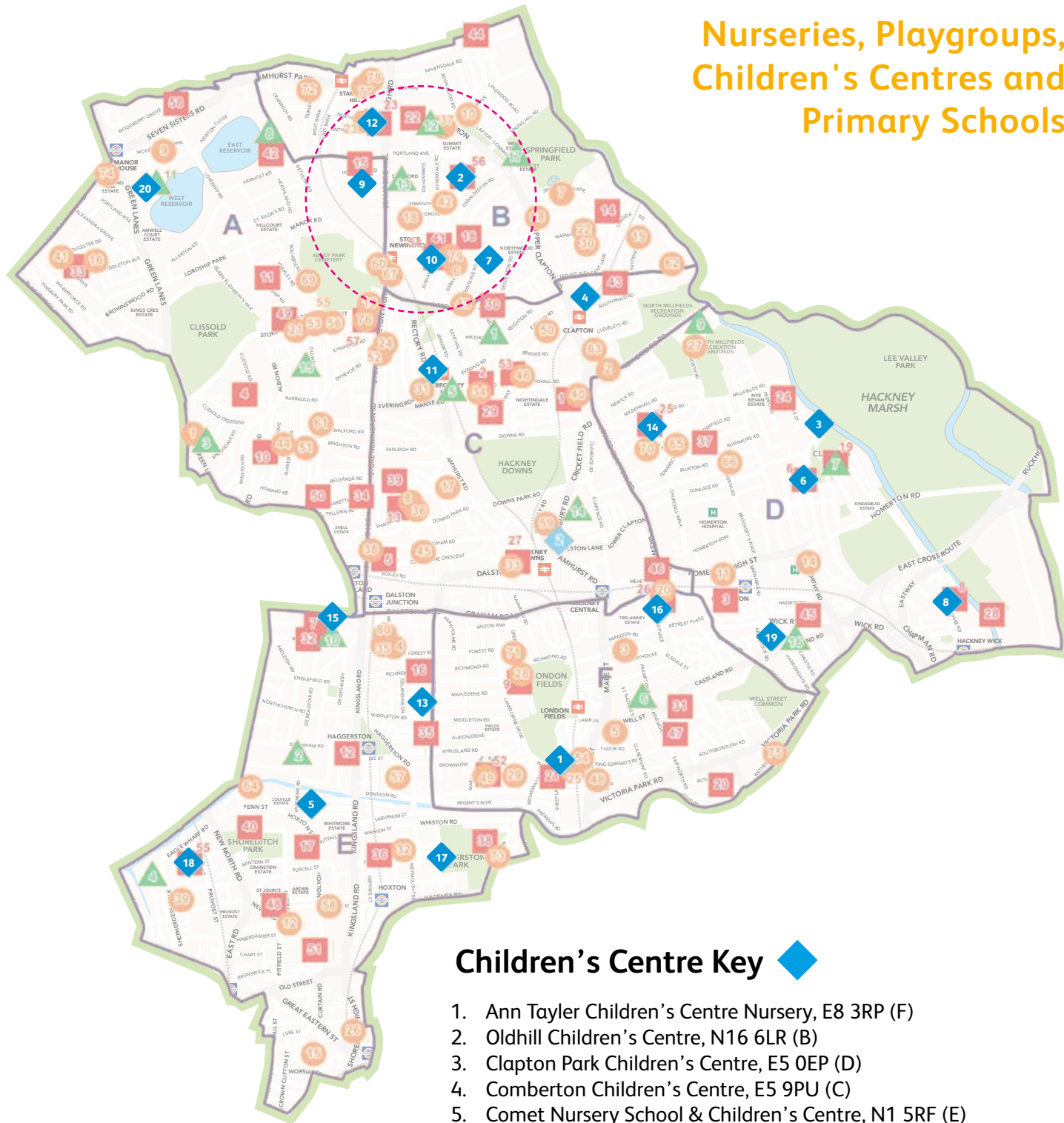


Nurseries, Playgroups, Children's Centres and Primary Schools



Children's Centre Key

1. Ann Tayler Children's Centre Nursery, E8 3RP (F)
2. Oldhill Children's Centre, N16 6LR (B)
3. Clapton Park Children's Centre, E5 0EP (D)
4. Comberton Children's Centre, E5 9PU (C)
5. Comet Nursery School & Children's Centre, N1 5RF (E)
6. Daubeney Children's Centre, E5 0EG (D)
7. Fernbank Children's Centre, N16 7EA (B)
8. Gainsborough Children's Centre, E9 5ND (D)
9. Hillside Children's Centre, N16 5QR (A)
10. Ihsan Children's Centre, N16 6AA (B)
11. Linden Children's Centre, N16 7SH (C)
12. Lubavitch Children's Centre, N16 5RL (B)
13. Mapledene & Queensbridge Children's Centre, E8 3LE (F)
14. Millfields Children's Centre, E5 0SQ (D)
15. Minik Kardes Community Nursery & Children's Centre, N1 4BW (E)
16. Morningside Children's Centre, E9 6LL (F)
17. Sebright Children's Centre, E2 8NP (E)
18. Comet at Thomas Fairchild, N1 7HX (E)
19. Wentworth Nursery School & Children's Centre, E9 5BN (D)
20. Woodberry Down Children's Centre, N4 2NP (A)

--- Five Children's Centres
within walking distance

● Day Nursery Key

▲ Playgroup Key

■ Primary School Key

Consultation on the Early Years Strategy and proposed changes to Hackney's Children's Centres

We would like your feedback on the Council's new Early Years Strategy, which sets out the Council's vision, priorities and principles that underpin all the services it provides for young children and their families, and outlines how it will protect those services into the future. This strategy has been developed following engagement with parents, carers and professionals.

The new strategy includes proposed changes to how we deliver children's centre services across the borough. Please tell us what you think about the proposals and how you think they'll affect you and your families. Please read the information provided summarising our proposals before providing your feedback **by 16 November 2021**.

have  say

 Hackney

Background and Context:

Happy, healthy and ready to learn. Those are Hackney Council's ambitions for every child in our borough, whatever their background or start in life, as they grow and learn from birth to five years.

Early education, childcare, play opportunities and support for families is at the core of what we offer during this critical time of development and foundation in a child's life, which we call the 'early years'. We are proud that 94% of our Early Years settings and childminders are judged good or better by Ofsted; that 77% of reception pupils in Hackney schools are achieving a good level of development by the end of their first school year; and that our services that support children, young people and families were recognised by Ofsted as being 'well-developed and effective'.

In order to build on these successes and so we can continue to improve outcomes for our children, we have developed a new Early Years Strategy. This sets out our vision, priorities and principles that underpin all the work we do and all the services we provide for young children and their families.

Over the past two years, we've listened to hundreds of residents – parents, carers, those who would like to become mothers and fathers in the future, as well as other professionals who work with families – to ensure this strategy reflects what is most important to them.

They told us the services we provide are invaluable to them; and they are positive about the support they receive from us. Parents with younger children said nurseries, 'stay and play' and music activities are what they care about most; and parents with older children and young people said they really value being able to access a range of different opportunities that work for them. Our Early Years Strategy protects those services into the future.

We also know that families appreciated some of the digital resources we developed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and we will be looking at how we can cater for more of Hackney's communities in an increasingly digital world. The Council is committed to Rebuilding a Better Hackney out of the pandemic. That includes better supporting our communities who need extra help. That's why our new strategy focuses on ensuring we provide more holistic help to families by working more closely with partner organisations, including health teams; and reviewing the services we deliver to children and families on the ground.

At the same time, this is also an opportunity to ensure our services, such as children's centres, remain fit and sustainable into the future, both operationally and financially. A children's centre is a place where local families with young children can go to enjoy facilities, and receive the support that they need, including free parenting support. Eleven of these offer childcare places,

subsidised by us. All of our children's centres have been judged good or outstanding by Ofsted; and 97% of people we talked to were positive about the centres they used.

We want to use this strategy to build on that accomplishment. However, the strategy is also a means to address some of the challenges ahead of us. The Council must make many millions of pounds of savings in order to meet our severe budget deficit – a legacy of more than a decade of sustained core Government cuts combined with the more recent, extreme, financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Early Years Service has a £1 million savings target for 2022/23.

We have 20 children's centres across the borough. There is currently a 23% childcare vacancy rate across the borough, which reflects a London-wide trend of falling reception class rolls. This means some children's centres are no longer viable in the current financial climate. We now must ensure that we are doing the best we can, with the resources available, and continue to support Hackney's children to achieve the best possible start in life.

What are we proposing?

Development of 'children and family' hubs

We are proposing to broaden the role of our six 'multi-agency children's centres' into 'children and family hubs', offering support for families with children and young people aged up to 19 years old, rather than just for families with young children.

This will make it easier for parents with children of different ages to access the support and information they need in one place. To achieve this, we will provide joined up support for families with children of all ages.

The 'children and family' hubs will provide:

- Universal early years services such as 'stay and play' activities to support language, communication, physical, emotional and social development.
- Targeted support for families with children pre-birth to 19 years who need extra help.
- Support for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Closure of two children's centres

We are proposing to close two children's centres in the north of the borough, where there are currently five centres within walking distance of each other, and where more and more young children are attending independent settings.

The two centres proposed for closure are:

- Hillside Children's Centre, 1 Leatherhead Close, Holmleigh Road, N16 5QR
- Fernbank Children's Centre, 1A Fountayne Road, London N16 7EA

Parents and carers of children using childcare at these two centres will be offered individual support to find alternative local childcare that meets their needs. Families will also be able to attend 'stay and play' activities, and family services at nearby children's centres. The closure of the two centres is not something that we want to do, but we will focus our remaining resources to ensure they have the biggest impact for those who need them most.

This includes:

- Bringing together early years and health visiting teams to provide holistic support and guidance for young children and their families.
- Developing two early years hubs, one in the north and one in the south of the borough for children with complex needs to access provision, whilst they undergo assessment for an education, health and care plan.
- Developing plans to turn the six multi-agency children's centres into new 'children and family hubs', outlined above, that bring together family-focused support. They will see professionals, working together, to provide friendly, cohesive and tailored support for families with children of ages 0-19 years.

Youth hubs

We are proposing that the four youth hubs work alongside the proposed 'children and family hubs' to provide joined up support for families with children 0-19 years.

The four youth hubs are located at:

- Young Hackney Forest Road, 29 Forest Road, London, Hackney E8 3BY
- Young Hackney Stoke Newington, Chaucer Court, N16 8TS
- Young Hackney The Edge, 7 Woodberry Grove, London, N4 1ST
- Concorde Youth Hub, Kingsmead Way, E9 5PP

The youth hubs are run by Young Hackney, a service that works across the borough in youth clubs, adventure playgrounds, community halls, voluntary and community sector provision and in schools. They provide individual support within schools, community settings or at our youth hubs, but will often provide support within the family home.

Young Hackney services are for children and young people aged 6-19, or up to 25 years if the young person has a special education need or disability.

Who do we need to hear from?

We would like to hear from all residents, but especially parents and carers of children and young people who have used, currently use, or may use, children's centres in the future, and from professionals who support families in Hackney.

How to take part:

You can take part by completing the online survey at consultation.hackney.gov.uk or by providing your feedback at your local children's centre. You can also pick up a paper copy of the survey at your local children's centre.

Please submit your comments before the consultation closes on **16 November 2021**. If you have any queries or require further information, please do get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you.

What happens next?

Feedback received from the consultation will help us deliver the Early Years Strategy and inform how we deliver service in our children's centres, ensuring that what we do reflects local needs and continues to support outcomes of children at risk of underachievement.

Should these proposals be agreed, changes will take place from September 2022.