highly valued ARP on the Harrington Hill site with no reduction to the borough’s SEND offer.
- The potential to offer an enhanced range of wraparound and extended provision for the benefit of both school communities.

Please note the Oldhill Children’s Centre is not subject to these proposals. This provision will continue in its existing place regardless of whether or not Oldhill Community School closes.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - Oldhill Community School is not a maintained nursery school.

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

Specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at Oldhill Community School in the form of an ARP for 12 autistic children. This proposal would see an ARP for autistic children established at the expanded Harrington Hill Primary School. A separate notice relating to the establishment of an ARP at Harrington Hill can be found at consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/stat-notice-closure-merger

The number and percentage of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) or who do not have an EHCP but require special educational provision (SEN support) is outlined below (October 2024 data).

	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Oldhill Community School*	34	15%	55	24%
Hackney (primary phase)*	948	6%	2762	18%
England (state-funded primary schools)**	136,642	3%	651,458	14%

* Source: Hackney October 2024 pupil census

** Source: Department for Education, Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2023/24, Published: June 2024

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 SEN support to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported 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 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 proposal. Children identified as having a special educational need and receiving SEN Support would be able to continue doing so at any school, including Harrington Hill.

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at Oldhill Community 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.

12. Travel

All children on roll at Oldhill Community School will be offered a place at Harrington Hill Primary School. However, every parent is able to make a preference for an alternative school.

Families at Oldhill Community School currently travel on average 13 minutes to school and would travel 17 minutes on average to go to Harrington Hill.

For parents that do not wish to take up a place at Harrington Hill Primary School, they will need to make new journeys to school and may need to travel slightly further to other schools. However, in the majority of cases the journey to the nearest, suitable school will be less than 2 miles.

Eligibility for assistance with home to school travel will be determined in line with the Council's home to school travel policy, which can be accessed at education.hackney.gov.uk/content/help-home-school-travel

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

The Harrington Hill site has sufficient space to accommodate children from Oldhill Community School and an ARP for 12 children. There will be some minor building works associated with providing suitable accommodation. It is anticipated that these will be low value and are expected to be met from the Council's SEND capital programme.

14. 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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- اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔ (Urdu)
- 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. (Vietnamese)
- אויב ווילט איר וויסן וואס דער דאָקומענט זאגט, ביטע טיק די פאסטיגע קעסטל, שרייב דיין נאָמען, אַדרעס און טעלעפאָן נומער און שיק עס צוריק צו די אַדרעס אונטן. (Yiddish)

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Hall, Mare Street, London, E8 1EA