

STATUTORY PROPOSAL FOR A PRESCRIBED ALTERATION TO COMET NURSERY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE – Creation of Additional Resource Provision for SEND at Comet Nursery School and Children's Centre

The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013

1 School and LA details

School: Comet Nursery School and Children's Centre

Address: 20 Halcomb Street, London N1 5RF

Local Authority: London Borough of Hackney, 1 Hillman Street, London E8 1DY

2 Description of alteration

The London Borough of Hackney proposes to establish Additional Resource Provision (ARP) at

- Comet Nursery School & Children's Centre (Early Years ARP; 24 places in addition to the school's PAN of 122)

The ARP at Comet is expected to open by September 2025. The new provision will be based at the current site with building works carried out as required.

3 Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

If the proposal is agreed, the building works are planned to commence by September 2024, delivering the facilities for the new ARP at Comet by September 2025.

The planning application, pressure in the construction market and unknowns on the site may create some challenges in achieving this project within the existing budget and expected programme. If the planned timescales are not achievable, the opening of the new provision may need to be reviewed or postponed.

4 Evidence of demand

Hackney, like other local authorities, has seen a significant rise in the demand for SEND places.

- The number of Hackney children and young people with an EHCP increased from 2,645 in 2021 to 3,062 in 2022 (an increase of 16%).
- The number of Hackney children and young people with an EHCP rose from 3,062 in 2022 to 3,243 in 2023, equivalent to a 6% increase.
- The percentage of resident 0-24 year olds in Hackney with an EHCP was the second highest among statistical neighbours (4%), and the 9th highest across England.

We have seen an increase in the number of children with a primary need in the Early Years phase. We know that supporting children with SEND earlier and providing access to targeted support leads to better outcomes and potentially reduces the need for specialist provision later on. If the proposal is agreed, the Additional Resource Provision (ARP) at Comet will be the first Early Years ARP in the borough.

5 Objectives

5.1 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision

For the Early Years ARP at Comet Nursery School and Children's Centre we are proposing that children will be allocated to the ARP on an assessment basis, which means that the nursery will make an assessment of the child's needs and the type and level of support they might need over a period of time. For some children, the outcome of the assessment will lead to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) being created, which will outline how the child's needs must be met, either in an Early Years setting with extra help or in a suitable special school.

Children attending the ARP will benefit from an individualised specialist curriculum designed to meet their SEND needs. Staff in the provisions will deliver a differentiated curriculum and use materials and teaching approaches which promote the best possible academic, social and emotional outcomes for children.

Admission to the ARP will be determined by the London Borough of Hackney's Education, Health and Care Panel.

5.2 Hackney's SEND Strategy

The London Borough of Hackney has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for Hackney resident children. It also has a statutory duty to keep under review its educational provision, training provision and social care provision made in its area for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability. In recommending this proposal to set up an ARP at Comet Nursery School and Children's Centre, we are delivering Priority 1 - 'Outstanding Provision and services' of our SEND Strategy 2022-2025. You can download the SEND Strategy 2022-2025 here:

https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/hackney/fsd/files/hackney_send_strategy_2022-2025.pdf

- **School changes**

Hackney Education will support viable expansions of popular and successful schools in line with Department for Education (DfE) policy wherever possible.

- **Quality and diversity**

Hackney Education will seek to ensure that sufficient attractive high-quality state-funded school provision is available within the borough to meet the needs of all children. The new ARP will form part of Hackney's existing offer of well established ARPs for autism, speech, language and communication, and social, emotional and mental health needs, in addition to two special schools. This proposal will therefore broaden the local offer for parents by providing additional in-borough, specialist

provision and forms part of the wider implementation plan for additional SEND places.

- **School budgets/finances**

Hackney Education will consult with schools prior to the implementation of any changes to the funding of maintained schools. The funding will be allocated in line with the Operational Guidance, School Funding Regulations and endorsed by Schools Forum.

- **Education property**

Hackney Education will seek to ensure that school premises are well maintained, fit for purpose and meet all relevant national standards for space and health and safety.

6 Project costs and funding

The projected cost for a 24-place ARP at Comet Nursery and Children’s Centre is £945,000. The cost of these additional places will be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocations Grant. These costs are subject to change through the detailed design and construction stages.

The ARP will not remove funding from the mainstream schools, as it will be fully and independently resourced. The creation of the new provision is expected, over time, to reduce reliance on costly out-of-borough and independent provision and transport costs, as the number of places available within Hackney is increased and Hackney children are educated in-borough. Hackney Education will seek to ensure that school premises are well maintained, fit for purpose and meet all relevant national standards for space and health and safety.

7 Consultation

To inform this proposal, the London Borough of Hackney ran an initial public consultation from 11 January to 7 February 2024. The majority of the 59 respondents to the Comet proposal agreed with the proposal to create an ARP for early years (strongly agree and agree combined: 93%, 55 respondents). A much smaller number of respondents either stated they neither agreed nor disagreed (2) or disagreed (2).

All responses, including those expressing doubts and opposition to the proposal, were considered by the London Borough of Hackney at a meeting on 28 March 2024. The decision was to progress the proposal further. A copy of the consultation documents can be viewed at <https://education.hackney.gov.uk/consultations>.

8 Decision-making

The decision-maker for this proposed expansion is the Director of Education at the London Borough of Hackney, in the event that no objections are received. If objections are received, a decision on the proposal will be made by the London Borough of Hackney’s Group Director for Children and Education. A decision must be made within a period of two months of the end of this representation period.

9 Objections and comments

Any person wishing to submit any comments either in support of, or objecting to, the proposal may do so by sending them to:

Hackney Education
School Place Planning
London Borough of Hackney
1 Reading Lane
London
E8 1GQ

or by email to: schoolplaceplanning@hackney.gov.uk.

Any objections or comments must be received by 11:59 pm on Thursday 16 May 2024.

If you need this proposal in a different format please email: schoolplaceplanning@hackney.gov.uk. We will consider your request and get back to you within 5 working days.