

WESTMINSTER COUNCIL

SCHOOLS' FORUM – 17th JANUARY 2024

REPORT BY BI-BOROUGH DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

WESTMINSTER SCHOOLS FORUM PAPER PROVIDING THE ANNUAL SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING AND PROJECTIONS REPORT 2023-24

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides the annual school place planning projections, an overview of the more recent October pupil census, and a recommendation to continue with the strategic focus to reduce primary school capacity.

FOR INFORMATION AND DECISION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The accompanying School Place Planning and Projections 2023-24 report provides Schools Forum with the annual overview of primary and secondary school capacity and future projections, along with key headlines for SEND and Early Years.
- 1.2 In May 2020, Schools Forum commissioned the Isos Partnership to work with schools, the local authority and the dioceses to carry out a rapid review of primary school capacity and financial pressures for schools in Westminster. At that time the surplus capacity was 16.7% across the borough. It was recommended that removing 4 – 5 forms of entry from the reception point of entry (120-150) would start to stabilise the projected fall in pupil numbers. This was reviewed by Forum in June 2022 and increased to 7 – 8 forms (210-240) as school rolls continue to decrease at a fast pace. The key recommendations of the Isos report which were accepted by Forum are to; (1) reduce surplus capacity; (2) support schools' financial management and, (3) maximise pupil numbers where possible.

2. SCHOOL ROLL PROJECTIONS

- 2.1 Pupil place projections and school capacity analysis are undertaken annually and form part of a statutory process that is submitted to the DfE - the School Capacity Annual Projections (SCAP). This annual report provides the LA, and all key stakeholders, with forecasts that will need to inform decisions when managing supply and demand of school places. All London LAs subscribe to the GLA who provide the birth and migration data and the methodology for forecasting. Whilst the GLA methodology is the basis of the forecasts, the borough's Business Intelligence Team then applies its in-house modelling tool,

using local roll projections, to the GLA forecasts, which has led to largely accurate surplus capacity projections in recent years.

- 2.2 The data source of the report is the summer pupil census (May 2023), as required by the statutory DfE SCAP return. The timing of presenting this report to Forum, and other stakeholders does mean the on roll data is now preceded by Autumn census (October 2023). An update to the surplus capacity for the borough and by school and the latest overall surplus is provided in paragraph 4.

3. KEY REPORT HEADLINES

- 3.1 **Primary forecasts** are presented as a whole borough, and by six primary planning areas in Westminster: Bayswater, Maida Vale, St John's Wood, Central, South and Marylebone, as required by the DfE when submitting the annual SCAP return (School Capacity Annual Projections). The highest surplus capacity is in the Central planning area, with the South and Bayswater close behind. Unlike many other London boroughs, the surplus is quite evenly spread and not concentrated predominantly to one area with all areas with at least 20% surplus capacity.
- 3.2 When projecting forward, estimates will take account of any additional pupils that may derive from approved housing developments. Whilst there are currently developments in the pipeline or at the planning stage, as indicated in the report, the potential child yield suggests that there is sufficient spare capacity to meet any additional demand from new housing.
- 3.3 Action has been taken to address surplus capacity, with the removal (including the proposed removal), of fourteen and a half forms of entry between 2018-2025. Even with this large amount of capacity removed, the annual pupil place projections indicate a continuing decline in pupil numbers which will result in a continuing increase in surplus capacity across schools. When taking account of the removal of agreed and proposed capacity, the forecast surplus is estimated to be 23% from September 2025. Whilst this does stabilise what would be a much higher surplus if no action is taken, it remains too high, with further reductions needed.
- 3.4 **Financial implications** - fourteen LA maintained schools reported a deficit at the end of 2022-23 and a further four are at risk of going into deficit within the next two years. It is estimated that LA maintained schools will have a combined deficit of £2.35m by August 2025.
- 3.5 **Secondary forecasts** are presented with one planning area. Whilst the projected-on roll numbers are forecast to fall over the next five years, as the primary cohort works through to the secondary phase of education, the surplus forecast from September remains low and is estimated to be 7% in 2025. In May 2023 the secondary surplus was 3.6% and in October 2023, it rose to 5.9%. As highlighted in section 4, the majority of schools exceed their Published Admissions Number (PAN). When managing the placement of in-year new arrivals, all schools agree to offer places above PAN via the normal in-year

admissions route or the mechanisms of the Fair Access Protocol for hard-to-place cases. As there is a sufficiency of secondary school places in neighbouring boroughs, that are located within a reasonable travelling distance, demand can be met that accords to the legal requirement to offer a school place to residents.

- 3.6 **SEND and Early Years** key headlines are a new addition to the report this year to provide Forum, and other stakeholders, with details of supply and demand in and how unused capacity in primary schools can be utilised to meet demand in these growth areas. From 2023, SEND roll data and forecasts now forms part of the annual statutory SCAP submission to the DfE.

4. OCTOBER CENSUS DATA

- 4.1 The following table provides October 2023 pupil census for primary schools. Overall primary surplus capacity now stands at 26.6% As a comparison, October 2022 surplus capacity was 25.7%

Primary school	Published Admission Number	Cohort	Surplus capacity
Atwood Academy	420	386	8.1%
Wilberforce Academy	210	94	55.2%
Pimlico Primary	420	337	19.8%
Churchill Gardens Academy	210	157	25.2%*
Barrow Hill Junior	240	197	17.9%
Edward Wilson Primary	392	249	36.5%
Essendine Primary	420	262	37.6%*
Gateway	630	495	21.4%
Millbank	420	197	53.1%*
George Eliot Primary	210	216	0%
Hallfield Primary	420	221	47.4%
Robinsfield Infants	180	133	26.1%*
Queens Park Primary	294	257	12.6%
All Souls CE Primary	210	175	16.7%
Burdett Coutts Primary	210	126	40%
Hampden Gurney	210	191	9%
Our Lady of Dolours RC	210	139	33.8%
St Augustine's Primary	210	204	2.9%
St Barnabas` CofE	161	120	25.5%
St Clement Dane`s CofE	210	199	5.2%
St Edward`s RC	420	184	56.2%*
St Gabriel`s CofE	210	161	23.3%
St George's Hanover Square	210	75	64.3%
Soho Parish CofE	171	110	47.6%
St James' & St John's	175	161	8%

Primary school	Published Admission Number	Cohort	Surplus capacity
St Joseph`s RC	294	233	20.7%
St Luke`s CofE	210	170	19%
St Mary Magdalene	210	171	18.6%
St Mary's Bryanston Square	210	122	41.9%
St Mary of the Angels RC	294	188	36.1%*
St Matthew`s School	210	153	27.1%
St Peter`s CofE School	210	189	10%
St Peter`s Eaton Square	350	196	44%*
St Saviour`s CofE	210	190	9.5%
St Vincent's Primary	210	209	0.5%
St Vincent de Paul RC	210	197	6.2%
Christ Church Bentinck	420	195	53.6%
King Solomon Academy	630	617	2.1%
Totals	10741	7876	26.6%

* Agreed or consulted on a reduction in published admissions numbers.

4.2 The following table provides October 2023 pupil census for secondary schools. As a comparison, October 2022 surplus capacity was 3%.

Secondary school	Published Admission Number (PAN)	Cohort up to PAN limit	Actual cohort	Surplus capacity against PAN
Marylebone Boys	710	568	568	20%
Harris Academy St John's Wood	1050	1021	1021	2.7%
Grey Coat Hospital	835	835	836	0%
The St Marylebone School	840	840	840*	0%
Westminster City School	690	511	511	26%
St Augustine's High School	840	840	879*	0%
St George's Catholic School	900	900	900	0%
Paddington Academy	900	900	923*	0%
Pimlico Academy	1050	988	988	5.9%
Westminster Academy	900	900	962*	0%
King Solomon Academy	450	450	468*	0%
Totals	9165	8753	8896	4.5%

*These schools exceed their Published Admission Number to accommodate unplaced girls and/or Fair Access placements.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools Forum is asked to:

- 5.1 to agree that the established Isos Working Group reviews strategies to reduce primary capacity further and brings recommendations back to the next Forum meeting.
- 5.2 agree that the Isos Working Group should continue to receive information on the deficit position of schools with significant surplus places to inform options to reduce capacity.

Ian Heggs
Bi-Borough Director of Education and Libraries

Sarah Newman, Bi-Borough Executive Director of Children's Services