

Special Council

Date: **27 February 2025**

Time: **3.00pm**

Venue: **Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall**

Members: **Councillors:** Asaduzzaman (Chair), Grimshaw (Deputy Chair), O'Quinn, Atkinson, Alexander, Allen, Bagaeen, Baghoth, Burden, Cattell, Czolak, Daniel, Davis, Earthey, Evans, Galvin, Fishleigh, Fowler, Gauge, Goddard, Goldsmith, Guilmant, Helliwell, Hewitt, Hill, Hogan, Loughran, Lyons, Mackey, McGregor, McLeay, McNair, Meadows, Miller, Muten, Nann, Oliveira, Pickett, Pumm, Robins, Robinson, Rowkins, Sankey, Shanks, Sheard, Simon, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, Thomson, West, Wilkinson, Winder and Williams.

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Chief Executive
Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove BN3 3BQ

Date of Publication - Wednesday, 19 February 2025

AGENDA

Part One

Page

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests;
- (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
- (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services Officer preferably before the meeting.

2 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive communications from the Mayor.

3 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS

To receive any petitions relating to items of business on the agenda to be presented to the Mayor by members of the public and/or Members as notified by the due date of 21 February 2025.

4 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A list of public questions received by the due date of 12noon on the 21 February 2025 will be circulated separately as part of an addendum for the meeting.

5 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A list of deputations received by the due date of 12noon on the 21 February 2025 will be circulated separately as part of an addendum for the meeting.

REPORTS FOR DECISION

6 SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2026-27

7 - 194

Contact Officer: Richard Barker
Ward Affected: All Wards

Tel: 01273 290732

7 CLOSE OF MEETING

The Mayor will move a closure motion under Procedure Rule 17 to terminate the meeting 4 hours after the beginning of the meeting (excluding any breaks/adjournments).

Note:

1. *The Mayor will put the motion to the vote and if it is carried will then:-*

(a) *Call on the Member who had moved the item under discussion to give their right of reply, before then putting the matter to the vote, taking into account the need to put any amendments that have been moved to the vote first;*

(b) *Each remaining item on the agenda that has not been dealt with will then be taken in the order they appear on the agenda and put to the vote without debate.*

The Member responsible for moving each item will be given the opportunity by the Mayor to withdraw the item or to have it voted on. If there are any amendments that have been submitted, these will be taken and voted on first in the order that they were received.

(c) *Following completion of the outstanding items, the Mayor will then close the meeting.*

2. *If the motion moved by the Mayor is **not carried** the meeting will continue in the normal way, with each item being moved and debated and voted on.*

3. *Any Member will still have the opportunity to move a closure motion should they so wish. If such a motion is moved and seconded, then the same procedure as outlined above will be followed.*

Once all the remaining items have been dealt with the Mayor will close the meeting.

FOR INFORMATION

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- Do not stop to collect personal belongings;
- Once you are outside, please do not wait immediately next to the building, but move some distance away and await further instructions; and
- Do not re-enter the building until told that it is safe to do so

Further information

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Anthony Soyinka, (01273 291006, email anthony.soyinka@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 6

Subject: School Admission Arrangements 2026-27

Date of meeting: 27 February 2025

Report of: Corporate Director - Families, Children & Wellbeing

Contact Officer: Name: Richard Barker
Tel: 07584217328
Email: richard.barker@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1. The Council Plan 2023 to 2027, A better Brighton & Hove for all, outlines a vision of an inclusive, accessible and fair city where everyone thrives, and where no child, young person or family is left behind. The plan details the importance of delivering strategies for children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage. It also commits to finding ways to address the challenges schools are facing with falling pupil numbers in the city.
- 1.2. The council is seeking to address some of the following issues through amended school admission arrangements: falling pupil numbers, concerns around attainment of our disadvantaged children and seeking to provide more opportunity to obtain a preferred school place for more families across the city.
- 1.3. This report details the final proposed school admission arrangements for the academic year 2026-27 for the schools in the city where the council is the admission authority. This does not include academies, free schools or Voluntary Aided (church) schools.
- 1.4. When changes are proposed to admission arrangements, all admission authorities must consult on these new arrangements. In December 2024, Cabinet approved a public consultation on a set of proposals. This consultation ran from 6 December 2024 until 31 January 2025. The consultation gained significant levels of engagement, detailed within Appendix 12 and as highlighted in the report below. In order to comply with relevant legislation the admission arrangements must be determined by the council by 28 February 2025.
- 1.5. As part of determining school admission arrangements, Local Authorities must also set out schemes for coordinated admissions, including key dates in the admission process and the arrangements for consultation with own

admission authority schools in the city and with other local authorities. They also establish the area (the “relevant area”) within which the admission consultation should take place.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Full Council agrees to make no changes to the council’s admission arrangements other than the proposed changes listed below in recommendations 2.2 to 2.11. The full admission arrangements are set out in Appendix 5.
- 2.2. That Full Council agrees to increase the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Rudyard Kipling Primary School from 30 to 45 for entry into reception year from September 2026
- 2.3. That Full Council agrees to amend the catchment area boundary between Longhill High School and Dorothy Stringer and Varndean schools, as set out in section 20 below.
- 2.4. That Full Council agrees to reduce the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Blatchington Mill School from 330 to 300 for entry into year 7 from September 2026.
- 2.5. That Full Council agrees to reduce the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Dorothy Stringer School from 330 to 300 for entry into year 7 from September 2026.
- 2.6. That Full Council agrees to reduce the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Longhill High School from 270 to 210 for entry into year 7 from September 2026.
- 2.7. That Full Council agrees to make a change to the admissions priorities for community secondary schools, to provide that at any school the percentage of places for pupils eligible for Free School Meals within the oversubscription priorities 1-5 should be set at 30% of the Published Admission Number (PAN).
- 2.8. That Full Council agrees to the introduction of a new Criteria 6 within the oversubscription criteria for entry into community secondary schools in the city, to be referred to as Open Admissions. This is to be set at 5% of the total PAN of those schools and is only available to pupils living within a single school catchment area in the city.
- 2.9. That Full Council agrees to increase the number of preferences that families can express from three to four for admission from September 2026 onwards.
- 2.10. That Full Council agrees to make no change to the ‘relevant area’ for school admissions purposes.
- 2.11. That Full Council agrees to the proposed primary and secondary school coordinated schemes.

- 2.12. That Full Council notes the intention to review the Home to School Transport Policy informed by the admissions arrangements determined by Full Council, review capital expenditure on school buildings in 2025/26 and evaluate the educational disadvantage strategy, Better Outcomes, Better Lives.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1. The council is seeking to influence life outcomes in line with the Council Plan, A Better Brighton & Hove for all, which seeks to ensure no child or family is left behind and educational outcomes for the most disadvantaged are improved.
- 3.2. These proposals seek to address the issue of educational disadvantage in the city as well as tackle the established inequity experienced by many families regarding school admissions, due to the current configuration of secondary school catchment areas. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Brighton and Hove mirror outcomes in the south east of England where social segregation is greater than elsewhere in the country. Schools in the south east with higher levels of FSM pupils struggle to achieve the same outcomes as schools where the intake is less disadvantaged. These recommendations also seek to address the imbalance of opportunity between those living in single school catchment areas and those in dual school catchment areas.
- 3.3. The proposals outlined in this report should be considered alongside the School Organisation Strategy which outlines four strands of work to implement the council's commitment to develop a system that:
- provides families with a good choice of schools in the city that meets their child's needs,
 - delivers schools which are sustainable and able to thrive,
 - ensures risk (budget) to the council is manageable and proportionate,
 - delivers children's outcomes which are good and improving, especially for those at risk of disadvantage,
 - facilitates schools working together and with the council in an effective partnership model
- 3.4. In delivering the School Organisation Strategy, the council is providing support and challenge on how schools are using their funding whilst seeking to continually improve. The council is also working with school leaders and governors to explore what type of collaborative system in the city could benefit pupils, staff and schools, including federations or similar structures. The council is providing support and guidance around the way schools support SEND learners in school and, as this report outlines, we continue to keep under review the organisation of our schools including the number of places available and the way school places are allocated.
- 3.5. The council, as the admission authority for community schools in the city, is required to determine its admission arrangements annually. Where changes

are proposed, the admission authority must first publicly consult on those proposed arrangements. The School Admissions Code sets out those groups and individuals who must be consulted. This includes parents of children between the ages of 2 and 18; other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest in the proposed admissions; all other admission authorities within the relevant area and any adjoining neighbouring local authority areas, where the admission authority is the local authority.

- 3.6. The council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. Pupil numbers overall across the city have been falling and are forecast to continue to fall over the coming years. The council is therefore seeking to manage the reduction in pupil numbers across the city now and into the future by reducing the Published Admission Number of three secondary schools in the city.
- 3.7. Appendix 2 details the council's latest forecast of starting school places required up to 2028. This data has been updated since the report to Cabinet on 5 December 2025 after the council received updated information from the NHS. It shows that the council expects 1978 pupils to require a school place in Reception in 2026, 1823 pupils in 2027 and 1887 pupils in 2028. With no further changes to the number of school places available the number of unfilled places is expected to be 482 in 2026, 638 in 2027 and 573 in 2028.
- 3.8. Appendices 3 and 4 show the forecast of secondary school places required until 2031. The forecast varies depending on the model of catchment area used and is subject to a proposed change as detailed in this report's recommendations. Should the proposals be determined, the number of pupils forecast to require a school place in the city's schools is as follows:

 - 2026 - 2284 pupils
 - 2027 - 2234 pupils
 - 2028 - 2206 pupils
 - 2029 - 2117 pupils
 - 2030 - 2028 pupils
 - 2031 - 2009 pupils
- 3.9. Brighton & Hove has two secondary academies in the city, BACA and PACA. Both schools are part of Aldridge Education, a Multi-Academy Trust, which is the admissions authority for all academies within the Trust. Aldridge Education, in accordance with its funding agreement, is responsible for the admissions policy of each academy and co-ordinates with the council regarding the administration of admission applications. The Trust has adopted the council's catchment areas for use within its admission arrangements.
- 3.10. King's School is a Free School and as such sets its own admissions arrangements. Cardinal Newman Catholic School (CNCS) is a voluntary aided (church) school and also sets its own admission arrangements.

Neither school has a defined catchment area. The council administers the admissions for both schools via the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

- 3.11. Other than the introduction of a new admission criteria for children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) last year, the council has not significantly altered its secondary school admission arrangements since the introduction of catchment areas and random allocation in the event of oversubscription in 2007.
- 3.12. As a result, the arrangements have solidified long held expectations about the allocation of school places and reinforced perceptions of the schools in the city. Even when pupil numbers were rising in secondary schools there has been limited action to change those expectations and perceptions because expanded PANs were used to accommodate the oversubscription within particular catchment areas instead.
- 3.13. The proposals which have been the subject of the recent consultation are intended to offer all families an extra preference when applying for school places, a higher likelihood of receiving a school place in another catchment areas (if you live in a single school catchment area) and a higher likelihood of a preferred school place for families who qualify for Free School Meals. Together with the opportunity for those living in the upper parts of Whitehawk to be included in the Dorothy Stringer/Varndean catchment area.
- 3.14. If the council proposes no changes to the current admission arrangements, then some of the larger secondary schools in the city will remain relatively well funded whilst drawing pupils from further across the city in a way that would make it difficult to manage overall numbers. This would only serve to reinforce the logistical barriers faced by smaller and sometimes less favoured schools as they continue to meet the needs of their communities, provide their staff with the right conditions to perform to the best of their abilities and offer the appropriate professional development opportunities available to others. Leaving the arrangements as they are would also put at risk the availability of an appropriate geographical spread of secondary schools across the city.
- 3.15. The schools in the city currently have an uneven distribution of disadvantaged pupils. In January 2025, the average percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in the city's secondary schools was 26.3%. The specific percentage of pupils in the city's secondary schools eligible for FSM ranged from 19.1% - 49.1%. Due to the proportion of FSM pupils in the schools, six of the city's ten secondary schools had a proportion of pupils eligible for FSM below the city average. Both BACA and Longhill High School had more than 40% of pupils eligible for free school meals.
- 3.16. The council considers that the proposals are an opportunity to contribute to efforts to tackle emerging and entrenched issues of equity of opportunity, variation in pupil intakes, long term viability and performance. It is recognised that when families have considered the implications of these proposals it has led to a range of emotions being expressed from those who have felt anxious about the potential changes and what it means for them

through to those feeling as though their child's current education is in some way being labelled inadequate. There have been examples of strong polarisation in the city and examples of negative discourse often played out in social media. It is inevitable that these concerns, conclusions and division will have affected some children and young people. On the conclusion of this process consideration will need to be made to the support and explanations provided to them to help make sense of the changes determined.

4. The Consultation Process

- 4.1. In order to inform the current proposals the council firstly undertook an engagement exercise between 2 October 2024 and 23 October 2024. Three illustrative models for potential secondary school catchment areas were presented for comment. Option A was an amended version of the current catchment area arrangements with a reduced catchment for the Dorothy Stringer and Varndean area. Option B was drawn with larger, multi-school catchment areas and Option C was drawn with single school catchment areas.
- 4.2. Four public meetings were held attended by more than 400 people and over 2600 responses were received via the council's online engagement portal, YourVoice.
- 4.3. No option received overwhelming support but a large volume of quantitative and qualitative data was gathered during the exercise. The feedback received during the engagement exercise contributed to the development of the current proposals which were presented to Cabinet on 5 December 2024.
- 4.4. At that meeting Cabinet approved a set of proposed admission arrangements to go out to a statutory public consultation. The consultation ran from 6 December 2024 until 31 January 2025, a total of eight weeks, two more than the legislation requires. There is a report given as Appendix 12 which details the consultation, and a summary of the feedback received.
- 4.5. The consultation was published on the 'YourVoice' site on 6 December 2024. That site provided consultees summary information along with a reference to the Cabinet Report and paragraph referencing if consultees sought more detail.
- 4.6. The council ran an online survey along with a series of events open to anyone to attend. The online survey asked a series of questions about the various changes, with a link to the Cabinet report and paragraph numbers where the explanation was set out. For each question there was a rating of 1-6 as to how much the consultee agreed or disagreed with the proposal as well as a box where the consultee could share any further thoughts or comments. The survey also included two general sections for comment to allow further elaboration of views to be expressed.
- 4.7. When the council designed the survey, a decision was made not to require consultees to log-in to YourVoice to leave a response. The council

recognises that this meant that it may have been possible for people to submit multiple responses. However, the survey was intended to be a way of gathering resident and stakeholder views rather than act as a referendum and the council consider that this has been successfully achieved. It was felt more important to ensure that there were no additional barriers to consultees to respond such as requiring a pre-registration process to be completed.

- 4.8. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was produced for the December 2024 Cabinet paper which detailed steps the council needed to take to ensure the public consultation was accessible and that proactive steps were taken to hear from a range of residents and especially those that have intersecting needs and / or characteristics. An EIA has now been produced for the final proposals and is included as Appendix 9.
- 4.9. All schools in the city were informed about the consultation on 9 December 2024. During the consultation, some attendees at public meetings reported that their primary phase school Headteachers were not aware of the public consultation. In response, a reminder went to all schools on 17 January 2025 with a specific request that details of the consultation were shared with their school communities.
- 4.10. The council notified neighbouring Local Authorities, Academy Trusts and the Catholic and Church of England Diocesan Authorities about the consultation exercise and invited responses. Information about the consultation and how to respond was also sent to all childcare providers and nurseries within the relevant area.
- 4.11. The council also published a series of press releases/social media posts during the consultation.
- 4.12. The proposals were considered at the council's People Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on 14 January 2025. This meeting featured representations, presentation and deputations from a range of attendees. Details of the meeting can be found [here](#).
- 4.13. The council held the following public meetings during the consultation:
 - 12 December 2024 - Online meeting
 - 16 December 2024 - Online meeting
 - 11 January 2025 - public meeting at Jubilee Library
 - 13 January 2025 - Public meeting at Varndean School
 - 14 January 2025 -Public meeting at Blatchington Mill School
 - 15 January 2025 - Public meeting at Longhill High School
 - 16 January 2025 - Meeting for parents/carers at Queens Park Primary School
 - 20 January 2025 - Meeting for parents/carers held in person at Mile Oak Primary School – hosted on behalf of the Portslade Primary School Partnership
 - 21 January 2025 - Meeting for parents/carers held in person at Fairlight Primary School

- 23 January 2025 - Private but openly advertised 'coffee morning' session with parents/carers with SEND children – facilitated and hosted by the city's Parent and Carer Council
 - 24 January 2025 - Parent/carer consultation meeting hosted by Coombe Road primary schools
 - 25 January 2025 - Private but openly advertised lunchtime workshop, facilitated by the Hangleton and Knoll Projected (aimed at supporting vulnerable residents)
 - 27 January 2025 - Parent/carer consultation meeting hosted by City Academy Whitehawk (a primary school located within one of the catchment areas with proposed changes)
 - 28 January 2025 - Parent/carer consultation meeting hosted by St Mark's CE Primary School (a primary school located within one of the catchment areas with proposed changes). Online meeting for parent/carers of SEND children – facilitated by the city's Parent and Carer Council
 - 29 January 2025 - Parent/carer consultation meeting hosted by Bevendean Primary School
- 4.14. Following the first public meetings some residents advised that it would be helpful for the council to produce a summary document of the proposals as they did not feel that they were always easy to follow. In response the council produced a summary of the proposals together with a Frequently Asked Questions document, both of which were uploaded to the YourVoice portal. Further public meetings were also arranged to enable people to hear directly from officers and Council Members and to ask questions. There were many email enquiries, both directly to officers via a dedicated email address and via Council Members.
- 4.15. In response to some communities expressing the view that they had not been given the opportunity to have a meeting in their area of the city the council agreed to schedule additional meetings attended by officers and, where possible, Council Members to present, listen and answer questions.
- 4.16. Some of the public meetings were better attended than others, those held in central locations tended to achieve higher numbers of attendees. However, whilst the council was pleased to see high levels of engagement in particular areas the council is interested in the breadth and depth of feedback from a wide range of residents and not solely the numbers of people that attended each meeting.
- 4.17. During the consultation the council sought assistance from a number of voluntary and community organisations across the city to enable community voices to be heard and recognised during this process. Whilst the volume of responses provided via the formal survey that was available on YourVoice is informative, the council recognises the importance and significance of receiving a range of responses including those gathered by community engagement.
- 4.18. The council were keen to support residents and stakeholders to engage with the consultation. Residents and stakeholders were offered a variety of ways they could contribute their feedback or to ask questions. The information

held on both the council website and on the YourVoice portal is fully accessible with translation applications. Consultees were also given the option of telephoning the school admissions team and verbally leaving consultation responses. Reasonable adjustments were made where requested for example an attendee at a public meeting asked if their question could be submitted in advance and read out by officers.

- 4.19. The council was particularly interested to gather views from residents whose families have an intersectionality of needs or characteristics, for example parents of children with SEND who have other children who are young carers. The council worked with PaCC to host two listening events with families of children with SEND. PaCC have a representative on the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and they proactively publicised the consultation to their networks.
- 4.20. During the consultation a number of representations were made to officers and Council Members by groups of residents and the council met with them on a number of occasions, for example the Parent Support Group, Class Divide and Equity in Education.
- 4.21. In order to encourage engagement from the north east of the city Equity in Education made an offer to interested local residents to submit survey responses on their behalf with approval of the consultees and with their consent. The group advised the council that this was their intention and made it clear that any responses submitted on behalf of residents via Equity in Education would be clearly marked as such. The council has identified that responses submitted by the group equate to approximately 10% of the total consultation responses.
- 4.22. The equalities monitoring data presented in Appendix 12 (consultation results) and Appendix 9 (the EIA) identify there are gaps of community voice remaining, such as members of Black and Global Majority communities, younger families and those who are disabled. The council recognises this and will continue to further develop and improve engagement processes on this matter. However, given the involvement and engagement from such a wide spread of communities and such a range of views shared, the council feels there is sufficient feedback to meaningfully and conscientiously consider the views of those who have submitted their views in the consultation.
- 4.23. Some criticism was made that the council had not actively sought the direct views of teachers and other school staff as it was felt that their insight would better inform the understanding of the impact of the proposals. The council has liaised with headteachers and governing boards throughout the consultation. In addition, the YourVoice survey was open for all to respond to and allowed people to declare their status as a member of school staff, if they wished to.
- 4.24. The consultation, along with the engagement exercise before it, generated a detailed and energised debate amongst residents with many views being shared in open forums on social media platforms. The council cited

examples of academic research as part of the rationale for proposals, and some consultees provided examples of other papers and produced papers / areas of research. These were all accepted by the council as valued contributions to the consultation.

- 4.25. In summary, given the number of responses received and the wide variety of ways in which people could contribute to or engage with the consultation, the council is of the view that the consultation successfully offered opportunities for a wide range of residents to respond, challenge and offer feedback on the proposals.

5. Consultation outcome

- 5.1. Appendix 12 provides a detailed summary of responses to the online survey, direct communications with the council together with details of the range of meetings which took place. The council recognises and thanks the great number of people that took time to respond to the consultation in whatever form and noted that some residents took considerable time to consider their responses and attend multiple meetings.
- 5.2. Further detail is given below on the content of the consultation responses. There were some prominent themes that came across strongly around the fairness of opportunity, about concern about travel to school and about the impact on some particular groups in the city (SEND children being a significant group but also girls, in relation to safety). This report and these recommendations to Council are informed by those concerns.

6. Themes arising from the consultation

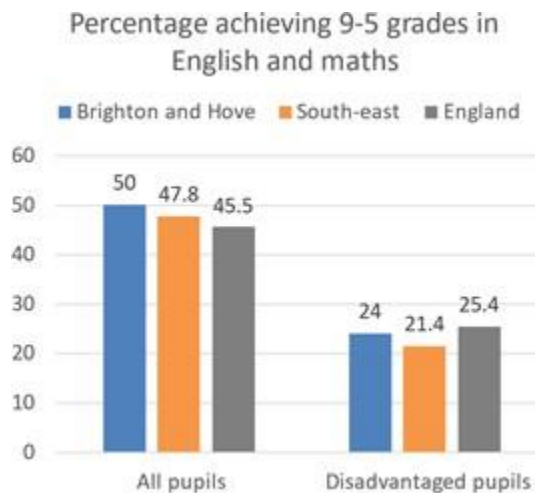
- 6.1. As stated above a number of broad themes which are applicable across one or more of the proposals were raised in consultation responses and in the public meetings. In recognition of the interplay between these themes they are detailed below as ten standalone issues as well as in relation to each individual proposal, where relevant, further in the report.
- 6.2. Of note is the fact that throughout the consultation responses, there was broad agreement and commendation for the council's intentions in bringing forward these proposals, including a growing support for the FSM criteria introduced for 2025/26 admissions. There was however considerable concern raised about specific proposals, and these are covered in more detail below.
- 6.3. The ten broad themes have been grouped and are given below in this order:
- Educational Disadvantage
 - Fairness and opportunity of choice/access
 - SEND
 - School attendance
 - School improvement
 - Transition
 - Transport

- House purchasing prices/rentals
- Communities
- Complexity of proposals

7. Educational disadvantage

7.1. The council's view is that disadvantaged pupils do not do as well as they could and should do in Brighton and Hove. The attainment of all pupils and disadvantaged pupils in the percentage achieving English and maths GCSE at grades 9-5 in 2022/23 (2023/24 data remains provisional at time of writing), shown in the table below demonstrates that overall attainment in the percentage of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils achieving grades 9-5 in English and maths is 50.0%, southeast region is 47.8% and national is 45.5%. At the overall level attainment in Brighton and Hove is above national, and southeast average.

7.2. Information in the table about disadvantaged pupils shows the attainment for this group of pupils only. This shows the attainment in the percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving 9-5 grades in English and maths in Brighton and Hove is 24.0%, southeast is 21.4% and national is 25.4%. Attainment for disadvantaged pupils in Brighton and Hove is above the southeast region but below the national average.



7.3. This attainment data on all pupils and disadvantaged pupils cannot be directly compared because the attainment for disadvantaged pupils affects the attainment for all pupils. However, Brighton and Hove has a local attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils that is larger than the national attainment gap. The local attainment gap is affected by higher attainment outcomes for non-disadvantaged pupils more so than lower attainment outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

7.4. The council recognises that school admission arrangements are not the only way to tackle educational disadvantage and the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. The council continues to put

in place initiatives to address this issue. This includes work with the Durrington Research School in partnership with the Education Endowment Fund on a continuing professional development programme for school leaders. In addition, the council supports schools to undertake a poverty proofing audit to consider how their policies and practices impact on children and families. There has also been specific language and literacy work funded in schools to support the raising of outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in reading and writing.

7.5. The council has an existing strategy for tackling educational disadvantage entitled Better Outcomes, Better Lives. It outlines the council's determination that every pupil in our city who is disadvantaged is encouraged and supported to achieve their academic potential and to leave school or college with a positive relationship with education. The current plan runs until 2026 and focusses on education from age 4-19 with 6 themes identified through an evidence base:

- Leadership and Governance
- Quality First Teaching
- Targeted Academic Support
- Pupil Voice & Pastoral Support
- Language and Literacy
- Attendance

7.6. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Brighton and Hove mirror outcomes in the south east of England where social segregation is greater than elsewhere in the country. Schools in the south east with higher levels of FSM pupils struggle to achieve the same outcomes as schools where the intake is less disadvantaged.

7.7. Whilst Ofsted do look at each school's context and community, there is research that demonstrates a correlation between high levels of free school meals and poorer judgements. Likewise, lower levels of free school meals correlate with better Ofsted judgements. Through reducing social segregation within our education system, the council aims to support better outcomes for all.

7.8. One detailed submission to the consultation referenced research evidence which suggests that if lower-income pupils attend more effective schools, their attainment will improve. The attainment gap between richer and poorer pupils decreases whilst incumbent students appear not to be negatively affected by typically lower-ability incoming students. The research states that as most state secondary schools in England use geographical admissions criteria 'access to over-subscribed schools in England is rationed by residence' (Burgess et al. (2023)). Many sources give theoretical reasons for why geographic admissions criteria are bad for social mobility. The typical reasoning is that as property prices increase around 'good' schools, lower income families are priced out. State-funded schools therefore become rationed by parents' ability to buy or rent in the local area.

This may limit the power of education to offer pupils options and give social mobility opportunities.

- 7.9. It is acknowledged that factors beyond the school gates and in the communities where pupils live can have a detrimental impact on pupil's achievement and as such there is further work required to address underlying causes of inequality and disadvantage. Yet that is not to mean that where possible, opportunities to nudge and advance opportunity should be delayed or postponed. The council is convinced that by responding to resident's feedback, enhancing opportunity, and re-aligning some of the barriers faced by schools due to their intake of pupils, at a time of financial and demographic pressures is the appropriate course of action to follow.

8. Fairness and opportunity of choice/access

- 8.1. The council received many responses from those in support of the proposals, some from families within dual school catchment areas who praised the proposals even if their family was directly impacted. Views were shared that the proposals were a way of fixing an inherently unfair system.
- 8.2. Addressing Inequality: The proposals were viewed by many as a positive step towards addressing inequality in the school admissions process, with views from some that the aims would give children from disadvantaged areas the opportunity to attend better-performing schools, thereby improving their life chances and promoting social diversity.
- 8.3. Community and Social Impact: Some reported the hope that the proposals would have a broader social impact by promoting fairness and access to better educational opportunities. This is seen as essential for creating a more inclusive and diverse community generally across the city. Consultees also talked about the need to sure that all children have equal opportunities to succeed.
- 8.4. Increased Choice for Families: Many felt the proposed introduction of an open admission priority could provide more choice for families, especially those in single school catchment areas. This policy is seen by some as a way to create a more mixed and equitable system, allowing children to apply to schools that best match their interests and strengths. One response described this as this allowing children to apply for a school that 'speaks to them' in terms of what subjects and other strengths it can offer.
- 8.5. One detailed response talked about the strengths at both BACA and Longhill particularly amongst the staff and highlighted the need for increased support and investment at those schools so that they can provide the same offer as other schools in the city. They also highlighted that families in single school catchment areas not only deserve choice but they also deserve high performing schools with consistently good educational opportunities. The response concluded by saying that "the children in the poor parts of the city are just as bright, sporty, academic, creative, kind and compassionate as their peers in more affluent parts of the city, but they need to be reminded of this by giving them opportunities to reach their full potential."

- 8.6. Some felt that these proposals were only a first step in the right direction, that whilst good, more needed to be done to better support disadvantaged families. Others presented a counter view to the theme of fairness and opportunity of choice – that by introducing an open admissions criterion the council may be reducing the choice for families living in dual school catchment areas. Questions were raised about the fairness of this approach.

9. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- 9.1. The council heard a high level of concern about the impact of proposals on children with SEND and their families. In addition, the Equality Impact Assessment identified elements of consideration and adjustments.
- 9.2. The council received a report from the Parent and Carer Council (PaCC) following two listening events held during the consultation. PaCC represents all parent carers in the city and therefore did not take a position on whether the proposals should be approved or not but sought to ensure that school placements would not place undue strain on children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), young carers and their families.
- 9.3. Parent and carer feedback is detailed in Appendix 12 and summarised below.
- Complexity and lack of clarity
 - Inequitable allocations using criteria 2
 - Transport
 - Impact on families
 - Accessibility and equity concerns
 - Safety and mental health risks
 - Parental burnout and emotional toll
 - Fractured SEN community
 - Failure to properly assess SEND needs
 - Loss of stability and certainty

Some suggestions from parents and carers included:

- Altering the random allocation tie-break
 - Improve certainty for families to assist better planning of transition for families
 - Re-site of school provision
 - Provide the same guarantees to pupils with SEND but without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) as those with an EHCP.
 - Ensure peer group stability for autistic children
 - Improve co-production before final decisions are made.
- 9.4. During the consultation the council also heard from SEND families in support of the proposals. The following matters were raised:

- As the arrangements current stand, families with children with SEND (but no EHCP) who live in single catchment areas are not able to consider which school may best meet their children's needs. They simply have to take the one school available to them.
 - Other comments expanded on this, sharing that the proposals may allow their children access to schools with SEN provision that better match their needs
- 9.5. In broad terms all maintained schools should be able to meet the needs of the majority of children without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). However, the council must be cognisant of the fact that any proposed new admission priorities must not unfairly disadvantage pupils with SEND.
- 9.6. Responses received directly from schools raised concerns about the introduction of the proposals because of the likely adverse impact they could have on pupils with SEND and the potential disadvantage that could cause. Particular concerns were raised in relation to pupils without a formal diagnosis, especially if they were unable to claim priority under the existing exceptional circumstance criteria (Criteria 2). Schools were concerned about being resourced to meet the anticipated rise in tailored support that would be required, placing further pressure on a stretched system, and which might in turn compromise the educational offer that the schools were proud to deliver.
- 9.7. Schools raised the fact that friendships for this cohort of pupils are of particular importance and that the proposals, particularly in relation to open admissions (criteria 6), risked connections and friendships being lost which would then make transition to secondary school more difficult. Primary schools flagged the concern that they would need to work in partnership with a wider range of secondary schools than is currently the case, with associated increases in workload. Concerns were expressed that the focus on supporting pupils with FSM could come at the detriment of supporting pupils with SEND. Some consultees also felt that the additional logistics in terms of travel and transport of attending a school outside of their catchment area would have an adverse impact on children with SEND or other social, emotional or mental health (SEMH) difficulties.
- 9.8. Schools use personalised learning plans, targeted interventions, and collaboration with families to support pupils with SEND to do well academically and personally. This was considered at risk by some schools should changes occur and it was outlined that further capital investment would be required to ensure schools could meet the needs of more pupils with SEND, should that be an outcome of the introduction of the proposals.
- 9.9. Concerns were raised that an unintended consequence of the consultation was the possibility that the council would receive an increased number of requests for an Education, Health and Care Need Assessment to identify if a formal EHC Plan might be required. Schools advised that this could negatively impact on the resources available in schools and at the council. This would also run counter to work currently being undertaken by the

council and schools to ensure sufficient early interventions are in place to lessen the potential need for a formal EHCP to be issued.

- 9.10. It was also raised highlighted that due to the process required in seeking to have SEND needs identified, those families experiencing disadvantaged circumstances may be less able to navigate the system, thereby further entrenching inequalities for these pupils.
- 9.11. The council can and does offer support and guidance on meeting the needs of pupils with a range of needs including SEND. Pupils with a range of needs already attend each secondary school in the city, and schools have staff skilled to meet pupil's needs. The introduction of the new admission arrangements may change the profile of need of some pupils and schools will be supported to manage any change in the profile of their pupil body so that they can continue to offer suitable provision.
- 9.12. There is expertise already available in the city's schools and therefore a key consideration is how that knowledge is shared between schools and how staff's professional development is tailored to support them to adjust to such changes. The council has conscientiously considered the potential disadvantage a child with a disability or special educational needs could face should these proposals be determined and considers that schools have the leadership and professional expertise to mitigate the impact of any change to their pupil cohort.
- 9.13. The council recognises that in seeking to positively enhance the opportunities of particular cohorts in the city there is a risk that other groups are less advantaged than they would be if no change takes place. The city has a strong reputation in providing support for SEND learners which is endorsed by the council's Ofsted rating in its SEND and AP inspection. Whilst there are further improvements to make, it demonstrates a system operating in the city where expertise and resources are available to address the impact and scale of change should proposals be determined.
- 9.14. In addition, there are statutory processes available to consider what assistance may be required for a pupil to ensure the appropriate support is made available. The council is confident that it will be able to deploy resources to meet fluctuations in demand should they occur.

10. School Attendance

- 10.1. Concerns have been raised that should the proposals be implemented there will be a negative impact on attendance of pupils for reasons outlined above including the potential of more complex journeys to school than families envisaged.
- 10.2. School attendance remains a focus for the council and a recent city-wide campaign has been launched to promote the importance it has on pupil's outcomes and achievements. The council has a strategic approach to improving attendance, ensuring that it is a key focus of all frontline council services. The School Attendance Team works with all schools, ensuring

there are opportunities for all schools to share effective practice, together with offering enhanced support and formal intervention measures where absence levels are unexplained or inappropriate.

- 10.3. Due to their admission arrangements CNCS and King's admit pupils from a wider geographical area. Despite the length of journeys some children might have to make, both schools have high attendance rates and demonstrate that journey distance and time may not be a limiting factor for pupils' ability to attend school. Therefore it is not the case that longer journeys always mean increased absenteeism.
- 10.4. Additionally the council has developed resources used nationally to help explore individual push:pull factors affecting a pupil's attendance at school. It is the view of the council that the council's admission arrangements are not prime drivers of a child's attendance at school and that robust arrangements are in place to ensure that any attendance issues are picked up by schools and the council at the earliest opportunity.

11. School Improvement

- 11.1. Consultation responses have suggested that instead of using school admissions as a mechanism to address the inequity in school access and disadvantage the focus should instead be on raising the popularity, performance and attendance at all the city's schools in order to improve attainment and progress. There was a widespread and misplaced assumption that because the council's consultation on admission arrangements did not include reference to school improvement that this is not an area of focus for the council. There was a call for investment in underperforming schools and a more equitable distribution of resources to ensure high educational standards across all schools in Brighton and Hove.
- 11.2. Standards of education in Brighton and Hove are good. The council has seen improvements in outcomes in its secondary schools over the past few years with progress and overall attainment above national averages. There are fluctuations in the outcomes of our disadvantaged students whose results do not compare as favourably to the national average as the results of all pupils in the city and this remains an area the council is focussed on improving. This creates an attainment gap between the performance of disadvantaged pupils in the city and the performance of all pupils in the city. The majority of schools in the city are graded as good or above in all areas by Ofsted with increasing numbers of schools being judged with an outstanding grade in at least one area.
- 11.3. The council works closely with schools that have been identified as requiring support and intervention to ensure rapid improvement. School improvement can have happened well in advance of a follow up Ofsted inspection therefore schools may already be doing well for all pupils, ahead of a change in its Ofsted grading. There are currently 2 high schools in the city that are graded as requiring improvement by Ofsted.

- 11.4. Longhill was judged by Ofsted in March 2024 as requiring improvement in all areas. The report confirmed that the school's development plan was robust and that recent leadership changes were already securing significant improvements. It states that expectations of pupils and staff are much higher now. The focus on high aspirations, determination and success is ensuring that pupils are more positive about their education.
- 11.5. The council established a school improvement board to support accelerated improvement and funded additional support from a school partnership adviser (an experienced headteacher), a local partnership school and provided additional consultancy. This work has focused on rapidly improving the quality of education, leadership and behaviour. Since the date of the last inspection, further progress has been made, and the school has met improvement milestones building on the improvements recognised by Ofsted.
- 11.6. Brighton Aldridge Community Academy School is part of the Aldridge Education Trust. It was judged as inadequate by Ofsted in March 2022. Since then, the school has made significant improvements, and this progress led to a "requires improvement" grade in May 2023. This included "good" outcomes for personal development, leadership and management and the sixth form provision. Ofsted state that this is an improving school. Dynamic leadership in the school has raised expectations of pupils' education and behaviour since the last full inspection.
- 11.7. The council has a comprehensive school improvement strategy focussing on three main elements:
- Promoting high standards: Strategic support and challenge is provided to headteachers and governors and through a comprehensive professional development offer
 - Knowing schools well: A risk assessment process is in place whereby the council evaluates data relating to its schools and identifies concerns. Termly visits to schools are carried out through a team of school improvement advisers who are experienced headteachers who have system level leadership experience (and are often Ofsted trained).
 - Intervening in schools causing concern: The council has an early intervention model, so where concerns are identified officers will work with the school to swiftly address issues and support improvement through a support plan. This is closely monitored against clear targets.
- 11.8. The council welcomes the spotlight that has been placed upon the educational challenges faced in the city and will seek, outside of this process, to take the opportunity to build on the engagement and exploration of alternative approaches and insights offered by the community. These will be undertaken in addition to, rather than alternatively to, the determining of school admission arrangements for September 2026.

- 11.9. As part of this work the council will continue to work with school leaders to develop the city-wide vision for education and then review, refine and replace existing approaches and initiatives that are not fit for purpose.
- 11.10. The council has carefully considered the points raised in the consultation and these have informed the recommendations in this report.

12. Transition to secondary school

- 12.1. The consultation identified concerns from individuals and some schools about the impact of the proposals upon pupils' transition to secondary school. As outlined above it was raised as a concern for families with children with SEND, but it was also noted as a broad concern for all pupils.
- 12.2. It was expected that with less certainty about being allocated a school in their catchment area, concerns experienced by children about the change to a new school would increase. These included uncertainty about which school they may be attending and whether they would be accompanied by their friends, the dispersal of their friendship groups and a move away from the communities they were part of which, in some cases were established in the primary phase or earlier.
- 12.3. In the consultation, concerns were raised that the introduction of greater uncertainty in admission arrangements would be counter to the council's own promotion of a sense of belonging for pupils, which is a corner stone for children's well-being and academic success. In response to the consultation research was cited showing that children who keep the same best friend during this period tend to do better at school. Under existing admission arrangements no account of movement with friendship groups is considered.
- 12.4. Because of the introduction of an open admission criteria, it was felt that schools would have to manage transition arrangements with a larger number of schools and for a greater number of pupils, impacting on the resource available in school to do this well. This would vary depending on the scale of the changes being proposed such as the availability of places for FSM eligible pupils from outside the catchment area and the proportion of places made available through the proposed open admission criteria.
- 12.5. The city has an experienced and robust approach to secondary school transition which will mitigate these concerns. Through the use of a 'vulnerability index' tool, primary schools can accurately describe a detailed set of factors about each individual child that the receiving secondary school should be aware of.
- 12.6. The tool exists to provide contextual information for pupils transferring between primary and secondary schools in the city. The tool allows for a wide range of vulnerability factors to be identified and given a weighted score. Additionally, it captures information from the primary school about how to support individual children as needed.

12.7. The index has been running for several years and has been modified and adapted over that time. A working party of representatives from primary and secondary schools review the content of the index and consider adjustments as necessary.

13. Transport

13.1. In the response co-ordinated through the Trust for Developing Communities (TDC), ease of travel was the most important factor influencing school choice for young people. It was the most influential factor at the following settings:

- BACA
- Blatchington Mill School
- Whitehawk Youth Club
- Woodingdean Youth club

13.2. In terms of school travel, the majority considered 30 minutes to be a reasonable journey time, though there were some who preferred a shorter commute of 10 to 20 minutes, while others were comfortable with up to 45 minutes.

13.3. Responding to the consultation there was significant concern expressed that proposals did not offer any solutions on the transport issues that pupils face currently, as well as the possible transport implications on pupils should the proposals be determined. The conclusion of many was that overall more children in the city will be having to travel to schools that are further away from where they live on a daily basis. It was highlighted that the anticipated implication of these proposals would be running counter to the council's promotion of active and environmentally friendly travel to school, as well as its Net Zero aspirations.

13.4. In addition, there were concerns about the impact on families who have to help older children travel to secondary school and have younger children at primary school or early years settings in the city.

13.5. Others raised the logistical, financial and perceived safety concerns of travelling to and from school and were frustrated by the absence of costed proposals that assured families that any proposed changes to admission arrangements would be mitigated by adjustments to the council's home to school transport policy and the provision of public transport routes in the city. Within the recommendations of this report is a formal request that Full Council note the intention to review the Home to School Transport policy following the determination of admission arrangements. It is also noteworthy to highlight that the scale of any changes required will be dependent upon the scale of changes to school travel that occurs, particularly through the introduction of an open admission criteria. The smaller the percentage of places made available under this proposed criteria, the smaller the scale of change to transport arrangements that will be required.

- 13.6. The detrimental impact of long travel times for learners, restrictions on after school and school linked social engagements together with the negative impact on the environment and potentially increased costs to the council at a time of significant budget challenges were outlined.
- 13.7. There will be the potential for pupils to be outside of the catchment area but be in closer proximity than the school assigned to them. As a result, pupils may be in walking distance to a school but be required to take public transport to their catchment school. This is the case in the city now and will continue to be the case if the proposals are agreed.
- 13.8. The Department for Education's guidance on home to school transport outlines the council's statutory responsibility to make free of charge travel arrangements, which are when a pupil is of compulsory school age, attending their nearest suitable school and: live more than the statutory walking distance from that school or could not reasonably be expected to walk to that school because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problem, even if they were accompanied by their parent or would not be able to walk to that school in reasonable safety, even if they were accompanied by their parent.
- 13.9. A child aged 8 years or over is eligible for free travel to their nearest suitable school if it is more than 3 miles from their home.
- 13.10. To be eligible due to special educational needs, a pupil does not need to have an EHCP, attend a special school or live beyond the statutory walking distance.
- 13.11. Low-income families who receive free school meals have additional support to exercise school choice if they attend one of their three nearest suitable secondary schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 6 miles from their home; or attend a secondary school that is more than 2 but not more than 15 miles from their home that their parents have chosen on the grounds of their religion or belief if, having regard to that religion or belief, there is no suitable school nearer to their home.
- 13.12. In the DfE's guidance, the general expectation is that parent(s) will accompany their children or make other suitable arrangements for their journey to and from school. There is no distinction between primary or secondary aged pupils.
- 13.13. A child will not normally be eligible for assistance solely because their parent's work commitments or caring responsibilities mean they are unable to accompany their child themselves.
- 13.14. The home to school transport guidance goes on to state that consideration needs to be given to whether the parent has a disability or mobility problem that would make it difficult for them to accompany their child. The guidance states: *"Reasons such as the parent's working pattern or the fact they have children attending more than one school, on their own, will not normally be*

considered good reasons for a parent being unable to accompany their child.”

In addition, Paragraph 54 of that guidance specifically addresses the issue of secondary aged pupils and states:

We know it can be difficult for local authorities to make decisions in relation to children of secondary school age whose special educational needs, disability or mobility problem mean they could not reasonably be expected to walk to school unaccompanied. Other children of this age may normally be expected to walk to school unaccompanied which might, for example, enable parents to increase their working hours. When deciding whether it is reasonable to expect the parent of a child with special educational needs, disability or mobility problem to accompany their child to school, local authorities should be sensitive to the particular challenges parents of such children may face.

- 13.15. The council's own home to school transport policy states that the general expectation about parental accompaniment is in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance but will also consider whether one would ordinarily expect a child of that age to be accompanied.
- 13.16. In formulating the recommendations contained in this report there has been analysis of the impact of the proposals in respect of transport for pupils allocated schools outside of the catchment area in which they live, either because they express a preference under the open admissions criteria, or because the proposals result in there being insufficient places available within catchment.
- 13.17. Further consideration of the transport implications can be found in consideration of the open admissions proposal below. Where coverage and capacity on public transport are a concern, taking as a starting point the conclusions of the report from Jacobs, as outlined in appendix 9, then the council will need to develop plans to ensure it meets its statutory responsibilities in reasonable time before September 2026.
- 13.18. Through the consultation the council has undertaken to review its current home to school transport policy, review existing public transport routes and consider the need for revised journeys should the admission priorities be determined as proposed. These processes will conclude once the admissions criteria are determined. It is recognised that this has caused frustration, but there is a clear obligation to ensure the council complies with its statutory duties and a commitment to review the existing arrangements for pupils to consider if they remain fit for purpose.
- 13.19. Concern was expressed through the consultation about the safety of bus travel, especially for female students. There are already mitigations in place to support the safety of pupils travelling on bus routes in the city. All buses are equipped with CCTV cameras for safety and monitoring. Driver training includes dealing with challenging passenger behaviour. Bus supervisors are sometimes deployed on routes where concerns are reported and there is a

dedicated schools liaison supervisor. Brighton and Hove Buses also work with schools on behaviour agreements and reporting protocols and offer free travel to teachers to use routes involving pupils.

- 13.20. Any reports of concerning behaviour or incidents will be collected by Brighton and Hove Buses and, where necessary, there will be liaison with Sussex Police. The council's Education Safeguarding Officer has no record of any referrals or concerns relating to safety on school transport and there are no patterns of incident reporting to the council's community safety team.
- 13.21. As outlined in Section 20, where there are concerns for coverage and capacity the council will need to consider what additional analysis and mitigations will need to be put in place for September 2026
- 13.22. As a result of the high pupil mobility prior to the start of term it is important to ensure the overall transport network is resilient to changes and by necessity, any additional capacity required will only be apparent in the months leading up to September 2026.
- 13.23. The council has signalled through the consultation that a review of the council's Home to School Transport policy will occur. This will take place over Spring/Summer 2025 and arrangements be in place for September 2026. This is formalised in the recommendations of this report. This will enable mitigations to the impact of the determined admission arrangements to be considered and applied.
- 13.24. Before forming the current administration, the Labour Group indicated a policy intention to provide free bus travel for under-19s still in education. Any review undertaken will explore how the council can continue to work to this policy aspiration. In addition, the review can explore what other entitlements to travel assistance beyond the council's statutory duties, may be considered appropriate in response to decisions taken on the admission arrangements.
- 13.25. The table below outlines some of the policy options open to the council and the potential first year cost of their introduction from September 2026 and an estimate of the annual costs when the proposed policy changes have been established in all secondary school years. As detailed in Appendix 9, a simple multiplication of the costs in year 1 for 5 years may not accurately reflect the costs as pupil numbers reduce and costs may change. In addition the changes in admission criteria may also change patterns of preferences. However as an indicator of overall costs an estimation of costs in 5 years' time provides a reasonable indicator of potential future costs to the council.

Option	No. of pupils	Year 1 cost	Estimated full implementation cost (5 years) per year
Provide all pupils offered places under criteria 6 (5%)	76	£33,820	£169,100
Provide all pupils offered places under criteria 5	26	£11,570	£57,850
Provide pupils not offered their catchment area school at 5% open admissions	63	£28,035	£140,175

14. House purchase/rental prices

- 14.1. Concerns were raised by many that they had worked hard to ensure they lived in a catchment area that not only gave them access to preferred schools of choice, but also supported other areas of family life such as being close to support networks and access to work. There were also a number of comments shared about the perceived implication during the consultation that everyone in the dual school catchment areas were wealthy, middle class and able to move house around catchment area changes. Some argued that opposing the proposals did not equate to solely caring about the value of their properties. Others stated direct concern that the proposals would impact negatively on the value of their homes.
- 14.2. Concerns were heard from families who had taken the decision to pay more to live in a particular area to prioritise the education of their child. There was criticism from some who had specifically moved to particular areas of Brighton to access catchment area schools, opposed to the introduction of the open admissions priority due to concerns about not gaining a local school place. Many comments were received about a worry that many families would chose to leave the city if these proposals were bought in.
- 14.3. Comments were made by some in support of the proposals expressing hope that this may help 'level' out house prices and enable people to move/buy homes elsewhere in the city. Several consultees commented that the proposals may end the entrenched divisions of house prices in the city with views that the current catchment system significantly disadvantages poorer families who cannot 'buy in' to the catchment area. Some also related this issue to the wider sense of developing family areas of the city. Some responses described how families have been moving out of single catchment areas because they want to access more choice of schooling and the negative impact this is having on the community and its social capital and mobility. One consultee talked about their single school catchment area has meant families haven't move there for a long time and that has a meant high numbers of rentals in the area rather than families settling there.

15. Impact on communities

- 15.1. Concerns were raised about the impact of the proposals on the communities which have built up around schools, as it is possible that children will not receive school places alongside others within their community. Consultees were concerned that this would adversely affect transition to secondary school by potentially disrupting supportive peer and friendship networks and could also result in practical difficulties, especially for pupils with SEND.
- 15.2. Although the council's admission arrangements include catchment areas there is no further recognition of geographical proximity or neighbourhood boundaries. The council does not use admission arrangements that name a primary phase school as a feeder school. Instead, the council uses random allocation when there is oversubscription in a catchment area. This offers no guarantees that pupils will transition with particular friendship groups. Schools mainly on the periphery of the city will also have experience of admitting children from outside the city and all schools will admit children in-year that have moved into the city and not been part of formal transition arrangements. Schools are therefore already experienced at supporting individual or small numbers of pupils to integrate into a new school when they are not part of established friendship groups.
- 15.3. It was argued by some living in single school catchment areas that their children feel devalued and deprioritised because of this arrangement, highlighting the impact upon their child's self-esteem and that this in itself acts as an educational barrier.

16. Complexity of proposals

- 16.1. Paragraph 1.8 of the School Admission Code states:

“Oversubscription criteria must be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation. Admission authorities must ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs, and that other policies around school uniform or school trips do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child. Admission arrangements must include an effective, clear, and fair tie-breaker to decide between two applications that cannot otherwise be separated.
- 16.2. Paragraph 14 of the School Admission Code 2021 outlines the overall principles behind setting school admission arrangements and states, “parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.”
- 16.3. Concerns and criticisms were raised about the consultation process and the ability for consultees to fully understand the proposals and their likely impact which would affect their ability to be able to comment meaningfully in

response. Consultees were also concerned about the perceived complexity of the proposed secondary school admission priorities and the ability for families to understand these when considering the submission of their preferences for school places. It was felt that this complexity might have a disproportionate impact on those families already experiencing disadvantage.

- 16.4. The council considers that it has made extensive efforts to ensure that consultees were provided with sufficient opportunity to ask questions and clarify any uncertainties about the proposals. As outlined above there were a considerable number of public meetings, where Members and officers presented the proposals and attendees were able to ask questions. An FAQ and a summary document were published two weeks into the consultation, i.e. six weeks before the end of the consultation. These documents addressed queries which had arisen in the first two weeks. The FAQ was then updated during the remainder of the consultation.
- 16.5. The council recognises that some residents reported finding the proposals complex and difficult to comment on. The council feels that the volume and breadth of responses, including the different methods used to engage with stakeholders, means that Full Council are in a position to be able to consider the recommendations from an informed position and with confidence in its understanding of the diverse views held by residents and stakeholders affected by these proposals.
- 16.6. Concerns have been expressed that it has been difficult for families to calculate their probability of securing a particular school place under the proposals. The council has provided as much information as possible to model the impact of the proposed arrangements however this information is always subject to a number of caveats.
- 16.7. In themselves admission priorities are not designed to ensure families can calculate their probability of securing a particular school place. They are oversubscription criteria whose function is to describe which places will be allocated at the school when there are more applications than places available and the order in which the criteria will be applied.
- 16.8. In any year there are a number of factors that will impact on how school places are allocated and for September 2026 specifically these include:
 - CNCS have consulted on changing their admission arrangements for September 2026 by introducing a FSM criteria. Their consultation document did not provide a description of the proportion of places that will be made available for this criteria. To date the Governing Board have not determined their arrangement so no consideration of the impact has been made.
 - In recent years King's School has admitted over its PAN of 165 and taken 180 pupils into each year group. This trend may continue in future years. As a Free School and therefore its own admission authority King's School does not need to consult on increasing its PAN.

- How many successful faith based applications are made to CNCS and King's will affect how many places are available for pupils applying under a 'no faith' criteria.
- In any year some places that are offered are not taken up and are reallocated to pupils on a waiting list.
- Each year a number of appeals are successful and mean that a school is required to admit more children, potentially over their PAN, because of the decision of an independent panel.
- Whilst low numbers, children admitted in criteria 1 and 2 will not only come from the school's catchment area and this amount can vary each year, dependent on individual circumstances. As will the number who are eligible for free school meals.
- How parents rank their preferred schools will affect how many pupils get a place in each school.

16.9. Whilst it is reasonable to assume that arrangements can give an indication to families as to the likelihood of a place, especially when considering faith based, aptitude or ability banding criteria; they cannot be relied upon to give a level of certainty in individual cases.

16.10. The council is confident that the arrangements as written in Appendix 5 are clear and understandable.

17. Consideration of consultation responses

17.1. The council is obliged to conscientiously consider the results of the consultation when determining the admission arrangements. As well as this report and its appendices all Members have been given private and confidential access to the following:

- All email responses provided to the consultation
- The 'raw data' from the survey platform
- Any submissions made on behalf of groups, organisations, schools and subject experts.

17.2. This data could not be shared publicly in its full form as it can contain personal and sensitive information which the council does not have permission to publish.

17.3. Officers have read and considered all of the consultation responses both as they came in and in the final days of the consultation. In the drafting of this report, officers have ensured that all submissions have been considered. The detail of this analysis is given in this report and in Appendix 12.

17.4. The council has been encouraged by the active engagement across the city on the matters raised during both the engagement exercise and the public consultation. Some residents shared views that this was a highly complex issue that would need a longer-term approach to fully solve. The council agrees that further discussions should take place following determination of the 2026 admission arrangements. The council will be looking to issue a call for evidence around educational disadvantage and how this links to school

admissions and strategies affecting the city's children, which can contribute to longer term planning of the council's school admission arrangements.

18. Modelling and pupil numbers

18.1. The council provides forecast pupil numbers on an annual basis. For primary schools this data is informed by GP registration data and for secondary schools it is informed by what is known about the existing primary age cohort within the city. Calculations and assumptions are made about the numbers of children that may wish to attend faith schools, private schools, move out of the area and those that opt for arrangements such as elective home education. The council's pupil forecasting approach is well established and typically is more than 95% accurate when compared to the number of places allocated and dependent on how far in advance the forecast is made. The council therefore feels well informed about likely pupil numbers needing a secondary school place in September 2026 and this is detailed in Appendices 2-4.

18.2. The council's forecast for the number of secondary school places needed in future years is summarised in the table below.

Year of entry	Number of pupils forecast in the city*	Number of pupils requiring a community school place*
2026	2284	1787
2027	2234	1737
2028	2206	1709
2029	2117	1620
2030	2028	1531
2031	2009	1512

*assuming determination of changes proposed in this report

18.3. The forecast number of pupils will vary depending on the catchment area used because there are individual factors modelled at catchment area level e.g. the forecasting we do of the number of children who do not accept their allocated school. There are some slight differences between forecast pupil numbers in appendices 3 and 4 as summarised below.

Year of entry	Appendix 3	Appendix 4
2026	2279	2284
2027	2231	2234
2028	2204	2206
2029	2116	2117
2030	2025	2028
2031	2010	2009

- 18.4. Since the start of the consultation the council has generated a new forecast for primary school pupil numbers having received updated data about GP registration figures received annually from the NHS in late autumn. This data also provides the first indication of pupil numbers in September 2028 and is provided in the format shared as part of the report that was considered by Cabinet in December 2024. This is available in Appendix 2 and when compared with previous data shows a decline in surplus places albeit at the same time the number of places in primary schools has reduced following the closure of 2 primary schools and a reduction in PAN at some other schools. This new forecast is part of our annual forecasting work and can occur at the same time as our annual consultation into school admission arrangements. The new forecast for September 2028 numbers makes no material difference to the impact of the proposals set out in the consultation.
- 18.5. The council's current forecast is shown in the table below. The council is proposing no other change to the number of primary school places available except the recommendation in Paragraph 2.2. There has been a consultation on a proposal by the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton to close St Joseph's Catholic Primary School at the end of August 2025 which is a separate process and outside the scope of this report.

Year of entry	Number of pupils requiring a place
2026	1978
2027	1823
2028	1887

- 18.6. In addition to the catchment area forecast outlined above, the council is able to use other data sources such as termly school census and parental preference data to model the potential impact of the proposed changes to school admission arrangements.
- 18.7. Any modelling of future proposals requires a series of assumptions to be made. Which assumptions are used will alter the figures generated. Using previous trends may not identify changing habits or how people may act in the future. Some potential changes to matters affecting school allocations have yet to be confirmed and so cannot be incorporated in assumptions. Any modelling or projections provided in this report therefore need to be understood in this context. Variables which may affect allocations in September 2026 are outlined in Paragraph 7.8.
- 18.8. Whilst the council is now aware how many families have used the FSM category in 2025 and can use this to estimate future numbers, it is yet to understand parent's motivation for their choices or identify a pattern to apply.
- 18.9. The council does not know what the potential impact will be on the maintained state sector of the private school VAT levy. Although this is being monitored closely so far there is no statistically significant impact locally. However, the council recognises that the levy has only just been introduced and so will continue to monitor this.

- 18.10. The council also notes that whilst not affecting the forecasting process, consideration needs to be given to the fact that post allocation factors will also affect actual allocations and the number of pupils in school during the autumn term. Each year a number of appeals are successful and mean that a school is required to admit more children because of the decision of an independent panel. In any year some places that are offered are not taken up and are reallocated to pupils on a waiting list.
- 18.11. Under the current admission arrangements, it is made clear that there is no guarantee that living within a particular catchment area means that a place will be offered at a catchment area school. The offer of a place is dependent on the number and pattern of preferences across the city. The introduction of new priorities does not change that interdependency.
- 18.12. It is important to note that within the data provided in paragraph 3.44 of the Report to Cabinet on 5 December 2024, it stated that 125 children from the Dorothy Stringer/Varndean catchment area might not gain a catchment area school place. Following feedback and a further review of all data and calculations, the council amended this figure to 144 and this was clearly signposted in meetings that were held from the 11 January onwards.
- 18.13. As suggested above in paragraph 16.8 (the list of variables), the December Cabinet report also detailed a number of planning assumptions that were made in that data modelling. These included:
- The same percentage of FSM pupils from each catchment area attend CNCS & Kings as non-FSM pupils.
 - That in-catchment area pupils in Patcham, Dorothy Stringer/Varndean and Blatchington Mill/Hove Park areas who are eligible for FSM want to attend one of their catchment area schools.
- 18.14. During the consultation the council received additional analysis undertaken by residents using publicly available data that appeared to demonstrate that the proposals would have a greater impact than set out in the modelling provided by the council. The council met with the authors of several of the pieces of modelling submitted to discuss their analysis. Whilst the council appreciates that some consultees consider that work to be of greater merit and rigour, the assumptions and interpretation of implementation of the proposals do not always align to the council's position. For example, the council clarified during the consultation the intention to 'count' the free school meals quota from criteria 1. Additionally, the council explained that the applications were still being processed in January and February and has to act with caution about what information is shared before National Offer Day, however this meant that the public could only rely on the data shared as part of the consultation process. This has resulted in residents sharing interpretations of data modelling in an authoritative manner which hasn't reflected what the council has shared during the consultation.
- 18.15. During the consultation period, the council decided against sharing any calculations about the likelihood of obtaining a place in part because of the

variability involved in forecasting and the impact of the take up of the FSM criteria introduced in 2025.

- 18.16. Considerable frustration was expressed by some consultees during the consultation period about the perceived lack of modelling data available. Through the consultation, the council has continued to develop its planning assumptions used to model the impact of the proposed arrangements.
- 18.17. Our assumptions have been refined but there inevitably remains a degree of informed estimation. There is no definitive model that will provide certainty on the impact of the admission process until the actual applications are considered against the determined admission priorities of the schools in the city. It is for this reason that the council always act with caution when sharing modelling and detailed assessments of impacts, beyond sharing trend data of what has happened previously and forecasting future numbers.
- 18.18. The December 2024 Cabinet report set out the potential impact of the introduction of the proposals in terms of data and numbers of children who might not gain a place at their catchment area school. The planning assumptions made in that modelling were detailed in the report. The allocations for secondary school in September 2025 were being processed and have only become available very recently. The insight gained from those allocations have further informed planning assumptions. However, based on the proposals consulted on, it is not anticipated at this stage the forecast impact as set out in the Cabinet report will be materially different.
- 18.19. A prominent theme raised during the consultation related to the impact of these proposals on children living in the Stringer/Varndean catchment area obtaining a place at those schools. The council has undertaken modelling for admissions for in area allocations into year 7 in September 2026 which indicate that at 5% open admissions all pupils in catchment area have a 91% chance of admission and those in proposed criteria 7 have a 80% chance of admission.
- 18.20. By way of comparison, nationally data published by the Department for Education for 2024/25 states 82.9% of secondary school applicants were made an offer of their first preference school and 96% of all secondary school applicants were made an offer by any of their ranked preference schools. The variables as listed in 16.8 still apply and do not take into account where in area children may take places outside of the catchment area under higher preferences.
- 18.21. During the consultation concerns were raised about whether the proposed arrangements, in particular open admissions and the FSM priority criteria would disproportionately impact some schools by allocating a high proportion of places to pupils eligible for FSM compared to their average

allocation under the current arrangements. For example, questions were raised by one school as to whether, due to the way that preferences may be expressed within their dual school catchment area and the introduction of an open admissions criteria (which is proposed to admit children after the FSM quota has been reached in earlier priorities), their FSM quota would go higher than the city average This concern is mitigated by the management of FSM places up to criteria 5 up to the 30% quota.

18.22. The degree of uncertainty of influencing factors as described above, applies to the process the council uses to forecasts the level of FSM allocations under priorities 4 and 5. However, in order to provide clarity, based on the same caveats as above, the table below provides a summary of the current modelling.

	Modeling interpretation where FSM applications are 'opted in' and where the proposed 30% quota of FSM pupils is counted from criteria 1 to 5					
	20% open admissions		10% open admissions		5% open admissions	
	% of intake FSM eligible	Potential number of catchment area pupils not offered a catchment area school	% of intake FSM eligible	Potential number of catchment area pupils not offered a catchment area school	% of intake FSM eligible	Potential number of catchment area pupils not offered a catchment area school
Dorothy Stringer	35.11%	144	34.46%	84	34.13%	54
Vardean	35.10%		34.37%			
Blatchington Mill	33.04%	57	31.52%	9	30.76%	0
Hove Park	21.16%		19.91%			
Patcham	27.03%	43	26.04%	21	25.50%	9

18.23. This table does not detail all schools in the city but focusses on those that typically fill with preferences. For the other schools it is more complicated to predict the percentage levels of FSM due to the impact of late applications and other directions being made to these schools. However, what this table does show is that there are still variations in the FSM allocations between schools, but it is not a significant difference in the range that some consultees have been reporting during the consultation. The table illustrates that the lower the proportion of open admission places applied, the lower the number of catchment area pupils potentially not offered their catchment area school. In the Blatchington Mill/Hove Park catchment area, no catchment area pupils are forecast to not be offered a catchment area school should 5% open admissions be determined.

The council's proposed arrangements for 2026/27

19. Increase in PAN at Rudyard Kipling Primary School

19.1. The council is proposing to increase the Published Admission Number for the school from 30 to 45 pupils from September 2026. The Governing Board are supportive of the proposed increase and believe that a PAN of 45 is most aligned to the number of children wishing to join their school. In their view this will enable the school to continue to enable an equality of opportunity for children from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The

proposed increase in PAN will facilitate the school's return to a balanced budget position within the agreed timescales. The Governing Board are confident that the school can make a success of a vertically grouped class model and maintain strong educational outcomes for all children.

- 19.2. As outlined in Appendix 2, the overall number of pupils forecast to need a school place up to September 2028 is expected to remain below 2000 pupils across the city. In the Deans planning areas, which incorporates Rudyard Kipling Primary School (RKPS), the number of children requiring a place is expected to fall after 2026. The highest number of children in the planning area is in the postcode area BN2 6 served by both RKPS and Woodingdean Primary School.
- 19.3. The consultation asked consultees to indicate how much they agree or disagree with the proposed increase in PAN. Of the 3836 responses made 748 responses either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal and 434 responses disagreed or strongly disagreed. 2654 preferred not to say or neither disagreed or agreed.
- 19.4. Some respondents were supportive of the increase if it meant local children could attend their community school, while others questioned the need for an increase given recent school closures due to falling pupil numbers. There was also a feeling that if the school's Governing Board requested the increase, it might be justified as they are likely to understand their circumstances best. The potential impact of a PAN increase on other schools in the area was also a point of discussion, alongside cautious support if the change in PAN did not adversely affect the quality of teaching at the school.
- 19.5. Having taken into account all responses the council agrees with the Governing Board request to increase the PAN and therefore recommends that the PAN of Rudyard Kipling Primary School rises to 45 with effect from September 2026, as outlined in recommendation 2.2.

20. Amend the catchment area boundary of Dorothy Stringer/Varndean schools and Longhill High School

- 20.1. The council is proposing a change to the catchment area boundary of Varndean/Dorothy Stringer and Longhill High Schools. The council proposes changes for the community of Whitehawk, as defined by the upper BN2 5 postcode, with a move into the Dorothy Stringer/Varndean catchment area. The proposal seeks to both balance the number of pupils requiring school places with the proposed PANs of each school as well as addressing the profile of the proportion of FSM eligibility in each catchment area from September 2026. Based on the data in Appendices 3 and 4, the table below shows the potential number of total pupils in each catchment area with no change or if proposals are introduced.

Year /Proposal	LHS catchment area	DS/V Catchment area
2026/No change	197	598
2026/Proposed changes	175	624
Difference	-22	+26

- 20.2. The proposal would mean that the BN2 5 north area above Manor Way and Manor Hill would be brought within the Varndean/Dorothy Stringer catchment area, moving out of the Longhill High School catchment area. To ensure the geographic spread of secondary schools and continued alignment of pupil numbers and places, it is proposed that the Kempton area BN2 1 and BN2 5 (south) would move into the Longhill High School catchment area.
- 20.3. The council will commit to maintaining a sibling link for families who are affected by the proposed changes in catchment area. The sibling link will continue to apply should there remain an elder sibling attending the school when the younger sibling starts. This includes elder siblings who were placed in the school under the sibling criteria prior to September 2026.
- 20.4. Due to the location of the city's schools, the Whitehawk and Kempton areas require pupils to use transport to travel to all three receiving schools, Dorothy Stringer, Varndean, and Longhill High School. As such, in either the existing catchment model, or the proposed future model, it is unlikely that pupils in either area would be walking to school.
- 20.5. Of the 3836 responses to the consultation, 1167 either agreed or strongly agreed and 1746 either disagreed or strongly disagreed. 923 consultees neither agreed or disagreed or preferred not to say.
- 20.6. The Governing Board of Dorothy Stringer School have committed to work with the proposed catchment boundary changes, stating that they are proud to already welcome students from across the city. They sought assurance that transport arrangements would be provided by the council to enable equity of access.
- 20.7. The Governing Board of Varndean School did not comment directly on the proposed catchment boundary change.
- 20.8. The Governing Board of Longhill High School outlined their full support for the intent and objectives behind the proposed changes to the admissions arrangements, however no specific mention was made of the proposed catchment boundary change. They did however express concerns about the existing transport network stating that a suitable number of direct, conveniently timed buses needed to be established alongside enhanced and published, safe and efficient walking and cycling routes from the different catchment areas to the city's schools.

- 20.9. The Governing Board of Queens Park Primary School identified in their response that a significant majority of children attending their school would be impacted by the proposal, citing 178 pupils (57% of their total number on roll) being moved into the Longhill catchment area, including 76 pupils eligible for FSM and 9 with EHCPs. The remaining pupils in the catchment for Dorothy Stringer and Varndean schools would face increased uncertainty regarding gaining a place in their catchment schools given the council's other proposals for open admissions addressed elsewhere in this report.
- 20.10. The Governing Board questioned the appropriateness of moving certain communities into and out of catchment areas without addressing the root causes of disadvantage. In their view concentrating a high number of disadvantaged children into a single catchment area with one in-catchment school choice limited opportunities and risked entrenching inequality. It is the council's view that this is mitigated by the proposed introduction of an open admission criteria as well as the opportunity to benefit from the FSM admission criteria.
- 20.11. The Governing Board also identified that families might find themselves attending both primary and secondary schools identified by Ofsted as Requires Improvement, albeit single word judgments are no longer recognised and that a judgement is necessarily reflective of a moment in time. The Governors expressed concern that families might be less likely to remain in or move to the Kemptown area if it becomes a single catchment area with 3 schools currently deemed to be Requires Improvement.
- 20.12. Many consultees expressed concerns about the potential impact on children from Whitehawk being included in the catchment area for Dorothy Stringer/Varndean, which are both potentially oversubscribed, particularly if they do not have FSM eligibility or sibling links which would have given them a higher priority to attend one of the schools. They also raised concerns about increased travel distances for children and the potential disruption of local communities.
- 20.13. Reference was made to the closure of COMART (East Brighton College of Media Arts, a maintained secondary school closed by the council in 2005) and the need for any further change in catchment areas to be handled sensitively and with an awareness of the history of change in secondary school education for those in this community.
- 20.14. Those in support of the proposal felt that including Whitehawk in the catchment for high-performing schools could promote social integration and improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged children. They also wished to challenge where only having one school in the catchment area, when other areas have two, (and with no open admissions option) leads to their children feeling devalued and deprioritised and acts as a barrier to

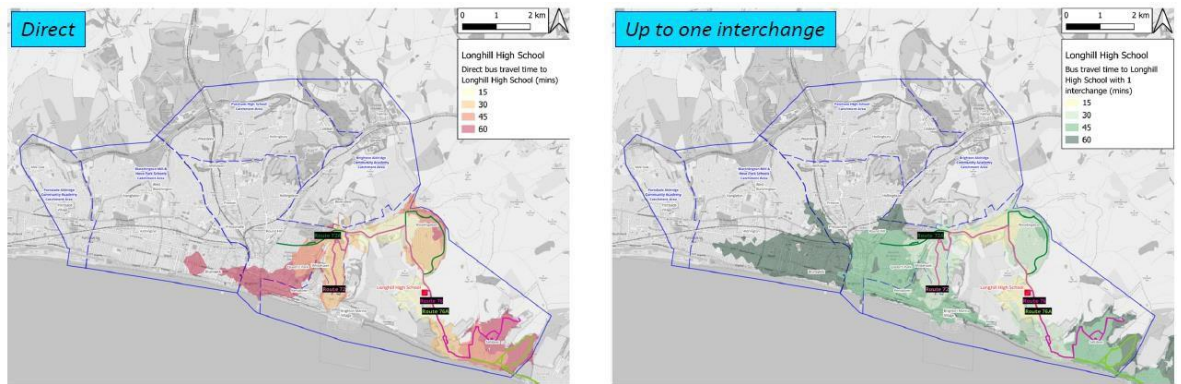
successful engagement in school for some and also affects their self-esteem.

- 20.15. The projected impact will change depending on whether other proposals in relation to the reduction of the PAN of Dorothy Stringer, and an open admissions criteria are adopted. Further modelling is presented under the relevant sections below which considers the cumulative impact of those proposals if the new catchment boundaries are adopted, together with a reduction in the PAN for Dorothy Stringer school.
- 20.16. The council recognises that overall the consultation responses did not support the proposed change in catchment area and appreciates that any alteration may change patterns of applications for those living in the area which could affect the primary schools in the area. Due to considerations raised earlier, including in paragraph 14.2 the council maintains the intention to change the catchment area boundary detailed above.
- 20.17. The council has carefully considered the responses from the schools whose catchment areas will change and noted that the boundary change in itself is not a significant concern but is accepting that, alongside this, the role public transport plays is crucial.
- 20.18. The maps featured below are taken from Appendix 10 and show the consideration of future capacity and coverage of bus routes that support pupils to attend the schools mentioned. The work was undertaken to consider the impact on the bus network based on certain assumptions. The RAG assessment gives an overall summary as to the potential impact of the proposals. It should also be noted that RAG scoring is high-level and there can be material differences in impact severity within the same RAG score.
- 20.19. As can be expected, the assessment of the impact varies depending on the proportion of open admissions modelled. The lower the proportion of open admission the less impact there is on the capacity of routes to transport pupils to Longhill High School. The assessment of both capacity and coverage do not change in relation to Dorothy Stringer/Varndean schools with capacity remaining rated as green but coverage rated red throughout. Therefore indicating a need for the council to review the current bus arrangements in advance of September 2026, should the proposals be determined. The council will actively consider future changes and additions to bus routes and capacity to ensure journey times are minimised.

Longhill High School

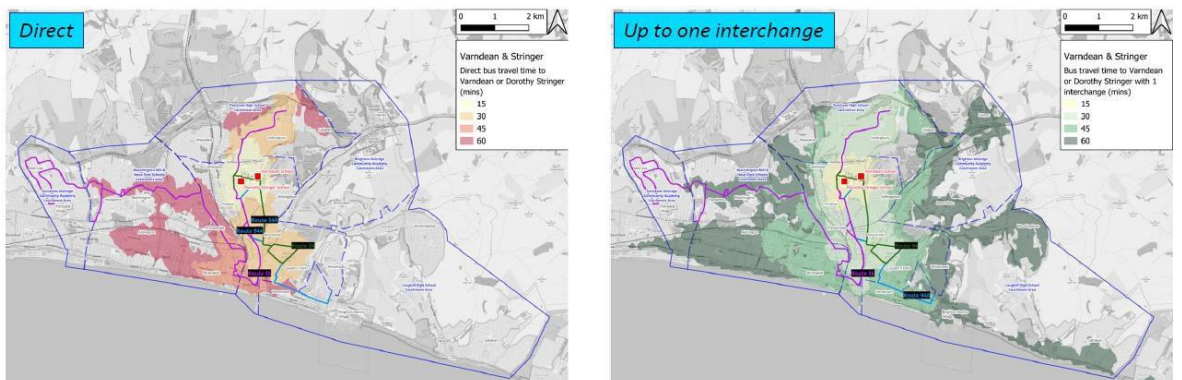
- 20.20. At 5% open admissions, the capacity has been RAG assessed as green and the coverage amber. No school services from the origin catchments and limited coverage is provided in general services. Travel times of 30-45 minutes by bus for pupils in parts of the origin catchments, but large areas

taking more than 60 minutes. Direct journeys only available from Queen's Park and Whitehawk.



Vardean and Dorothy Stringer Schools

20.21. At 5% open admissions, the capacity has been RAG assessed as green and the coverage red. School service 94A serves Kemptown in the Longhill catchment, with connections to services 55 and 94 available in the centre. Analysis of loading data does not suggest potential capacity issues. A mix of direct and connecting options provide bus travel times of less than 60 minutes from most of the Patcham catchment, but access is poorer from the other origin catchments with some connecting journeys taking 45-60 minutes, but often longer.



20.22. On balance, the council therefore recommends that the catchment area boundary between Dorothy Stringer/Vardean and Longhill School should be amended as detailed above.

21. Reduction in the Published Admission Number at Blatchington Mill School

21.1. The council proposed reducing the PAN of Blatchington Mill School from 330 to 300 from September 2026.

- 21.2. Blatchington Mill is part of a dual catchment area with Hove Park school. Secondary school pupil numbers for September 2026 are outlined in Appendix 4. Across the city there are forecast to be 2279 pupils requiring a place. The catchment area of Hove Park and Blatchington Mill schools is forecast to have 434 pupils living in the catchment area and requiring a school place, having taken account of patterns of preference for CNCS and King's School. Hove Park School has a PAN of 180. Pupil numbers are not forecast to be above 445 from 2027 onwards. A reduced PAN for Blatchington Mill would mean the number of places available in the catchment area is 480 places.
- 21.3. In its response to the consultation the Governing Board school stated that they are and remain sympathetic to the changing demographics and the differing attainment levels achieved across the city, yet its focus, as a matter of law, was on the current and future students of Blatchington Mill school.
- 21.4. The Governing Board cited the school's performance and being mindful of whether the proposed reduction in the PAN would impact upon the school's ability to maintain this level of attainment for those students currently in the school and also limit access for future students. The Governing Board referenced the recent School Resource Management Adviser review held between October and December 2024. The subsequent report states:
- 21.5. *"The pupil numbers forecast reflect current demand for places. Recruitment is expected to meet near capacity of 330 pupils (PAN since 2018) for each year forecast (up to 2027 currently)...The school would need to undertake a full analysis on how to operate to a balanced budget with a reduced PAN, and the first step to allow this analysis is to agree on a model that operates to a balanced budget with the current PAN, as reducing PAN by 30 pupils would see income reduce by approximately £180K p.a. with a related teacher/TA staffing reduction unlikely to offset this income reduction. The net capacity of the school is calculated at 2016, therefore any reduction would create further economy of scale challenges around the maintenance of the premises."*
- 21.6. The Governing Board also acknowledged the strong opposition, sentiment and feeling held across the community in relation to the proposals many of whom, they describe as having centred their work and lives around getting their children into their school of choice.
- 21.7. Of the 3836 responses, 1047 either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal. 1618 either disagreed or strongly disagreed. 1171 consultees either preferred not to say or neither agreed or disagreed. As such there was not a conclusive response from those replying to the consultation in support of the Governing Board's position. It is noted however that concern was expressed by the Governing Board themselves and others that insufficient energy and opportunity was provided to ensure the community of the school were engaged in the consultation process.
- 21.8. Some respondents considered that the proposed reduction in PAN contradicted the presumptions in the School Admissions Code and were

concerned that local children would not receive a place and be required to travel long distances to other schools, negatively impacting their education, community ties, and well-being.

- 21.9. Others referenced concern about the financial implications for the school, such as budget cuts and staffing issues. As well as denying families the opportunity for their children to attend a well regarded and successful school, citing its oversubscription in previous years.
- 21.10. The council has carefully considered the views of the Governing Board, as well as individuals participating in the consultation. It is understood that there is potential for the governing body to object to the Schools Adjudicator if the PAN set for them is lower than they would wish having considered the council's reasoning, and that there is a strong presumption in favour of an increase to the PAN to which the Schools Adjudicator must have regard.
- 21.11. The council has considered the forecast reduction in pupil numbers across the city, and the numbers of children living in this catchment in future years. The council is aware of the level of preferences for Blatchington Mill school. The school is well regarded and performs well and the consideration of a reduction in PAN should not be thought of as a verdict on the school or its running.
- 21.12. The governors have raised concerns that a school with a PAN of 300 may not be financially sound. A PAN of 300 would still be above all but three of the schools in the city, and be the same as for Varndean and Dorothy Stringer if their proposed PAN reduction is determined.
- 21.13. The council has considered whether the pattern of parental preferences for Blatchington Mill school and within the catchment would be unreasonably adversely impacted by the proposal to reduce the PAN to 300. In the last two years and again in 2025 the pattern of parental preferences is such that a reduced PAN would still be able to accommodate first preferences, even with open admissions and the other priorities proposed. In recent years the allocation of places on National Offer Day for families who placed it as a first preference are as follows:

Year	Number of first preferences offered a place/first preferences received
September 2021	284/400
September 2022	270/292
September 2023	260/300
September 2024	243/279

- 21.14. The council is committed to offering support to Blatchington Mill School to ensure that any financial issues are properly evaluated and addressed but other schools have demonstrated that it is possible to run a financially viable and good school with a PAN of this number, or below.
- 21.15. As part of its overarching responsibilities and in line with its intentions to amend admission arrangements and address the forecast reduction in

secondary school pupil numbers the council proposes to reduce the school's PAN as outlined in paragraph 2.4. The council believes that the considerations on a city wide level are sufficiently compelling to propose a change to the school's PAN.

22. Reduction in the Published Admission Number at Dorothy Stringer School

22.1. The council has proposed reducing the PAN of Dorothy Stringer School from 330 to 300 from September 2026.

22.2. Secondary school pupil numbers for September 2026 are outlined in Appendix 3 and 4. Across the city there are forecast to be 2284 pupils requiring a place, compared with 2297 in 2025. The proposal would mean that with the PAN for Varndean remaining at 300, available secondary school places within the Dorothy Stringer/Varndean catchment would fall from 630 to 600. Taking into account patterns of preference for Cardinal Newman and King's School the catchment area of Varndean and Dorothy Stringer schools is forecast to have 598 pupils living in the catchment area requiring a school place if the catchment remains the same, and 624 pupils if the catchment boundaries change per the proposal.

22.3. In recent years the allocation of places on National Offer Day for families who placed it as a first preference are as follows:

Year	Number of first preferences offered a place/first preferences received
September 2021	306/386
September 2022	258/291
September 2023	242/260
September 2024	199/242

22.4. In its response to the consultation the Governing Body of Dorothy Stringer stated that they support the council's proposal to reduce the PAN having already considered such a move, recognising that pupil numbers have grown over the years, which has had a detrimental impact on the logistical operation of the school, due to the geographical limitations of the site.

22.5. In addition, they acknowledge the falling pupil numbers across the city and are committed to supporting the wider family of schools across the city by a PAN reduction.

22.6. Of the 3836 responses to the consultation, 1009 consultees either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal. 2336 either disagreed or strongly disagreed. 491 consultees either preferred not to say or neither agreed or disagreed.

22.7. Respondents were strongly against the proposal to reduce the PAN with over half of the consultees in disagreement. Many were concerned that this reduction, combined with other proposed changes such as open admissions and increased catchment areas, will lead to even more children being unable to attend their preferred school.

- 22.8. There was a frequently expressed view that reducing places at an oversubscribed school contradicts the School Admissions Code. The potential for increased travel times and the impact on community cohesion were also cited as major concerns and frustration. The council welcomes the Governing Board's clear stance on the proposal to reduce the school's PAN and carefully considered their view, as well as individuals participating in the consultation. As stated previously, the council understands the strong presumption in favour of an increase to the PAN to which the Schools Adjudicator must have regard should an objection be raised. However the Governing Board's support of the proposal for the reasons outlined add to the compelling arguments in favour of a reduction.
- 22.9. Respondents who supported the proposal cited reasons given by the Governing Board and the need to reflect the reduction in pupil numbers.
- 22.10. The council considers that there are strong educational reasons to consider that it is not in the interests of pupils to have a PAN which compromises the logistics of the school give the constraints of the site, and this is an issue that the school have identified consistently over years. The school have used their best endeavours to accommodate pupils on a site which is recognised as overcrowded for the PAN, in a context where in previous years this, met the needs of the community in years where pupil numbers were rising and other schools were accommodating bulge classes. The pressure on space has been identified by the school over a considerable period of time, including on the availability of a suitable canteen for the numbers of pupils, and the measures that have to be taken even to enable pupils to change classrooms to avoid overcrowding in the corridors.
- 22.11. The proposal is made in the context of falling pupil numbers across the city, and some schools needing to attract greater pupil numbers to maintain their viability. It is recognised that if priorities 1-5 are adopted a reduced PAN has the potential to mean that some pupils in Criteria 7 may not be allocated a school within catchment. The report considers below the various mitigations which can be put in place including in relation to some children not being allocated a preference for a school within their local catchment.
- 22.12. With the support of the Governing Board, a shared consideration for the impact on all of the city's schools and agreement with the governing board's concern for the geographical constraints of the school's site it is recommended that PAN of Dorothy Stringer is reduced by 30 pupils.

23. Reduction in the Published Admission Number of Longhill High School

- 23.1. The council has proposed reducing the PAN of Longhill High School from 270 to 210 from September 2026. In its response to the consultation the school stated that they fully supported this proposal.
- 23.2. Secondary school pupil numbers for September 2026 are outlined in Appendix 4. Across the city there are forecast to be 2279 pupils requiring a secondary school place. The Longhill catchment area is forecast to have

197 pupils living in the catchment area and requiring a school place, having taken account of patterns of preference for CNCS and King's School. The proposed PAN would ensure that there were sufficient places for all those pupils should they seek a school place in their catchment area school.

- 23.3. Of the 3836 responses to the consultation, 1873 either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal. 822 either disagreed or strongly disagreed. 1141 consultees either preferred not to say or neither agreed or disagreed.
- 23.4. Consultees generally agreed with the reduction of the PAN at Longhill High School, citing its consistent under-subscription and the location of the school in an area with a low population density.
- 23.5. Many suggested that the reduction should be even greater, with some proposing a PAN as low as 150, reflecting the school's recent admission numbers which have not exceeded 200 for over a decade. The council has maintained it would not wish to see a community secondary school have a PAN lower than 180 and maintain this view in the absence of any representation from school leaders to the contrary.
- 23.6. Consultees also referred to the potential impact of the reduction on Longhill's financial stability, with some fearing that it could lead to staff redundancies or a decline in the diversity of subjects offered.
- 23.7. Some responses suggested that the school could become smaller and more specialised and others suggested it could federate with other schools in Brighton and Hove to support raising standards. Logistical challenges with its location and start time were also referenced. Some responses challenged the council to support the Headteacher to quicken its improvement journey and turn around its reputation.
- 23.8. Having considered all the responses, and the overall consensus that Longhill's PAN should be more closely aligned with demand, it is recommended that the PAN of Longhill school should be reduced from 270 to 210 as set out in paragraph 2.6.

24. Proposals in relation to Oversubscription Priorities

Criteria 1 - Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the council) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

- 24.1. This criteria is unchanged.

Criteria 2- Compelling medical or other exceptional reasons for attending the school.

- 24.2. There has been considerable discussion during the consultation about the availability of this criteria for children with SEND. The notes which accompany the admission arrangements explain that this criteria applies to

pupils with a specific need which can only be met by one school rather than any other. This could include medical or social reasons that make it essential for the child to attend a particular school.

- 24.3. Independent supporting information must be provided from a professional, for example a doctor, consultant, social worker or other professionals working with the family which makes a compelling case as to why the child's needs can only be met at the preferred school and no other.
- 24.4. Any applications will be considered by a panel which likely to comprise representatives from the council's school admissions team, the consultant community paediatrician, an educational psychologist, a mental health practitioner and any other relevant professionals.
- 24.5. Appendix 11 provides further detail on the application and decision making process for this criterion. Updated guidance for parents/carers will be available when applying for schools for September 2026.

Criteria 3 - A sibling link applied for those living within the designated catchment area only.

- 24.6. This criteria is unchanged.
- 24.7. The council agrees to maintain a sibling link for those families whose home address moves into a different catchment area and where an older sibling is still attending the school. The council will consider if further changes should be consulted upon in future years to take account of the responses received that highlight how an absence of sibling link for those using the FSM or proposed open admission places is a limiting factor.

Criteria 4 & 5 Free School Meals (FSM)

- 24.8. The council is proposing to amend the secondary school oversubscription criteria 4 and 5 which apply to children eligible for FSM who live within a school's catchment area.
- 24.9. Under the current arrangements, for entry in 2025/26, eligible pupils are admitted under priorities 4 and 5 up to the city average. The city average is calculated from the year 6 data within the October 2024 school census return. The data from October 2024 showed a current year 6 average for 30% for FSM eligibility.
- 24.10. The recommendation is that the council set that at a fixed percentage which is intended to bring certainty to the number of FSM pupils to be admitted to each school thereby avoiding the need for a year on year variation. The percentage is proposed to be 30%, in line with the data for 2025 entry. This is set out in Appendix 5.
- 24.11. The determined admission arrangements for 2025/26 stipulated that the FSM quota (this was set as the variable city average) would only apply to priorities 4 and 5.

- 24.12. With regards to the implementation of the FSM quota, at the December Cabinet meeting, an amendment was tabled by Cllr Taylor which sought to clarify the intention of the FSM policy in the context of the new proposed admission arrangements. This amendment stated that 'The application of the Free School Meals priorities should align with the intention of allowing additional access to pupils on Free School Meals where a school would otherwise not meet the city-wide average figure for their overall intake.'
- 24.13. This clarified the council's intention to ease the balancing of FSM averages, particularly in recognition of the proposed amended catchment areas and proposed introduction of the open admissions criteria which could mean further FSM eligible children are admitted to the school on top of the 30% already admitted. This means that from September 2026 the 'quota' would be counted from criteria 1 – up to 5. This point about the implementation of the policy was clarified in public consultation meetings and in the published FAQ document.
- 24.14. The proposal is that for the September 2026 admissions the council will include the count of children who are eligible for free school meals under priorities 1-3, before places are allocated under priorities 4 and 5. This means that it is possible that the figure of 30% will be reached whilst assessing applications under priorities 4 and 5 in which case the council would stop allocating from those criteria groups (4 & 5) at that point.
- 24.15. Any children in priorities 6, 7 or 8 who are eligible for free school meals might still be allocated a place, under random allocation, which is used as the tie break for those priorities.
- 24.16. Of the 3837 responses received regarding this proposal during the consultation, 1355 agreed or strongly agreed, and 1570 disagreed or strongly disagreed. 912 consultees either preferred not to say or neither agreed or disagreed.
- 24.17. Overall, whilst there was in principle support for helping disadvantaged children, there was also apprehension about the proposed fixed percentage and its potential unintended consequences. Some consultees supported the principle of prioritising FSM children to promote social mobility and diversity in schools, whilst others sought greater explanation or evidence as to the effectiveness of the policy. Those in support referenced having a more inclusive system at all schools and saw the proposal as moving the admissions policy towards city-wide fairness in the allocation process.
- 24.18. A common concern expressed during the consultation was that this change, combined with other proposed admission priorities, could reduce the number of places available for children living within their catchment area and that instead proximity to school should be given a higher priority. A number of consultees felt that the percentage of places should remain as an annual calculation in order to match the city average. Requests were also made that if a change was made for September 2026 it should be kept under regular review.

- 24.19. A number of consultees criticised the council for intimating that families in receipt of Free School Meals required additional support from the council and that the proposal was being framed as a deficit narrative, in that pupils were considered in terms of the deficiencies or shortcomings rather than their potential and strengths. The council recognises that all pupils and families bring talent and capability to each school and its intention is not to perpetuate a stereotype but operate within the permissible parameters of the School Admissions Code to facilitate greater opportunity for families than may be available due to economic circumstances.
- 24.20. A number of respondents felt that the council's communication on this proposal was not sufficient and identified a complexity with how the different priorities interacted in the allocation process.
- 24.21. It was suggested in some responses that the council wait to thoroughly evaluate the impact of the new FSM policy which has only just been introduced for admissions in September 2025.
- 24.22. The council referred in its FAQ document to 'further data modelling taking place in January 2025'. This was a reference to the data and insight which would become available to the council following receipt of applications for 2025/26 admissions. This data would provide the council with the opportunity to analyse and reflect on the pattern of those applications in relation to FSM applicants further inform the thinking about data modelling and the assumptions made at the outset of the consultation. The table in paragraph 16.23 provides further detail so the modelling undertaken and indicates a calculation of the possible proportion of FSM pupils in schools likely to experience oversubscription.
- 24.23. The council must necessarily be cautious about the information it is able to publicly share ahead of National Offer Day (3 March 2025), as information cannot be divulged which might inform families ahead of that date of their likely school allocation. However the council has been able to use the information gained from the pattern of preferences expressed for September 2025 to further inform the thinking for September 2026 allocations. That informed thinking did not indicate a change to the number of children that may not be offered a catchment area school.
- 24.24. For 2026 admissions onwards the council is proposing that all families who qualify for FSM will be automatically opted in as an FSM applicant. Families who do not wish to be considered under this criterion will have the ability to opt out on the application form.
- 24.25. The council recognises that there is not universal support for the specific proposal but there was broad and general support for the intention behind its introduction last year. Noting that concerns were mostly around the consequences to those who have felt that it will negatively affected their opportunity to attend a local school and considering this against the council's stated policy aims, the council recommends that the percentage of places available for FSM applicants at each community secondary school in

the city up to criteria 5 should be set at 30% and the council implements the criterion as described above and detailed in Appendix 5.

Criteria 6: Open admissions

- 24.26. The council has proposed the introduction of an open admission oversubscription criteria 6 in the admission arrangements which is intended to provide some families with increased opportunities to access a wider range of schools, than they do under the current arrangements. The new criteria would give pupils living in a single school catchment area (BACA, PACA, Patcham High School or Longhill High School) an increased chance of securing a school place at a school other than their catchment area school. The council proposed that up to 20% of the total number of places at each community secondary school should be available under the new criteria 6. It is recognised that the responses received to this proposal were informed by the stated intention for this to be available for 20% of places. The council has responded to the consultation by recommending the change to only 5% of places being prioritised to open admissions.
- 24.27. The proposal sought to directly address the perceived unfairness of the city having some single and some dual catchment areas and would provide more equity of opportunity and a greater element of choice/preference for parents living in single catchment areas who have previously only had a priority for their catchment school.
- 24.28. In response to the overarching question about the introduction of an open admission criterion, 1278 consultees agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal and 2343 consultees disagreed or strongly disagreed, of which 1976 consultees strongly disagreed i.e. just over half of the responses to this question. 215 consultees preferred not to say or neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 24.29. When consultees were asked about the preferred percentage, overall 40.2% reiterated that they did not agree with its introduction (although some of those also provided a response that said it should be at 5% or less). 41% of consultees provided a response that said it should be 5% or higher.
- 24.30. The council provided some modelling of the likely impact of 20% open admissions in the report which went to Cabinet in December 2024. The modelling was based on a particular set of assumptions which included:
- There is no dropout rate (e.g. moving on to private school) for FSM pupils (difference between primary and secondary uptake)
 - The same percentage of FSM pupils from each catchment area attend CNCS & Kings as non-FSM pupils.
 - That in-catchment area pupils in Patcham, Dorothy Stringer & Varndean and Blatchington Mill & Hove Park areas who are eligible for FSM want to attend one of their catchment area schools.

- FSM eligible pupils not offered under the FSM criteria will still have opportunity to be allocated under “in” or “out” of catchment area criteria.

- 24.31. However during the consultation it became apparent on reviewing the figures that the forecast figure for the number of pupils unable to be placed in the catchment area of Varndean and Dorothy Stringer Schools was incorrect. The report referred to 125 pupils when in fact the figure should have been 144. Officers corrected the figure at all the subsequent public meetings and reviewed the formula in place to generate the modelling.
- 24.32. Significant concern has been expressed about the absence of more informed modelling as to the impact of this proposal. Notwithstanding the uncertainties outlined higher up in the report about being able to forecast or predict the likelihood of an offer of a school place being made in September 2026, the council has sought to model the anticipated impact to help inform the decision by Full Council and this is available in paragraph 18.22.
- 24.33. This forecasting can take account of the council’s understanding as to how the new FSM criteria, introduced for secondary school admissions in September 2025 has been used by parents. Whilst mindful not to indicate what allocations may be made on National Offer Day, it is recognised that Full Council must be able to make a fully informed decision and it is accepted that this will be informed with further information than was available to respondents to the consultation.
- 24.34. Responses from schools have indicated a range of reasons why they are not in support of the introduction of this proposal. They have identified the risk that children living in catchment will miss out on a catchment place and others will have to travel to gain a place at their preferred school.
- 24.35. The schools considered that inclusive high-quality provision would be at risk because they would have to manage transition arrangements with a larger number of schools and for a greater number of pupils, thus increasing pressure on finite resources. There was concern that the sense of belonging, essential for children’s well-being and academic success, might be compromised because of the diversity of schools and areas of the city that pupils may come from to attend the school. There was also concern about the potential impact on school attendance if children have to travel further to school.
- 24.36. Concerns were raised about the perceived lack of clarity about the likely impact of this scheme. Whilst schools noted that the city does not have true equity in secondary education provision there was a desire for more consideration to be given as to how to achieve fairer access for parents to a school of their choice.
- 24.37. Schools raised the issue of the absence of detailed transport arrangements to alternative schools. The council was encouraged to review these at a later date once more is known about the pattern of September 2025 allocations. At that stage the council will be in a more informed position to carry out

further work on the logistical support for the proposal which will in turn protect the school's firm identity, sense of community and financial viability.

- 24.38. In their representation, Aldridge Education identified that the proposed operation of the open admission criteria only relating to single school catchment areas would mean that any negative impact on schools would not be equally felt across the city and in this instance, Aldridge Education Academies would be disproportionately impacted as they represent a high proportion of single school catchment areas in the city.
- 24.39. In summary, schools raised concerns under the broad themes of supplanting communities, travel concerns, risks to high-quality provision, local networks, attendance and equity across schools. A private joint letter from community secondary schools was received which supported the introduction of the FSM admission priorities 4 and 5 but opposed the proposed addition of an 'open admissions' criteria 6, whilst reiterating they remained committed to working collaboratively with the council, families, and the wider community to develop a sustainable and inspiring long-term vision for education and the city child.
- 24.40. Aside from schools a significant number of consultees disagreed with the proposal to prioritise children from single-school catchment areas over those in their local catchment, fearing it would displace local children and force them to travel long distances to schools outside their communities. They felt that this could have an adverse impact on children's mental health, community cohesion, and the environment due to increased travel.
- 24.41. Other consultees echoed similar sentiments to those expressed by Governing Boards, noting specific concerns about how families in dual school catchment areas would be disadvantaged as they would be unable to use the new proposed criteria.
- 24.42. Concerns were also raised about the lack of clear evidence supporting the effectiveness of the proposed changes and the potential for increased absenteeism and reduced educational attainment. There were some suggestions that a more gradual approach should be considered, perhaps starting with a lower percentage for open admissions and assessing the impact of existing changes before introducing new ones.
- 24.43. The lack of a clear plan during the consultation for safe and reliable transport for children who would need to travel further was also a common theme, with many worried about the safety of young children traveling alone and the financial burden on families.
- 24.44. Concerns were also raised that the effect of an open admissions criteria might marginalise families living in the dual school catchment areas and thus create a new inequity for those families.
- 24.45. During the consultation, some views were expressed that those living in single school catchment areas do have increased choice as many have the option of, and some opt for, applying for schools outside of the city

boundary. It is the council's view that this is not an indication that the admissions policy is working well for some children. The council is proud of its education and learning community and wants Brighton and Hove children to be educated in Brighton and Hove schools. In addition, if children chose to go to a school in another area, their funding for a school place goes with them. The council would prefer for funding to remain with Brighton and Hove schools so that schools can invest the money in a way which improves the educational offer in the City and supports school improvement. There is also value in children attending local schools which have access to a wide range of curriculum and wrap around support, such as the advice and guidance on anti-racist education and trauma informed practices.

- 24.46. Some consultees reiterated that more effort and expenditure should be placed on improving schools where parental preference is lower rather than implementing a new criteria into secondary school admission arrangements. Several consultees stated that they found the proposal confusing and difficult to identify how it would affect them personally.
- 24.47. There was support for the open admissions proposal from a number of groups representing parents and local residents. Class Divide, a group of local residents, parents, education experts, and community members, supported the proposal stating that in their view families in more affluent areas have multiple school choices, families in areas of higher deprivation are restricted to a single school and that wealthier families can effectively "buy" school choice by moving to certain areas. Class Divide advocated for an open admissions percentage of 30% in order to provide families in single catchment areas with more choice.
- 24.48. Equity in Education, a group formed of parents living in northeast Brighton (in the BACA school catchment area) strongly supported the introduction of an open admission criteria. They stated that families in their area consistently referred to a lack of choice as a barrier to success for disadvantaged children and the strong sense of unfairness that some catchment areas include two schools whilst others include only one. They believe that as a minimum the open admissions percentage should be 20% as not only would this offer increased choice but it would also increase the likelihood that children moving into and out of the catchment area would do so with groups of children that they know.
- 24.49. There have been many responses asking the council to take the opportunity to implement change to an admissions system which has remained fundamentally untouched for a significant period of time. Some consultees have seen this as a rare opportunity to address inequity and perceived unfairness in the current system which could address the issue of educational disadvantage in a way which is not likely to arise again until pupil numbers drop further, making more spaces available. This would however come at the risk of the viability of some schools.
- 24.50. Taken at its heart, the intention behind the proposal is to provide increased opportunity for individuals who currently do not enjoy the same level of choice in accessing secondary schools in the city as other parents. The

combination of limited levers of influence, the timescale required for more incremental change and the expected positive impact on families and pupils who are currently denied the ability to attend a school they feel better meets their child's needs is powerful. As a result, the council proposes to introduce a new admission criteria for open admissions, as outlined in paragraph 2.8.

24.51. However having carefully considered all feedback received during the consultation the council accepts that a figure of 20% might currently result in unreasonable levels of disruption to schools, pupils and their families based on the forecast data for 2026. The council is therefore revising the proposal, following the consultation and is recommending that the open admission criteria should be reduced from 20% to 5% of places and for this to be kept under review in future years. The possible number of places available are shown in the table below.

School	Proposed PAN	20% of places	5 % of places
Blatchington Mill	300	60	15
Dorothy Stringer	300	60	15
Hove Park	180	36	9
Longhill High	210	42	11
Patcham High	225	45	11
Varndean	300	60	15
Total		303	76

24.52. Where pupils do not receive a place at their catchment area school consideration has been given to the capacity and coverage of the bus network to transport pupils to their allocated school. This includes consideration of the travel times involved. Further details are found in Appendix 9 and in the following section.

Transport policy and open admissions

24.53. An impact review in relation to transport of the proposed introduction of new admission arrangements has been undertaken by an independent firm on behalf of the council.

24.54. The Impact Review has found that as shown in the summary table below, there are a range of potential impacts in relation to the coverage of the city's existing bus network resulting from the proposed introduction of open admissions (OA), reductions in PANs and boundary changes. The report assumes the adoption of the new boundaries to the catchment area to Longhill and Dorothy Stringer/Varndean schools.

24.55. The impact in relation to transport are predominantly issues with coverage of current bus routes potentially impacting on the availability of affected pupil's

use of currently available bus routes to get to and from their school. Particularly for students allocated a preference at a central catchment school under the open admissions criteria. The issues with capacity becomes more acute the higher the proportion of open admissions.

24.56. The report provides a high level RAG rating in relation to proposal to introduce the open admission criteria at 5% of the school's PAN.

School	PAN	5% Open Admission RAG		
		Places	Capacity	Coverage
Brighton Aldridge Community Academy	180	0	Green	Green
Hove Park & Blatchington Mill	480	24	Yellow	Red
Longhill High School	210	11	Green	Yellow
Patcham High School	225	12	Green	Yellow
Portslade Aldridge Community Academy	220	0	Yellow	Yellow
Varndean & Dorothy Stringer	600	30	Green	Red

24.57. In addition, there are implications for ensuring that where it is anticipated that some pupils will not be able to allocated a school in their catchment area there are appropriate transport arrangements for the transport of those pupils to schools allocated to them which are outside of their local catchment area.

24.58. It is the case that depending on school place allocations there is the potential for some journeys to school to involve longer journeys than under the current admissions criteria. For pupils allocated under the open admissions criteria 6 this will be a matter of choice to seek a placement outside of their local catchment, and the length of the journey will form part of the evaluation of parents and carers as to the right school for their child. Every year preferences are expressed for schools out of catchment, and journey times already vary considerably depending on where in the catchment pupils reside in relation to the location of the school. For some pupils, allocation under the new admission arrangements may mean shorter journeys

24.59. It is not the case, as has sometimes been suggested in the consultation, that thousands of children will be conducting longer journeys across the city. The numbers who will have to conduct different journeys will depend on the scheme adopted. The impact upon those children can be mitigated by the transport arrangements made by the council in response to the adoption of the admissions criteria. Circumstances will also depend on the pattern of preferences expressed and what offers can be made and where. All of these factors affect how allocations are made and therefore who may need to take a longer journey to school.

- 24.60. There are well established city wide precedents for pupils managing journeys to schools greater than the guidance walking distance. The council has already identified that it will need to monitor the capacity and coverage of public transport to ensure statutory duties are met.
- 24.61. As outlined in Appendix 9 there are a number of bus routes in the city that can be used by pupils to attend school. Each secondary school has at least 2 dedicated school services. The council currently contributes £339,000 to the operation of 8 of these services.
- 24.62. The council already supplies approximately 600 bus passes each year to provide travel assistance at a cost of approximately £267,000. A review of the Home to School transport arrangements to be conducted prior to the implementation of any new admission arrangements will mean further scope to carry out more detailed work to assess students' needs and to develop a management strategy and mitigations.

Criteria 7 - Pupils living in the designated catchment area for the school(s)

- 24.63. This will remain the same as previous criteria 6. The impact for pupils unable to utilise new priorities 1-6 has been considered above. Criteria 7 is unchanged in its wording under the current arrangements (currently Criteria 6). In the consultation there has been a significant amount of concern raised as to the vulnerability of families living within the Dorothy Stringer/Varndean catchment area whose children would be considered under this criteria. By proposing that the proportion of open admission places is reduced to 5% the potential impact of its implementation is reduced which will mitigate parental concerns. The council does so whilst taking into account the existing inequity in access to the City's secondary schools.

25. Proposal to increase the number of school preferences from three to four

- 25.1. The council is proposing that the number of preferences that families can express when applying for a school place should rise from three preferences to four.
- 25.2. Of the 3836 responses, 1424 consultees agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal and 1647 consultees disagreed or strongly disagreed. 765 consultees preferred not to say or neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 25.3. During the consultation representations were made that the number of preferences should rise to 6 to reflect what is available in other parts of the country. This would mean families did not need to be strategic with their submitted choices, for example omitting a school they would prefer if the probability of admission of entry is low.
- 25.4. It was hoped that by considering a rise in the number of preferences being made available to families it could improve the match between pupils and schools, reducing the chance of a child being allocated a school not on their preference list. This would in the council's view afford families greater

opportunity to use the option of an application under the new open admission criteria or the free school meals criteria.

- 25.5. The School Admission Code provides that an application form that enables parents to express their preference for a place at any state funded school must have a minimum of 3 preferences in rank order. There is no restriction in the Code as to the maximum number of preferences that the council would be able to make available.
- 25.6. The Department of Education publishes figures each year on school applications and offers. The key measures are first preference, top three preferences and non-preferred offer rates. During the consultation there was some scepticism raised that the council would be able to manipulate its performance figures by raising the number of preferences. These figures do not in themselves form any part of the council's performance measures with external agencies. With minimal numbers of preferences being three, this and first preferences would be the most transferable measure to compare performance with other local authorities.
- 25.7. There was also concern that providing opportunities to express additional preferences might increase anxiety in pupils who could anticipate more opportunity than the admission priorities would actually afford them, as well as a belief that many families would not actually want to be placed in their fourth choice school.
- 25.8. Following consideration of the responses it is recommended that the council provide all families who apply for a school place either in primary or secondary school with the option to express four preferences, as outlined in paragraph 2.9.

26. The 'relevant area' for consultation

- 26.1. As outlined in the School Admissions Code, the relevant area is the area for a school (determined by its local authority and then reviewed every two years) within which the admission authority for that school must consult all other prescribed schools on its admission arrangements. The council undertook to consult on this area remaining the area within the city boundary.
- 26.2. Of the total responses received 1404 consultees either agreed or strongly agreed. 356 consultees disagreed or strongly disagreed. 2076 consultees neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.
- 26.3. It is recognised that this element of a consultation on admission arrangements is very specific and leads to some confusion or conflation with other matters, such as priority for school places and liaison with both East and West Sussex County Councils.
- 26.4. It is recommended that the relevant area remains as the city boundary of Brighton and Hove.

27. The co-ordinated admission schemes for 2026/27

- 27.1. The proposed co-ordinated admission schemes for 2026/27 are set out in Appendix 5.
- 27.2. Many of the responses to this question referenced representations made regarding specific proposals and the process undertaken as well as comments on the council's approach to the consultation process. Some consultees indicated that this part of the consultation was unclear. There were no specific responses that have led to changes in the proposed schemes and therefore, it is recommended that no change is made to these schemes.
- 27.3. The council recommends that the proposed coordinated scheme of admissions as detailed in Appendix 5 is agreed, as outlined in recommendation 2.11. It is noted that the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton is currently consulting on a proposal to close St Joseph's RC Primary School in August 2025. A final decision on the proposal is due to be taken by Full Council in May 2025.
- 27.4. It is important to note that the admission arrangements are being set for the year specified (in this case 2026/27). A council can then decide simply to retain those arrangements for a further year or may (as Brighton & Hove typically do) consult again the following year.
- 27.5. The council has heard many views during the consultation and will continue to consider them for future years. This could include extending the open admissions priority to families in dual catchment areas, increasing the percentage of open admissions and / or establishing the sibling link beyond catchment area boundaries. Any future changes would be subject to a public consultation.

28. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 28.1. Under the School Admission Code, the council must determine its admission arrangements for September 2026 by 28 February 2025. After consultation the council can make minor changes to its proposals but cannot seek to determine anything new that has not been consulted upon.
- 28.2. The consultation received responses that urged further time to be taken when specifically considering the arrangements related to those eligible for Free School Meals and the open admission category.
- 28.3. The council determines individual PANs separately and has the option to determine different arrangements for each school.
- 28.4. In relation to all priorities, it would be possible for the council to make no changes to those arrangements determined last year. However, the council has embarked on two consultative exercises since Autumn 2024 and when determining the introduction of a FSM category last year, undertook a public consultation exercise that generated over 1500 responses. As a result, the

council is confident it understands the opinions and sentiments of the city in relation to school admission arrangements and is therefore capable of making an informed view especially in relation the introduction of untested, new priorities.

- 28.5. Some feedback has indicated a willingness to adapt proposals beyond what has been consulted upon but the absence of a formal opportunity for residents and stakeholders to comment directly means these cannot be considered for September 2026 but may form the basis of a consultation next year, for implementation in September 2027. For example, extending the sibling link to those who are offered places under the proposed open admission criteria and the existing FSM criteria together and the exploration of the proposed open admission criteria not being restricted to single school catchment areas.
- 28.6. As outlined elsewhere in this report the council proposes to implement the recommendations detailed above and does so having considered the possibility of not implementing them or delaying implementation as outlined in some of the responses received. Implementing changes for September 2026 means that the council is seeking to take action at the earliest opportunity and means taking steps to mitigate the falling pupil numbers from September 2026.
- 28.7. Concerns about the progress of school improvement, tackling the negative reputation of some schools in the city and considering further efforts to support those pupils who face the most disadvantage to progress and achieve well, will continue to be explored outside of this exercise. The council is keen to understand and explore how other ideas to supplement work the council already undertakes can have a positive impact and be implemented for the benefit of the whole city going forward.

29. Community engagement and consultation

- 29.1. Appendix 12 outlines the scale of the consultation undertaken together with details of the responses received to the online response form as well as the questions, comments and clarifications sought during the series of public meetings that were held.
- 29.2. As outlined in paragraph 4.22, the information provided on the respondees indicated that those of black and global majority, disabled and those under the age of 40 were underrepresented in the replies received.
- 29.3. The overall level of responses has provided the council sufficient insight to consider the public reaction to the proposals put forward.
- 29.4. The council is grateful for all groups that facilitated the view of their communities as well as appreciative of the time and consideration given to the responses supplied.

30. Financial implications

- 30.1. School budgets are determined in accordance with criteria set by the government and school funding regulations dictate that the vast majority (over 90% in 2024/25) of the delegated schools block of funding is allocated through pupil-led factors. This means schools with falling pupil numbers are likely to see reductions in annual budgets. This situation can be particularly challenging where pupil numbers in year groups fall well below the expected number, based on the PAN of a school.
- 30.2. Without planned reduction in PANs it is more challenging for schools to plan ahead for pupil and staff reductions and set balanced budgets. For the schools where reductions in PANs are proposed there will be direct implications and a need to plan future years' budgets to reflect lower pupil numbers in line with reduced PANs and the consequent impact this will have on budget allocations. However, planned reductions in PANs should mean schools are more likely to be able to balance their budgets if operating with full, or close to full, forms of entry.
- 30.3. The proposal to decrease the PAN across a number of schools is intended to reduce the number of surplus school places to safeguard and benefit the wider provision across the city. By reducing the number of surplus places in the city in the longer term there is an expectation that school occupancy rates will increase meaning that school budgets are more sustainable.
- 30.4. The proposal to amend the secondary admission criteria linked to FSM eligibility and to introduce an open admission criteria may lead to changes in pupil numbers at individual school level. This could potentially introduce a risk to less popular schools in terms of declining pupil numbers and associated budget challenges.
- 30.5. It is possible that proposals included in the report linked to secondary school admissions could impact on journey times and distances, which may result in additional costs being incurred within the Home to School Transport Budget, particularly through provision of bus passes or increased taxi costs for learners affected by changes.
- 30.6. Name of finance officer consulted: Steve Williams Date consulted 11/02/25

31. Legal implications

- 31.1. Part 2A of the council's Constitution provides that any strategic issues or reviews of the council's school admission arrangements, including any changes to catchment areas, are reserved to Full Council.
- 31.2. Section 88C of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('the Act') and the School Admissions (Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2012 ('the Regulations') set out the statutory framework for school admissions. The School Admissions Code 2021 ('the Code') is statutory guidance and imposes mandatory requirements in relation to the discharge of functions relating to admissions.

Admission Authorities must ensure that their admission arrangements are compliant with the Code.

- 31.3. Under the Act admission authorities are required to determine their admission arrangements annually. Arrangements must be determined 18 months in advance of the academic year to which they apply.
- 31.4. Where changes to admission arrangements are proposed to admission arrangements the admission authority must first publicly consult on those proposed arrangements. The Regulations state that consultation must be for a minimum of six weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before those admission arrangements are to apply. Following consultation, the admission arrangements must be determined by 28 February.
- 31.5. When a public body is consulting, it has a broad discretion as to how the consultation exercise should be carried out, subject to observing any express requirements that apply to a particular statutory consultation duty. However, it must conduct the consultation process fairly. In assessing fairness, the courts have identified four main principles of fair consultation, commonly referred to as the 'Gunning principles':
 - consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage;
 - sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposal to allow for intelligent consideration and response;
 - adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and
 - the results of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account.
- 31.6. Once all arrangements have been determined any person or body (eg parents, schools) who considers that any maintained school's arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the Code or relevant law relating to admissions, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections can be made if the PAN for a school is set lower than the school would wish or if the catchment area set for a school is considered to be unfair or unreasonable. The Code provides that there is a strong presumption in favour of an increase to the PAN to which the Schools Adjudicator must have regard when considering any objections to a reduction in the PAN.
- 31.7. Any objections in respect of the 2026/27 admission arrangements must therefore be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May 2025. Any decision of the School's Adjudicator is binding on the admission authority.
- 31.8. Admission authorities must set out in their arrangements the criteria against which places will be allocated at schools when there are more applications than places and the order in which the criteria will be applied ('oversubscription criteria'). All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names the school must be admitted.

- 31.9. In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear, and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.
- 31.10. Oversubscription criteria must also be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation.
- 31.11. The Code provides that admission Authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the pupil premium. This enables the council to include the priority criterion for pupils eligible for Free School Meals within its admission arrangements. The categories of eligible premium recipients to be prioritised should be clearly defined in the admission arrangements.
- 31.12. The 1998 Act also requires local authorities to establish a relevant area in which admission authorities must consult regarding their admission arrangements. The Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999 requires LAs to consult on these proposals every two years.
- 31.13. In order to comply with the public sector equality duty pursuant to the Equality Act 2010 the council should have due regard to the analysis of the impact upon those affected by the proposal who have protected characteristics under the Act. This is summarised within the EIA template and the body of the report. Recent government guidance indicates that the general duty requires decision-makers to have due regard to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to activities such as providing a public service. As indicated in recent government guidance the duty does not dictate a particular outcome. The level of “due regard” considered sufficient in any particular context depends on the facts. The duty should always be applied in a proportionate way depending on the circumstances of the case and the seriousness of the potential equality impacts on those with protected characteristics.

Name of lawyer consulted: Serena Kynaston Date consulted 17.02.2025

32. Equalities implications

- 32.1. In advance of the consultation the council undertook an Equalities Impact Assessment which accompanied the Cabinet report.
- 32.2. The council has subsequently completed an EIA to accompany this report that can be found at Appendix 8.
- 32.3. The recommendation of the EIA is to proceed with caution noting that Council’s will often amend and change city-wide admission arrangements and/or changes to catchment areas as demographics and circumstances of a local area change. The council has recently undertaken two consultation

exercises and received over 5000 responses in total meaning that the council should be confident it understands what implications will result from the proposed changes.

- 32.4. There are some aspects of the admission arrangements that provide an individual pathway for a child or family's individual circumstances to be considered. In the case of the appeal panel this is after the allocation has been made.
- 32.5. The views heard about the proposals were not unanimous and care needs to be taken to consider where there are complex impacts. Where there may be disadvantage so others with protected characteristics will also benefit and so it can be concluded that no unfair disadvantage occurs rather the arrangements re-prioritise how the admission arrangements for community secondary schools in Brighton and Hove function.
- 32.6. The most significant impact will be on children seeking a place in a community secondary school who live in a catchment area but do not have an older sibling attending the catchment school or are not in receipt of free school meals. Their priority for a place will be lower than in previous years. Conversely, children entitled to free school meals or living in a catchment area served by one school will receive a higher priority for a school place than in previous years.
- 32.7. Pupils with SEND who qualify for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are not impacted by the school admission arrangements being consulted upon. Mainstream community schools are expected to meet the needs of all pupils without an EHCP and are required to make reasonable adjustments in line with equality duties. However, the proposals may negatively impact pupils with disabilities where mitigations in place to minimise the negative impacts of managing within a community school are affected. For example, being placed with a friendship group or trusted adults, or where journeys to secondary school are longer and/or undertaken using public transport.
- 32.8. Cumulative effects are likely to be experienced by those whose children have SEND as a result of the impact of managing a child's needs before and after formal schooling together with the demands that schooling itself places on the child. We know that there can be a high correlation between families with children with SEND and socio-economic disadvantage and this will be compounded when the family live in a dual catchment areas and where the family do not have a sibling link to one of their catchment area schools. This is as a result of those children having a lower ranking in the oversubscription criteria than they would do under the current arrangements.
- 32.9. Concern was expressed that the complexity of the arrangements being consulted upon meant the implications have not been fully understood and as such people have not been able to comment appropriately to the consultation. Any changes that are determined will need to be clearly

explained and any barriers to understanding these will need to be overcome.

- 32.10. Parents with certain protected characteristics may struggle to make the arrangements required to ensure their child attends regularly, especially if the child is allocated a school place outside of the catchment area or not one of the family's preferred schools.
- 32.11. A child's mental health was often cited as a potential negative impact following the implementation of these proposals.

33. Sustainability implications

- 33.1. The council will often find itself needing to balance different policy intentions when considering how it fulfils its statutory responsibilities, its own politically defined objectives and the wishes of residents. In the consultation the impact on the council's Net Zero, public health and transport priorities have been questioned.
- 33.2. In relation to travel to school the council aims to reduce the number of journeys to school undertaken by car. A reduction in the availability of school places and changes to the admission arrangements could risk a rise in the number of journeys undertaken by car.
- 33.3. Schools are expected to have a School Travel Plan to:
- reduce the number of vehicles on the journey to school
 - improve safety on the journey to school
 - encourage more active and sustainable travel choices
- 33.4. Any change in PAN is expected to require the school's travel plan to be rewritten to take account of the change. It is recognised that schools are at the heart of their communities and have a significant role to play for families in supporting their local community. However, in the longer term the reduction in pupil numbers could lead to schools having additional financial pressures which could threaten their long-term viability. Thereby creating further journeys as a result of a school being unable to remain open.
- 33.5. The council monitors air quality across the city, throughout the year, at approximately 100 locations as part of its statutory duties. Figures are published annually to enable changes and trends to be identified, and current results show continuing gradual improvements. Travel patterns and choices of transport will not become apparent until after the proposed changes to admission arrangements are established, although these are unlikely to have a significantly adverse effect on air quality in the city generally.
- 33.6. The council currently supports some bus journeys in the city. These arrangements will be under review due to the impact of government funding for bus services and the council's own financial position. In the one-day snapshot undertaken by the city's secondary schools the pattern of travel

modes shows that approximately half of all pupils walk or scoot to school. The number of pupils who travel by car/van and/or park and then stride to school has increased in recent years to its highest level since 2018-19. Public transport use has dropped to its lowest level in the same time span. These proposals may further affect this change in travel and will be a prime focus of mitigations that need to be considered should the admission arrangements be changed for September 2026.

- 33.7. Appendix 9 explores the implications on transport of these proposals. Schools in dual catchment areas are closely clustered in areas which means that a reduction in places will not mean a significant increase in journeys to other catchment area schools. Some families may not be able to or chose to use sustainable travel methods to support their children getting to school.
- 33.8. Changes to PAN, which lead to a reduction in the number of classes the school has and the classrooms being used can lead to areas of a school being more efficiently managed in relation to energy use at a time of on-going financial pressures on schools.

34. Health and Wellbeing Implication

- 34.1. Concerns were raised in the consultation about a potential impact on children's health due to the increase in pollution if there were increased car and bus journeys across the city. During the consultation, the council heard concerns from consultees about the potential impact on children's mental health if these proposals went ahead. The worries mainly centred around anxiety and worry about the increased uncertainty about gaining a particular school place plus the increased pressure on family life and children's stress about the potentially longer journeys to school.
- 34.2. The Schools Mental Health Service supports schools with understanding and implementing strategies that support mental health and wellbeing of young people, as a way of reducing onward referrals for direct mental health support. The offer for 1-1 or group based mental health support is offered where a mental health need is identified.

35. Conclusion

- 35.1. The council has been contemplating its school admission arrangements in advance of this consultation. It has needed to propose the closure of two primary schools, sought to reduce the size of some large primary schools in an effort to support smaller schools, consulted upon and implemented a new FSM criterion for secondary school admission and engaged the city on the issue of secondary school catchment areas.
- 35.2. The council has been informed by revised pupils forecasts until 2028, in the case of primary schools, and to 2031 for secondary schools. Together with consideration of the pattern of applications in relation to the new FSM category for September 2025.

- 35.3. These give the council a solid base by which to consider how to work towards the stated corporate ambitions to ensure a fair and inclusive city, where no child or family is left behind. Whilst deliberating this against the requirements of the School Admissions Code to ensure arrangements are reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation. Ensuring that arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs.
- 35.4. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals in the city's secondary schools ranges from 19.1% - 49.1% with BACA and Longhill High School having more than 40% of pupils eligible for free school meals. Six of the city's ten secondary schools have a below average proportion of pupils eligible for FSM.
- 35.5. The council has concluded there is a strong rationale to make the proposed changes outlined in the recommendation. In so doing it is understood that these are not universally welcomed and will impact on families and children in different ways.
- 35.6. The benefits that the proposals bring are considered to outweigh the negative impacts outlined in responses to the consultation. Some of those responses are helping to shape how the admission arrangements may be further adjusted in future years to improve changes that the council does not feel justified to delay.
- 35.7. Outside of the admission arrangements there is on-going work to improve the education system and the council remains committed to continue to explore with all stakeholders in the city what they can bring to this work and consider what else may be possible to support the city's ambitions to minimise inequality and improve educational outcomes for the city's most disadvantaged children and young people.
- 35.8. Before forming the current administration, the Labour Group indicated a policy intention to provide free bus travel for under-19s still in education. As the recommendations outline, the council intends to review its Home to School Transport Policy and that will consider how to continue to work to this policy aspiration and what other entitlements may be considered appropriate, following determination of the September 2026 admission arrangements.
- 35.9. It is recognised that at the conclusion of this process consideration will need to be made to the support and explanations provided to children and young people to help make sense of the changes determined. The range of emotions faced by families and the nature of some of the discourse will have polarised pockets of the city and efforts will be needed to ensure the admission arrangements determined are successfully introduced and families are supported to engage positively with them.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. Published Admission Numbers for September 2026
2. Primary phase forecast numbers
3. Secondary phase forecast numbers (current catchment areas)
4. Secondary phase forecast numbers (proposed catchment areas)
5. Admission arrangements and priorities
6. Primary coordinated scheme
7. Secondary coordinated scheme
8. Equalities Impact Assessment
9. Transport implications and considerations
10. Bus review report
11. Proposed arrangements for criteria 2
12. Summary results of the consultation plus meeting notes

Proposed Primary Admissions Numbers 2026/27	Planned Admission No. 2026-27
Name of School	
Aldrington CE Primary	60
Balfour Primary	90
Benfield Primary	30
Bevendean Primary	60
Bilingual Primary	90
Brunswick Primary	90
Brackenbury Primary	30
Carden Primary	60
Carlton Hill Primary	30
City Academy Whitehawk	60
Coldean Primary	60
Coombe Road Primary	30
Cottesmore St Marys Catholic	60
Downs Infant	90
Downs Junior	128
Elm Grove Primary	60
Fairlight Primary	60
Goldstone Primary	90
Hangleton Primary	60
Hertford Primary	30
Hove Junior School (Holland Road)	64
Hove Junior School (Portland Road)	128
Middle Street Primary	30
Mile Oak Primary	60
Moulsecoomb Primary	30
Our Lady of Lourdes	30
Patcham Infant	90
Patcham Junior	96
Peter Gladwin Primary	30
Queens Park Primary	60
Rudyard Kipling Primary	45
Saltdean Primary	60
St Andrew's CE Primary	90
St Bernadette's Catholic Primary	30
St John The Baptist Catholic Primary	30
St Joseph's Catholic Primary *	30
St Lukes Primary	90
St Margaret's CE Primary	30
St Mark's CE Primary	30
St Martin's CE Primary	30
St Mary Magdalen Catholic Primary	30
St Mary's Catholic Primary	30

St Nicolas CE Primary	60
St Paul's CE Primary	30
Stanford Infant	60
Stanford Junior	96
West Blatchington Primary	30
West Hove Infant (Portland Road)	120
West Hove Infant (Holland Road)	60
Westdene Primary	60
Woodingdean Primary	60
Secondary Admission Numbers 2026-27	
	Planned admission no. 2026-27
Name of school	
Brighton Aldridge Community Academy	180
Blatchington Mill	300
Cardinal Newman Catholic	360
Dorothy Stringer	300
Hove Park	180
King's	165
Longhill High	210
Patcham High	225
Portslade Aldridge Community Academy	220
Varndean	300

* depending upon decision to close the school in August 2025

Yellow highlighting (for when viewed in colour) indicates a proposed change in PAN

Date of Birth / school year	School yr in Sept 25	Grand Total all planning areas from 2023 data	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Permanent places in Year R in 2024	Surplus places or shortfall of places
All planning Areas					
places in each school year from Sept 2025					
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	2,856	2,570		
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	2,865	2,579		
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	2,753	2,478		
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	2,620	2,358		
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	2,437	2,193		
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	2,409	2,168	2,550	
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	2,246	2,021	2,460	439
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	2,198	1,978	2,460	482
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	2,025	1,823	2,460	638
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	2,097	1,867	2,460	573

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	Portslade	Central Hove	West Blatchington and North Handleton	Central City	Patcham	City East	The Deans	City North	TOTALS
All planning Areas										
places in each school year from Sept 2025										
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8										
240 660 90 480 150 450 210 180 2460										
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	263	578	119	516	167	400	231	198	2570
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	217	695	105	523	177	422	225	214	2579
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	227	641	91	470	158	457	221	214	2478
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	225	653	86	459	153	407	194	182	2358
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	217	573	91	433	126	395	191	167	2193
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	185	565	81	428	138	433	160	179	2158
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	185	537	62	422	113	390	140	171	2021
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	176	536	72	374	128	376	165	153	1978
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	167	484	59	381	92	362	130	149	1823
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	165	506	59	394	119	383	117	145	1887

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	Portslade	Central Hove	West Blatchington and North Handleton	Central City	Patcham	City East	The Deans	City North	TOTALS
All planning Areas										
Percentage of Surplus places										
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8										
23% 19% 31% 12% 24% 13% 33% 5% 18%										
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	263	578	119	516	167	400	231	198	2570
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	217	695	105	523	177	422	225	214	2579
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	227	641	91	470	158	457	221	214	2478
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	225	653	86	459	153	407	194	182	2358
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	217	573	91	433	126	395	191	167	2193
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	185	565	81	428	138	433	160	179	2158
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	185	537	62	422	113	390	140	171	2021
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	176	536	72	374	128	376	165	153	1978
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	167	484	59	381	92	362	130	149	1823
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	165	506	59	394	119	383	117	145	1887

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	BNM1 1	BNM1 2	TOTALS	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Surplus places or shortfall of places
1 Portslade						
		St Peters Primary* Berfield Primary St Marys Primary	Brookbury St Nicolas Primary Mile Oak Primary Peter Glasdon Pri			* 2024 St Peters closed
places in each school year from Sept 2025						
60 180 240						
places in each school year from Sept 2024						
60 180 240						
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	87	205	292	263	
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	62	179	241	217	
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	77	175	252	227	
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	80	170	250	225	
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	67	174	241	217	
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	63	142	205	185	
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	66	140	206	185	55
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	55	140	195	176	65
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	52	133	185	167	74
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	51	132	183	165	75

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	BN3 1	BN3 2	BN3 3	BN3 4	BN3 5	BN3 6	BN3 7	TOTALS	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Surplus places or shortfall of places
2 Central Hove											
		West Hove Infant @Holland Road Hove Juniors Holland Road Brunswick Primary		St Andrews Primary		West Hove Infant Hove Junior	Cottesmore Primary Bilingual Primary School	Aldington Primay Goldstone Primary			
places in each school year from Sept 2025											
150 90 120 150 150 660											
places in each school year from Sept 2024											
150 90 120 150 150 660											
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	92	36	112	75	136	144	158	753	678	
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	101	34	100	72	157	148	160	772	695	
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	69	41	134	67	116	118	145	712	641	
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	98	41	105	69	149	136	138	726	653	
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	79	35	103	69	122	131	98	637	573	
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	86	32	93	74	129	87	127	628	565	
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	80	30	96	54	123	109	105	597	537	123
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	66	36	96	54	122	88	89	565	536	125
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	64	31	107	58	113	69	96	538	484	176
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	65	37	105	61	123	71	80	562	506	154

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	BN3 8	TOTALS	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Surplus places or shortfall of places
3 West Blatchington and North Handleton					
		Handleton Primary West Blatch Prim			
places in each school year from Sept 2025					
90 90					
places in each school year from Sept 2024					
90 90					
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	132	132	119	
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	117	117	105	
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	101	101	91	
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	95	95	86	
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	101	101	91	
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	90	90	81	
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	69	69	62	28
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	80	80	72	18
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	68	68	59	31
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	66	66	59	31

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	BN1 2	BN1 3	BN1 5	BN1 1	BN1 4	BN1 6	BN1 7	TOTALS	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Surplus places or shortfall of places
4 Central City											
		St Mary Mags Prim St Pauls Primary	Stanfrod Infant Stanford Junior Westdene Primary		Middle Street Primary	St Bartholomews 1	Downs Infant Downs Junior Balfour Primary St Bernadettes Pri	Hertford Infant Hertford Junior St Josephs Primary			
places in each school year from Sept 2025											
60 120 30 210 60 480											
places in each school year from Sept 2024											
60 120 30 210 60 480											
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	21	63	119	45	54	214	102	573	516	
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	26	74	117	12	60	184	108	581	523	
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	33	47	112	12	59	169	90	522	470	
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	20	73	106	8	39	174	90	510	459	
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	22	55	96	6	57	172	73	481	433	
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	32	58	94	6	42	147	96	475	428	
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	14	56	108	9	53	142	87	469	422	58
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	31	58	75	6	30	146	69	415	374	107
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	18	62	86	7	58	115	77	423	381	99
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	36	65	71	12	47	140	67	438	394	86

* 2024 St Bartholomews closed
2025 Stanford reduced PAN 80

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	BN1 6	TOTALS	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Surplus places or shortfall of places
5 Patcham					
		Patcham Infant Patcham Junior Garden Primary			
places in each school year from Sept 2024		150	150		
places in each school year from Sept 2025		150	150		
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	185	185	167	-17
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	197	197	177	-20
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	175	175	158	-17
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	170	170	153	-17
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	140	140	125	-15
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	153	153	138	-15
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	126	126	113	-13
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	142	142	128	-14
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	102	102	92	-10
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	132	132	119	-13

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	BN2 0	BN2 1	BN2 2	BN2 3	BN2 5	BN2 9	TOTALS	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Surplus places or shortfall of places
6 City East										
		Queens Park Pri St John the Baptist Primary			Elm Grove Primary Fairlight Primary St Marins Primary	St Marks Primary City Academy Whitehawk	Carlton Hill Primary St Lukes Primary			
places in each school year from Sept 2025		90			150	90	120	450		
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	48	43	<=	86	142	125	444	400	44
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	59	51	<=	97	131	131	469	422	47
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	58	62	<=	102	152	134	506	457	49
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	51	43	<=	83	151	124	452	407	45
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	41	52	<=	93	123	130	439	395	44
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	52	59	<=	90	155	125	481	433	48
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	43	42	<=	95	117	136	433	390	43
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	40	53	<=	91	118	116	418	375	43
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	38	58	<=	76	126	104	402	362	40
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	55	57	<=	99	108	106	425	383	42

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	BN2 6	BN2 7	BN2 8	TOTALS	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Surplus places or shortfall of places	2025 Saldean reduced PAN 60	2025 Variation agreed for Rudyard to reduce to PAN of 30
7 The Deans									
		Rudyard Kipling Pri Woodingdean Prim	Our Lady of Lourdes Pri St Margarets Pri	Saldean Primary					
places in each school year from Sept 2025		90	60	60	210				
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	125	33	99	257	231			
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	115	37	98	250	225			
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	126	33	86	245	221			
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	110	29	76	215	194			
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	103	30	79	212	191			
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	88	21	69	178	160			
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	83	22	51	156	140	16		
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	90	31	62	183	165	18		
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	73	21	50	144	130	14		
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	60	20	50	130	117	13		

Date of Birth / school year	School year in Sept 2025	BN1 9	BN2 4	TOTALS	pupils likely to want a school place based on 90% of GP reg data	Surplus places or shortfall of places
8 City North						
		Coldean Primary	Bevendean Primary Coombe Rd Primary Mousecomb Prim			
places in each school year from Sept 2025		60	120	180		
01 September 14 to 31 August 15	6	58	162	220	198	22
01 September 15 to 31 August 16	5	57	181	238	214	24
01 September 16 to 31 August 17	4	63	175	238	214	24
01 September 17 to 31 August 18	3	67	135	202	182	20
01 September 18 to 31 August 19	2	62	134	186	167	19
01 September 19 to 31 August 20	1	53	146	199	179	20
01 September 20 to 31 August 21	R	49	141	190	171	19
01 September 21 to 31 August 22	2026	42	128	170	153	17
01 September 22 to 31 August 23	2027	34	131	165	149	16
01 September 23 to 31 August 24	2028	44	117	161	145	16

Data from Oct 24 school census

Year of secondary entry

school Census by year in May 24								Estimated number going to CN	Number Attending Kings	total/average
R	1	2	3	4	5	6				
2031	2030	2029	2028	2027	2026	2025	places available			

PACA catchment	220	192	257	225	234	228	264	249		
reduced by 2.01%		188	252	220	229	223	259	244		
adjusted for CN & Kings		150	214	182	191	185	221	206	25	13
Surplus/Shortfall of palces	70	6	38	29	35	-1	14			
Number of FSM eligible pupils		37	61	62	70	65	78	81		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		19%	24%	28%	30%	29%	30%	33%		26%
difference in pupil numbers from Oct 2023 forecast		-6	-5	10	4	-8	-23			-28
difference in final forecast numbers from Oct 23 forecast		-4	-3	-0	6	-6	-4			

Hove Park & Blatch catchment area	510	677	662	728	725	760	750	833		
reduced by 5.47%		640	626	688	685	718	709	787		
adjusted for CN & Kings		365	351	413	410	443	434	512	136	139
Surplus/Shortfall of palces	145	159	97	100	67	76	-2			
Number of FSM eligible pupils		91	101	154	153	174	169	206		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		13%	15%	21%	21%	23%	23%	25%		19%
difference in pupil numbers from Oct 2023 forecast		13	-3	-4	-10	4	8			8
difference in final forecast numbers from Oct 23 forecast		19	4	3	-2	11	16			

Stringer & Vardean catchment area	630	645	642	650	674	677	700	658		
reduced by 3.82%		620	617	625	648	651	673	633		
adjusted for CN & Kings		545	542	550	573	576	598	558	68	7
Surplus/Shortfall of palces	85	88	80	57	54	32	72			
Number of FSM eligible pupils		93	146	160	181	178	181	191		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		14%	23%	25%	27%	26%	26%	29%		23%
difference in pupil numbers from Oct 2023 forecast		-9	3	-9	-1	19	-7			-4
difference in final forecast numbers from Oct 23 forecast		-18	-6	-18	-10	9	-16			

Longhill catchment area	270	266	284	289	317	305	327	315		
reduced by 22.61%		206	220	224	245	236	253	244		
adjusted for CN & Kings		150	164	168	189	180	197	188	53	3
Surplus/Shortfall of palces	120	106	102	81	90	73	82			
Number of FSM eligible pupils		69	99	107	122	121	129	106		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		26%	35%	37%	38%	40%	39%	34%		36%
difference in pupil numbers from Oct 2023 forecast		14	1	15	10	0	1			41
difference in final forecast numbers from Oct 23 forecast		10	-0	11	7	-0	0			

BACA catchment area	180	161	129	147	180	175	165	171		
reduced by 7.37%		149	119	136	167	162	153	158		
adjusted for CN & Kings		125	95	112	143	138	129	134	22	2
Surplus/Shortfall of palces	55	85	68	37	42	51	46			
Number of FSM eligible pupils		58	51	80	87	96	84	108		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		36%	40%	54%	48%	55%	51%	63%		50%
difference in pupil numbers from Oct 2023 forecast		-6	1	-4	3	-3	8			-1
difference in final forecast numbers from Oct 23 forecast		-14	-8	-14	-7	-12	-2			

Patcham catchment area	225	214	198	230	237	249	241	234		
reduced by 3.48%		207	191	222	229	240	233	226		
adjusted for CN & Kings		179	163	194	201	212	205	198	26	2
Surplus/Shortfall of palces	46	62	31	24	13	20	27			
Number of FSM eligible pupils		32	19	50	52	42	52	54		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		15%	10%	22%	22%	17%	22%	23%		19%
difference in pupil numbers from Oct 2023 forecast		13	4	-6	-4	-2	10			15
difference in final forecast numbers from Oct 23 forecast		13	5	-4	-2	-1	11			

Total for catchment area Schools	2035	1514	1529	1620	1708	1735	1783	1796
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Total for all Schools	2560	2010	2025	2116	2204	2231	2279	2292
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difference in final forecast numbers from Oct 22 forecast	-19	-72	-101	-36	-52	-6	38
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Number of surplus places	550	535	444	356	329	281	268
% of surplus places	21%	21%	17%	14%	13%	11%	10%

Data from Oct 24 school census

Year of secondary entry	school Census by year in May 24							Estimated number going to CN	Estimated number going to Kings	total/average
	R	1	2	3	4	5	6			
	2031	2030	2029	2028	2027	2026	2025			

places available

PACA catchment	220	192	257	225	234	228	264	249		
reduced by 2.01%		188	252	220	229	223	259	244		
adjusted for CN & Kings		150	214	182	191	185	221	206	25	13
Surplus/Shortfall of palces		70	6	38	29	35	-1	14		
Number of FSM eligible pupils		37	61	62	70	65	78	81		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		19%	24%	28%	30%	29%	30%	33%		26%

Hove Park & Blatch catchment area	480	677	662	728	725	760	750	833		
reduced by 5.47%		640	626	688	685	718	709	787		
adjusted for CN & Kings		365	351	413	410	443	434	512	136	139
Surplus/Shortfall of palces		115	129	67	70	37	46	-32		
Number of FSM eligible pupils		91	101	154	153	174	169	206		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		13%	15%	21%	21%	23%	23%	25%		19%

Stringer & Varndean catchment area	600	637	656	659	688	692	726	681		
reduced by 3.82%		613	631	634	662	666	698	655		
adjusted for CN & Kings		539	557	560	588	592	624	581	66	8
Surplus/Shortfall of palces		61	43	40	12	8	-24	19		
Number of FSM eligible pupils		124	183	187	216	210	210	216		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		19%	28%	28%	31%	30%	29%	32%		28%

Longhill catchment area	210	274	270	280	302	290	301	292		
reduced by 22.61%		212	209	217	234	224	233	226	55	3
adjusted for CN & Kings		154	151	159	176	166	175	168		
Surplus/Shortfall of palces		56	59	51	34	44	35	42		
Number of FSM eligible pupils		38	62	80	86	89	100	81		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		14%	23%	29%	28%	31%	33%	28%		27%

BACA catchment area	180	161	129	147	180	175	165	171	22	2
reduced by 7.37%		149	119	136	167	162	153	158		
adjusted for CN & Kings		125	95	112	143	138	129	134		
Surplus/Shortfall of palces		55	85	68	37	42	51	46		
Number of FSM eligible pupils		58	51	80	87	96	84	108		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		36%	40%	54%	48%	55%	51%	63%		50%

Patcham catchment area	225	214	198	230	237	249	241	234		
reduced by 3.48%		207	191	222	229	240	233	226	26	2
adjusted for CN & Kings		179	163	194	201	212	205	198		
Surplus/Shortfall of palces		46	62	31	24	13	20	27		
Number of FSM eligible pupils		32	19	50	52	42	52	54		
% of pupils in catchment area eligible for FSM		15%	10%	22%	22%	17%	22%	23%		19%

Total for catchment area Schools	1915	1512	1531	1620	1709	1737	1787	1800		
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Total for all Schools	2440	2009	2028	2117	2206	2234	2284	2297		
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Number of surplus places	431	412	323	234	206	156	143			
% of surplus places	18%	17%	13%	10%	8%	6%	6%			

Proposed Admission Arrangements for Brighton & Hove Schools 2026/27

Admission Arrangements for Secondary Schools

The Council uses a catchment area system with random allocation being used as the tie breaker in each admission criteria in the event of oversubscription. Cardinal Newman Catholic School, King's School, Brighton Aldridge Community Academy (BACA) and Portslade Aldridge Community Academy (PACA) have their own admission criteria (please visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schooladmissions or the schools' websites for details).

If a school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan where the school is named in the Plan, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out below.

The oversubscription criteria are applied in the context of an equal preference system as required by the School Admissions Code. They are:

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the council) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. *(note a)*
2. Compelling medical or other exceptional reasons for attending the school. *(note b)*
3. A sibling link applied for those living within the designated catchment area only. *(note c)*
4. Children living within the designated catchment area and eligible for Free School Meals up to the city average. *(note d)*
5. Other children eligible for Free School Meals up to the city average. *(note d)*
6. Children living outside the school's catchment area but within the catchment area for BACA, PACA, Patcham or Longhill up to 5%. *(note g)*
7. Pupils living in the designated catchment area for the school(s).
8. Other children.

Within all these priorities, the tie break is random allocation. *(note f)*

The catchment areas are set out in the catchment area map below. There is information below *(note h)* about which postcodes/addresses are in each of the catchment area.



Admissions Arrangements for Community Infant, Junior and Primary Schools

Parents must make a separate application for any transfer from nursery to primary school and from infant to junior school. If a school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan where the school is named in the Plan, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out below.

The oversubscription criteria are applied in the context of an equal preference system as required by the Admissions Code. They are:

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the council) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. *(note a)*
2. Compelling medical or other exceptional reasons for attending the school. *(note b)*
3. Sibling link. *(note c)*
4. For junior schools only: children attending a linked infant school. *(note e)*
5. Other Children.

Within all these criteria, the tie break is home to school distance which will be measured by the shortest route from the child’s home to the nearest of the school’s gates. This will be measured by specialist computer software based on Ordnance Survey data. It measures using the road network supplied by Ordnance Survey and some other public rights of way which are paved and lit. Routes across public parks or open spaces will not be accepted. When using roads for measurement purposes the computer measures along the middle of the road. It measures from the address point in the property to the nearest point on the road network and from there to the nearest of the school’s gates to the child’s home. No other measurement systems will be used for school

admissions decisions. Where the home addresses of two or more pupils are an equal distance from the school (e.g. two children living in the same block of flats) and only one place remains available at the school in question, the place will be allocated randomly by computer to one of these pupils. (note f)

Late applications

If an application is returned after the closing date without good reason it will be considered after all the on-time preferences have been dealt with and school places allocated to them.

If there is a good reason for the application being late, such as a recent house move to Brighton & Hove, it will be considered as on-time if it is received by 22 January (Secondary) or 8 March (Infant, Primary & Junior) and is accompanied by independent supporting evidence demonstrating why the form is late, e.g. solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts or a recently signed tenancy agreement.

Applications submitted after the closing date listing revised preferences will only be considered from mid-June onwards **unless** there has been a house move. This is to ensure that parents and carers who do this do not gain an unfair advantage over others by having the opportunity to list more than four preferences.

Home Address - The school admissions team will allocate school places using the address at which a child lives on the closing date for applications 31 October (Secondary) or 15 January (Infant, Primary & Junior) although late changes of address will be considered if proof of address is received by 22 January (Secondary) or 8 March (Infant, Primary & Junior).

Only one address can be used for admission purposes, and this will be taken as the address where the child spends most of their time. Where a child's time is divided between addresses, parents must agree which address they would like to be considered for the purposes of the application. In the event of a dispute, in the absence of a relevant court order, the admission authority will make a judgement about which address applies. This will usually be the address where the child is registered with a doctor.

Deferred admission - Children start school in the school year during which they have their fifth birthday. Children are allowed to start full-time in September or can defer admission or attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Children become compulsory school age in the term after their fifth birthday. Children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September and 31 December may defer or attend part time until January. Children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 January and 31 March can defer admission or attend part time until the start of the summer term. Children whose fifth birthday is between 1 April and 31 August don't become compulsory school age until the following September however they can also defer admission or attend part time until the start of the summer term. Where a place is deferred it will not be given to another child provided the place is

taken up by the beginning of the school term following the child's fifth birthday and within the school year that the offer was made.

Parents can request for a 'summer born' child to start school **outside of their normal age group**, and be admitted to reception rather than Year 1 as detailed below.

Admission outside a normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. To do so, parents should include a request with their application, specifying why admission outside the normal age group is being requested and which year group they wish their child to be admitted.

Applications should be accompanied with the additional form to request that the child is educated out of year group. Reasons for the request and any evidence to support the case should be included with the form. Evidence could include: information about the child's personal, social, emotional development and academic development; If relevant, medical history and views of a medical professional; whether the child has previously been educated out of year group and whether the child was born prematurely.

The admission authority will consider each case on its merits taking into account the child's best interests and either agree or refuse the request on that basis. Where the council is the admission authority, the views of the headteacher of each school will be sought before a decision is taken. Parents will be made aware of the outcome of the request for admission out of year group before national offer day and reasons for the decision will be shared with them. Late requests will be considered up until 8 March (Infant, Primary and Junior) or 22 January (Secondary) if there is good reason why the request could not be made by the closing date for applications. Requests made after this date will not be considered until after national offer day.

Waiting lists

The council holds waiting lists for community schools, and Bilingual Primary School. Pupils who have not been offered one of these schools as their first preference will have their name added to the waiting list for this school. Parents can request that their child's name is also added to the waiting list for their second and/or third preference school by contacting the school admissions team. Waiting lists are held until 31 December at which point pupils' names will be removed from the list. Parents can keep their child's name on the waiting list for the following term by contacting the admissions team in the last week of each term to request this. Pupils are added to waiting lists according to the oversubscription priorities listed above and consequently a pupil's name can move down the list as well as up. Where the home addresses of two or more pupils at the top of the waiting list are an equal distance from the school (e.g. two children living in the same block of

flats) and only one place has become available at the school in question, the place will be allocated randomly by computer to one of these pupils (note f).

Waiting lists for secondary schools are called reallocation pools. Each time the council is able to offer a place, or places at a school with a reallocation pool, the list is re-randomised within each criteria and the place(s) allocated to the child(ren) at the top of the list.

Late applicants will also be added to waiting lists as soon as possible after they apply. Late changes of preference (revised applications) will be added to the waiting list for the new preference as soon as possible from mid-June onwards. The pupil's name will be removed from the waiting list for the previous preferences.

Notes:

- a) Looked after and previously looked after children** - A 'looked after child' is a child who is (i) in the care of a local authority, or (ii) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a school. Previously looked after children are such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear (to the council) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
- b) Exceptional Circumstances** - This criteria applies to pupils with a specific need that can only be met by one school rather than any other. This could include medical or social reasons that make it essential for the child to attend a particular school. Independent supporting information (this could be a report or an assessment for example that specifies why the child's needs can only be met at one school) must be provided from a professional, for example a doctor, consultant, mental health practitioner, social worker or other professionals working with the family which makes a compelling case as to why the child's needs can only be met at the preferred school and no other. A medical condition or diagnosis in itself will not automatically result in priority being given. Advice will be sought from a panel of relevant professionals where necessary to determine whether or not the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to qualify under this category.
- c) Sibling link** - For the purposes of the school admissions process, children are siblings if they share the same main address and live as part of the same household. A sibling link will apply if the sibling will be attending the school in September 2026. Where separate junior and

infant schools are linked (see linked Infant/Junior school below), the sibling link will apply across both linked schools the sibling may be at either school and may be older or younger. If two children, of whom one is due to start junior school and the other infant school in the same September, the junior school child's allocation will be done first and a sibling link will count for the infant child. A sibling link is only taken into account if children live at the same main address and the sibling has already been allocated a place at the school. Twins or multiple births do not qualify for the sibling link unless one child has already been offered a place. Where a sibling attends a nursery class on the same school site, or a sixth form it will not be counted as a link for admissions purposes.

For areas of the city where the catchment area school(s) have changed and a child is already attending a catchment area school, the sibling link will remain valid until the older sibling has left the school even though the address is no longer in that schools' catchment area.

- d) Free School Meals** – children will be considered under this criteria if they are eligible for free school meals on the closing date for applications or on the date the application is submitted if it is late or outside the main admission round. The city average will be taken as 30%. The number of places available at each school under criteria 4 will be calculated by applying the city average to the school's PAN and subtracting the number of places offered to pupils eligible for free school meals under criteria 1,2 and 3. The number of places available under criteria 5 will be calculated by applying the city average to the schools PAN and subtracting the number of places offered to pupils eligible for free school meals under criteria 1,2,3 and 4.
- e) Linked infant/Junior Schools** - Children who are attending or have been offered a place at an infant school in the list below will have priority for places at the linked junior school providing the allocation took place by 8 March in the admission year.

Downs Infant - Downs Junior
Patcham Infant - Patcham Junior
Stanford Infant - Stanford Junior
West Hove Infant Portland Road – Hove Junior Portland Road
West Hove Infant Holland Road - Hove Junior Holland Road

There is no link between West Hove Infant Holland Road and Hove Junior Portland Road, or between West Hove Infant Portland Road and Hove Junior Holland Road.

- f) Random allocation** – Where the random allocation tiebreak is used, every preference is assigned a unique random number by computer. The computer will then list the pupils using this random number. This computer allocation process is audited and overseen by a senior council officer not part of the school admissions team.

g) Pupils living in single school catchment areas – places will be offered up to 5% of a school’s PAN to pupils living in a single school catchment area i.e. BACA, PACA, Patcham or Longhill. This criterion will not be applied to a preference for Patcham where the home address is in the Patcham catchment area or Longhill where the home address is in the Longhill catchment area.

h) Catchment area postcode lists:

Portslade Aldridge Community Academy (PACA):

BN41 2	BN41 1A
BN41 1DY	BN41 1D except Y
BN41 1FX	BN41 1E
BN41 1GR, S, T & U	BN41 1G except R, S, T & U
BN41 1LD, E, F, G & H	BN41 1H
BN41 1N	BN41 1L except D, E, F, G, H
BN41 1PS	BN41 1OH
BN41 1RX	BN41 1PB
BN41 1S	Part of BN41 1PH
BN41 1T	BN41 1UY
BN41 1UA, B, Q	BN41 1WA, B, E & R
BN41 1WY	
BN41 1X	
BN41 1Y	

Brighton Aldridge Community Academy (BACA):

BN2 4	BN1 9P
BN1 9HW	BN1 9Q except B
BN1 9HX	BN1 9R
BN1 9HY	BN1 9S
	BN1 9B except
BN1 9J except S	A,W,X & Z

Blatchington Mill School / Hove Park School:

BN3
 BN1 2
 BN1 3*
 *Except BN1 3TG (Westcombe)
 BN1 3TL (Prestonville Road
 north of the railway line - Nos 1-28)
 BN1 3TS (York Villas)
 BN1 3TT (York Grove)
 BN1 3TU (New England Road)

BN1 3TF/3TX (Belmont)
 BN1 3TH (Russell Crescent)
 BN1 3UG (Prestonville Court)
 These are in the DS/Varndean catchment area

Patcham High School:

BN1 5AZ	BN1 9B,X,Y,Z
BN1 5E,F,G,H	BN1 9D
BN1 5JD (even numbers only),	BN1 9E
BN1 5JE (even numbers only)	BN1 5BQ
BN1 5JH, JJ, JP, JX	BN1 9G
BN1 5L except A, B, D, E,	BN1 9HT
R, S, W	BN1 9HU
BN1 8	BN1 9JS
BN1 9A	BN1 9QB
BN1 9BA	BN1 9TN

Tongdean Lane

Addresses in BN1 5JD and BN1 5JE (Tongdean Lane) cross the boundary between the catchment area for Dorothy Stringer / Varndean and the area for Patcham High: Odd numbers are in the area for Dorothy Stringer / Varndean. Even numbers are in the area for Patcham High.

The part of Tongdean Lane which is east of the railway line (ie Windsor Court BN1 5JS and Manhattan Court BN1 6XZ) is in the catchment area for Dorothy Stringer / Varndean.

Dorothy Stringer School / Varndean School:

BN1 1	BN1 6
BN1 3TG (Westcombe)	BN1 7
BN1 3TL (Prestonville Road north of the railway line - Nos 1-28)	BN2 0 except Y
BN1 3TS (York Villas)	BN2 3
BN1 3TT (York Grove)	BN2 5DT & some of Z**
BN1 3TU (New England Rd)	BN2 5ET & some of F, H & L**
BN1 3TF / X (Belmont)	BN2 5F except A, B & G**
BN1 3TH (Russell Crescent)	BN2 5G except G, H & J**
BN1 3UG (Prestonville Court)	BN2 5H except A**
BN1 4	BN2 5L except J**
BN1 5JS	BN2 5N except A, B & S**
BN1 5A except Z	BN2 5P except some of A & B**
BN1 5B, D, N, P, R, S, T	BN2 5Q**
BN1 5JB, JD (odd nos only),	BN2 5RS**
JE (odd nos only), JF, JG, JL, JN	BN2 5ZG & J**
BN1 5LA, B, D, E, R, S, W	BN2 9

Tongdean Lane

Addresses in BN1 5JD and BN1 5JE (Tongdean Lane) cross the boundary between the catchment area for Dorothy Stringer / Varndean and the area for Patcham High: Odd numbers are in the area for Dorothy Stringer / Varndean. Even numbers are in the area for Patcham High.

The part of Tongdean Lane which is east of the railway line (ie Windsor Court BN1 5JS and Manhattan Court BN1 6XZ) is in the catchment area for Dorothy Stringer / Varndean.

Addresses in BN2 5DZ, BN2 5EF, BN2 5EH, BN2 5EL and BN2 5PA cross the boundary between the catchment area for Longhill and the area for Varndean/Dorothy Stringer:

BN2 5DZ/BN2 5EF (Manor Way)- even numbers 2-34 are in the Varndean/DS area.

All odd numbers and evens from 36 onwards are in the Longhill area.

BN2 5EH/BN2 5EL (Manor Hill)- odd numbers are in the Longhill area. Even numbers are in the Dorothy Stringer / Varndean area.

BN2 5PA (odd numbers in Wilson Avenue)- 1, 3, 5, 7 & 11 are in the Longhill area. 13 upwards are in the Dorothy Stringer / Varndean area.

NB: addresses on the eastern side of Wilson Avenue (BN2 5PB) are all in the Longhill area.

Longhill High School:

BN2 0Y	BN2 5R except S**
BN2 1**	BN2 5S
BN2 5A**	BN2 5T
BN2 5B**	BN2 5U
BN2 5D except T & some of Z**	BN2 5W
BN2 5E except T & some of F, H & L**	BN2 5X
BN2 5FA, B & G**	BN2 5Y**
BN2 5GG, H & J**	BN2 5Z except G & J**
BN2 5HA**	BN2 6
BN2 5J**	BN2 7
BN2 5LJ**	BN2 8
BN2 5NA, B & S**	
Some of BN2 5PA & B**	

Addresses in BN2 5DZ, BN2 5EF, BN2 5EH, BN2 5EL and BN2 5PA cross the boundary between the catchment area for Longhill and the area for Varndean/Dorothy Stringer:

BN2 5DZ/BN2 5EF (Manor Way)- even numbers 2-34 are in the Varndean/DS area.

All odd numbers and evens from 36 onwards are in the Longhill area.

BN2 5EH/BN2 5EL (Manor Hill)- odd numbers are in the Longhill area. Even numbers are in the Dorothy Stringer / Varndean area.

BN2 5PA (odd numbers in Wilson Avenue)- 1, 3, 5, 7 & 11 are in the Longhill area. 13 upwards are in the Dorothy Stringer / Varndean area.

NB: addresses on the eastern side of Wilson Avenue (BN2 5PB) are all in the Longhill area.

**Addresses in these areas were in a different catchment areas for 2025-26.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

Scheme for co-ordinated admissions to infant, primary and junior schools – Admissions Year 2026/27 (Admissions to Reception or year 3 of Junior School in September 2026)

Introduction

The main purpose of the co-ordinated scheme is to ensure that every parent of a child living in Brighton & Hove who has completed a school application receives one offer of an infant, primary or junior school place. This will be on a set date following the conclusion of the normal admission round for pupils seeking admission to school. The scheme is designed to foster clear communications on school admissions between the City Council, community schools, Academies (for the purposes of this document Free Schools are included as Academies), and voluntary aided schools which act as their own admission authority, and neighbouring Local Authorities (LAs) and admission authorities. It fulfils the requirements of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements (England)) Regulations 2012 and more detailed arrangements set out in the School Admissions Code 2021.

The scheme does not affect the rights of voluntary aided schools and Academies to set their own admission criteria and consider applications on the basis of those priorities. It is intended to set out a process and time scale for the exchange of pupil information between the parties to the scheme, resulting in the offer of a single school place. This should represent a preference listed by the parent /carer following the application of the admission priorities by the Local Authority (LA) or by own admission authority schools. Where it is not possible to allocate a place at any of the preferred schools for a child living in Brighton & Hove, a place will be offered at the nearest school to their home address within the city boundaries with a place available. This will not preclude parents from seeking an alternative place elsewhere if they are unhappy with the offer, nor will it prevent them from lodging an appeal with the admission authority for their preferred school.

All residents of Brighton & Hove should apply using the City Council's common application form (online or paper) even if they are seeking a place at a maintained school in the area of another Council.

The time scales set out in the scheme will be broadly in line with the time scales used by neighbouring LAs. **Please be aware that governing bodies for VA schools and Academies will need to meet between 23 February 2026 and 09 March 2026 when the ranking order needs to be returned to the Local Authority.**

Key dates

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| • Online application facility available | 1 September 2025 |
| • Closing date for applications | 15 January 2026 |
| • Preference data exchanged with Voluntary | 23 February 2026 |

- aided schools and other LAs.
- Consider qualifying late applications. 08 March 2026
- Voluntary Aided schools provide Council with provisional ranking order of all applicants. 09 March 2026
- Finalise allocations and exchange offer details with neighbouring LAs Between 23-27 March 2026
- Offer details provided to schools 15 April 2026
- Notification e-mails sent to parents, decisions posted to applicants without an email address 16 April 2026
- Deadline date for acceptance of places 30 April 2026
- Deadline for acceptance of places and appeals to be heard in the main round. 15 May 2026

Process and detailed time scale – infant, junior and primary schools

1. The school admissions guidance published by the Council is available online and will be distributed on request to parents/carers applying for infant or primary school places. A publicity campaign will be launched in September 2025 encouraging parents to apply online. Posters will be sent to schools, other council services, early years settings, the press and other media to remind parents of those pupils requiring a school place to apply.
2. Parents/carers will be invited to list 4 preferences for a school place ranked in order of priority. These may be at a city community school, an academy, a free school or a voluntary aided school, or any maintained school outside the City of Brighton & Hove. All residents in the city must use the Brighton & Hove school admission to indicate their preferred schools, either the paper or online form. No other form of application will be valid. The LA allocates places on the basis of equal preferences, and each preference listed will be prioritised on the basis of the published admission priorities for community and own admission authority schools. If it is possible to offer more than one place based on those priorities, the one ranked higher on the application will be offered.
3. Parents and carers are strongly advised to apply online through the facility available on the Brighton & Hove City Council website. This will provide them with a response which confirms their preference listing and acts as proof of application. Alternatively, the paper form should be completed and returned to their local infant/primary school or to the Admissions Team at Hove Town Hall, Hove **by 15 January 2026**.
4. Where, as part of its admission priorities a voluntary aided school requires additional supporting information, such as a Supplementary Information form, or proof of denominational commitment, that form or proof should be completed and returned to the school by the same closing date. This is to ensure that target dates for the exchange of pupil information and the notification date for parents/carers can be met.
5. Parents are encouraged to apply online however, if using an application form rather than the online application parents and carers are strongly

advised to return their application via a preferred school or email a scanned copy to the council's admission team. Parents who post the form should understand that proof of posting is not proof of receipt, and they will not have confirmation in the same way as those applying online or returning the form to a school. All maintained infant and primary schools in the city will return paper application forms to the LA as they are received, ideally scanned and sent by email. Schools should maintain a record of the date on which each form was received, and if required will provide proof of receipt to the parent/carer. This ensures that on time applications and late applications are clearly recorded as such. It also provides assurance for parents should the school or the LA subsequently mislay the form.

6. No later than 23 February 2026

- ❖ LA will identify the numbers of preferences (first, second and third) received for each school.
- ❖ Voluntary aided schools, free schools and academies will be provided with details of parental preferences where their school is given as a preference. They will apply oversubscription criteria to prioritise all preferences. Where pupils have an Education, Health & Care Plan (naming the school) and must be offered a place this will be indicated. These pupils must be given a place at the school in accordance with the SEN and Admissions Code. This applies to all maintained schools, free schools and academies.
- ❖ West and East Sussex and other LA's as necessary will be forwarded the details of preferences expressed for their schools by Brighton & Hove parents/carers (first, second and third). Where the pupil has an Education, Health & Care Plan this will be indicated.
- ❖ West and East Sussex will be asked to provide a list of pupils living in those areas who have expressed a preference for a Brighton & Hove school (first, second or subsequent).

7. No later than 9 March 2026

- ❖ Voluntary aided schools, free schools and academies will provide the LA with a list showing children in priority order for places at the school. The list will show which oversubscription criterion was applied to each child, and relevant information to apply any necessary tie-break. The school will advise the LA of such additional information as is necessary to inform parents of the reason for its decision when allocation letters and emails are sent on 16 April 2026.
- ❖ Brighton & Hove will apply its admission priorities to all preferences received for community schools, and where the children are resident in other LAs, will inform that LA.
- ❖ Consideration will be given to qualifying late applications received before 8 March 2026.

8. Between 23 and 27 March 2026

- ❖ Brighton & Hove will establish whether more than one offer could be made on the basis of the application of its own admission priorities and those of voluntary aided schools, free schools, academies and other

LAs. It will determine in each case which is the highest parental ranking.

- ❖ Final lists of school allocations will be prepared.
- ❖ Emails to parents/carers will be prepared.
- ❖ Discussions will take place with other admission authorities as necessary to resolve any remaining unallocated applications.
- ❖ Neighbouring LAs will be sent final details of children living in their area offered a place at a Brighton & Hove school, and for whom they will need to send allocation letters.

9. 16 April 2026

Online applicants will receive their decisions by e-mail. Letters will be sent only to parents/carers who do not have an email address. The LA email or letter to parents will contain the following:

- ❖ If they have not been allocated a school of preference, the reason why not.
- ❖ How places at the preferred schools were allocated.
- ❖ Where it is an own admission authority school, the fact that the offer is made on behalf of the governing body of the school.
- ❖ Where it is a school maintained by another LA, the fact that the offer is made on behalf of that LA.
- ❖ The right of appeal to an independent panel, and how to arrange an appeal for a community school or a voluntary aided school.
- ❖ Details about waiting lists for preferences that could not be met.

10. 30 April 2026

Parents and carers should accept offers of places by this date to allow schools and the LA ample planning time for the new intake. This does not affect their right to appeal if the place they are accepting is not their highest preference.

11. 15 May 2026

Parents should also have exercised their right to appeal by this date if they want to be assured of having their appeal heard in the main round of appeals.

12. Proof of address

The LA may require parents/carers to provide proof of address if they are applying for a community school place. Own admission authority schools may also request proof of address from their applicants.

Appendix A – Changes of address and late applications

New arrivals in the city

Parents/carers moving into the city in the course of the admission process who are making an application based on their new address must provide evidence of either a tenancy agreement of six months or more or an exchange of contracts if they are purchasing a property. Applicants should where possible, submit their application by the closing date, especially if their move took place before the closing date. Proof of the move should then be provided

at the earliest opportunity. If an application is made and evidence of the move provided by 8 March 2026, the application will be considered on-time and included in the main admission round.

Late applications received before national offer day

- I. With the exception of families moving into the area and cases as described at VI below, applications received after the closing date will not be considered by the LA until allocations have been made for those received before the closing date. Any received for an own admission authority school will be forwarded to the school. The school will decide whether there is a good reason to include these late applications in the main admission round but will only consider them if they are received before **8 March 2026**.
- II. Any applications received for community schools in respect of children in care will be included in the main admission round as valid preference at any time up to **2 April 2026**. Where such applications are received after that date, the LA will, if attendance at that school is seen as a necessity for the welfare of the child, seek to offer places at the school ranked highest on the application. If, however, it is acceptable to offer a place at a lower ranked school without going over numbers, the LA will discuss that possibility with the social worker for the child. Applications to voluntary aided schools, free schools and academies received on behalf of children in public care will be considered in line with the published admission policy for each school and the requirements of the School Admission Code.
- III. Applications received after the closing date but before the 8 March 2026 will be sent a letter or email allocating a school place on 16 April 2026 or as soon as possible after that date if the volume of late applications is high.
- IV. Applications received after 8 March 2025 will be sent an allocation letter or email as soon as possible after 30 April 2026.
- V. Parents/carers living in the city who change any preference because of a change of address, and who return the new application by **8 March 2026** will have that change considered in the main round of allocations. They will have to provide evidence of their new address and will not have their changed application accepted without that evidence.
- VI. Other late applications where there is a good reason for this will be considered in the main round of allocations if received by **8 March 2026** where independent evidence is given by a third party (usually a professional source such as a doctor or social worker) to support the reason for the delay.

Late applications received after national offer day

- I. Where an application is received after the allocation date, from a parent/carer living in the city, they must use the Brighton & Hove online application or paper form. If the preference(s) is for a community school, the LA will allocate a place if the school remains under subscribed. If the school(s) is fully subscribed, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to the home address that has a vacancy. Brighton & Hove will seek to

make a decision as soon as possible after receiving the form. Where a preference is given for an own admission authority school or a school in a neighbouring LA, the form will be passed to that admission authority for a decision. They will be asked to reach a decision within fourteen days of receiving the application. Brighton & Hove will endeavour to send a decision to the parent /carer either as soon as possible once it has reached a decision or has been informed of a decision by the other admission authority.

- II. If a change of preference is received following the decision letter on **16 April 2026** and the home address has not changed, that changed preference will not be considered until **mid-June 2026**. This allows reasonable time for the consideration of late first applications and the operation of the waiting list where places have been offered and refused.
- III. All applications received after 31 August 2026 will be regarded as outside this admission round and will be considered under the in-year coordinated scheme.

Waiting List

- I. Brighton & Hove will operate a waiting list system for its community schools. (Own admission authority schools make their own waiting list arrangements). The waiting list ranking will be based on the LA admission criteria. Rankings within each criteria will be determined by home to school distance. All children will be automatically placed on the waiting list for the community school for which they have expressed a first preference, although parents will be given the option of also asking to go on the waiting list for a different preferred school when places are allocated on **16 April 2026**. Places will start to be offered from the waiting lists after 30 April 2026. Places will be offered to children from the waiting list as soon as a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school and the admission criteria have been applied. The waiting list will operate until the 31 December 2026.
- II. Parents/carers wishing to keep their child's name on the list for longer than the 31 December they must inform the LA. They must renew the waiting list place each term thereafter.

School Admission Appeals

- I. Parents/carers wishing to appeal against the LA's decision not to offer a place at a preferred school should do so by **15 May 2026** if they want to be assured of having their appeal heard in the main appeal round.
- II. The LA will not arrange an appeal or ask a voluntary aided school to arrange an appeal for a school that was not included on the original application. It will only arrange an appeal for a school which was listed as a preference, as it will not have given a decision to the parent/carers for schools not included on the form. If a parent/carers wishes to receive a decision for a school not included in their original application, and thus acquire a right of appeal, they must complete a further application.

However, unless there is a good reason for a change of preference this new form will not be considered until **mid-June 2026**.

- III. Parents/carers will receive 10 school days' notice of the date of the appeal hearing and will receive copies of any documentation relating to the appeal 7 days in advance of the hearing.
- IV. Appeals for on-time applications must be heard within 40 school days of the closing date for appeals to be lodged. The volume of appeals to be heard and the availability of the appeal panel members, who are volunteers, will have a direct effect on the timing of the appeal hearings.
- V. Appeals for late applications and school transfers outside the normal admission round will be arranged as soon as practicable after the decision to refuse a preference has been conveyed to the pupil and the parent/carer, and in any case within 30 school days.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

Scheme for co-ordinated admissions to secondary schools – Admissions Year 2026/27 (Admissions to year 7 in September 2026)

Introduction

The main purpose of the co-ordinated scheme is to ensure that every parent of a child living in Brighton & Hove who has completed a school application receives one offer of a secondary school place at the conclusion of the normal admission round for pupils transferring from primary to secondary school. The scheme is designed to foster clear communications on school admissions between the City Council, community schools, Academies (for the purposes of this document Free Schools are included as Academies), Cardinal Newman School, which as a voluntary aided secondary school acts as its own admission authority, and neighbouring Local Authorities (LAs) and admission authorities. It fulfils the requirements of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements (England)) Regulations 2012 and more detailed arrangements set out in the School Admissions Code 2021.

The scheme does not affect the rights of the different admission authorities mentioned to set their own admission criteria and consider applications on the basis of those criteria. It is intended to set out a process and time scale for the exchange of pupil information between the parties to the scheme, resulting in the offer of a single school place. This should represent a preference listed by the parent/carer that it is possible to meet following the application of the admission criteria by this LA or by other admission authorities. Where it is not possible to allocate a place at any of the preferred schools for a child living in Brighton & Hove, a place will be offered at the nearest school to their home address within the city boundaries with a place available. This will not preclude parents from seeking an alternative place elsewhere if they are unhappy with the offer, nor will it prevent them from lodging an appeal with the admission authority for their preferred school.

All residents of Brighton & Hove should apply using the Council's common application form (online or paper) even if they are seeking a place at a maintained school in another Council.

The time scales set out in the scheme work towards the prescribed date (1st March or the first working day following 1st March where it falls at a weekend) on which secondary school place decisions must be notified to parents/carers. It will also be broadly in line with the time scales used by neighbouring LAs.

Key dates

- Online application facility available 1 September 2025
- Provide information for Junior & Primary schools to notify year 6 parents of the need to apply by 12 September 2025
- Closing date for applications 31 October 2025

- Preference data exchanged with own admission authority schools (Cardinal Newman, King's, BACA & PACA) and neighbouring LAs 1 December 2025
- Own admission authority schools provide LA with provisional ranking order of applicants. 19 December 2025
- Consider qualifying late applications. 22 January 2026
- Finalise allocations and exchange offer details with neighbouring LAs 2 - 6 Feb 2026
- Offer details provided to schools 26 February 2026
- Notification e-mails sent to parents, decisions posted to applicants without an email address 2 March 2026
- Deadline date for acceptance of places 16 March 2026
- Deadline for appeals to be heard in the main round. 27 March 2026

Process and detailed time scale

1. Information about the application process and how to apply will be distributed to parents via primary and junior schools at the beginning of September 2025.
2. Parents/carers will be invited to list 4 preferences for a school place ranked in order of priority. These may be at a city community school, an academy, a free school or a voluntary aided secondary school, or any maintained school outside the City of Brighton & Hove. All residents in the city must use the Brighton & Hove school admission to indicate their preferred schools, either the paper or online form. No other form of application will be valid. The LA allocates places on the basis of equal preference, and each preference listed will be prioritised in accordance with the published admission criteria for community and own admission authority secondary schools in the city. If it is possible to offer more than one place based on those criteria, the one ranked higher on the application will be offered.
3. Parents and carers are strongly advised to apply online through the facility available on the Brighton & Hove City Council website. This will provide them with a response which confirms their preference listing and acts as proof of application. Alternatively, the paper form should be completed and returned to the child's primary or junior school in the city, or to the Admissions Team at Hove Town Hall **by 31 October 2025**. Applicants for Cardinal Newman and/or King's School will need to return their supporting information directly to the school as well as submitting an online application or paper form to the Council. If supporting information is returned to the Local Authority, the documents will be shared with these schools.
4. Where, as part of its admission criteria a voluntary aided school, free school or academy within the city or beyond requires additional supporting information, such as a Supplementary Information form, or proof of denominational commitment, that form or proof should be completed and returned to the school by the same closing date. This is to ensure that

target dates for the exchange of pupil information between authorities and the notification date for parents/carers can be met.

5. Parents are encouraged to apply online. If using an application form rather than online application parents and carers whose children attend maintained primary schools in the city are strongly advised to return the form via the school or send scanned copies by email to the admissions team. Parents who prefer to post the form should understand that proof of posting is not proof of receipt, and they will not have confirmation of receipt in the same way as those applying online or returning the form to their child's school. All maintained junior and primary schools in the city will return any secondary paper application forms they receive to the LA as they are received, ideally scanned and sent by email. Schools should maintain a list to record the date on which each form was received, the school preferences, and if required will provide proof of receipt to the parent/carer. This ensures that on time applications and late applications are clearly recorded as such. It also provides assurance for parents should the school or the LA subsequently mislay the form.

No later than 1 December 2025

- ❖ LA will identify the number of preferences (first, second or third) received for each school.
- ❖ Own admission authority schools will be provided with details of any parental preference where it gives the school as a preference (first, second or third) received by the LA. It will apply its oversubscription criteria to prioritise all preferences. Where pupils have an Education Health & Care Plan naming the school and must be offered a place this will be indicated. (These pupils must be given a place at the school in accordance with the SEN and Admissions Codes of Practice.)
- ❖ West and East Sussex and other LA's as necessary will be forwarded the details of preferences expressed for their schools by Brighton & Hove parents/carers (first, second and third). Where the pupil has an Education, Health & Care Plan this will be indicated.
- ❖ West and East Sussex will be asked to provide a list of pupils living in those areas who have expressed a preference for a Brighton & Hove school (first, second or subsequent).

No later than 19 December 2025

- ❖ Own admission authority schools will provide the LA with a list showing children in priority order for places at the school. The list will show which admission criterion was applied to each child. The school will advise the LA of such additional information as is necessary to inform parents of the reason for its decision when allocation letters and emails are sent on 2 March 2026.
- ❖ Brighton & Hove will apply its admission criteria to all preferences received for community schools, and where the children are resident in other LAs, will inform that LA.

Between 2 and 6 February 2026

- ❖ Brighton & Hove will establish whether more than one offer could be made based on the council's admission priorities and those of voluntary aided schools, free schools/academies and other LAs. It will determine in each case which is the highest parental ranking.
- ❖ Final lists of school allocations will be prepared.
- ❖ Emails and letters to parents/carers will be prepared.
- ❖ Consideration will be given to late applications received before 22 January, as set out in Appendix A below.
- ❖ Neighbouring LAs will be sent final details of children living in their area offered a place at a Brighton & Hove school, and for whom they will need to send allocation letters.

2 March 2026

Online applicants will receive their decisions by e-mail. Letters will be sent only to parents/carers who do not have an email address. The LA email or letter to parents will contain the following:

- ❖ If they have not been allocated a school of preference, the reason why not.
- ❖ How places at all Brighton & Hove schools were allocated.
- ❖ Where it is an own admission authority school, the fact that the offer is made on behalf of the governing body of the school.
- ❖ Where it is a school maintained by another LA, the fact that the offer is made on behalf of that LA.
- ❖ The right of appeal to an independent panel, and how to arrange an appeal for a community school, a voluntary aided school, and in the case of Academies, Free schools, and schools in other LA's who to contact.
- ❖ Details about waiting lists and reallocation pools for preferences that could not be met.

16 March 2026

Parents and carers should accept offers of places by this date to allow schools and the LA ample planning time for the new intake. This does not affect their right to appeal if the place they are accepting is not their highest preference.

27 March 2026

Parents should have exercised their right to appeal by this date if they want to be assured of having their appeal heard in the main round of appeals.

Proof of address

The LA may require parents/carers to provide proof of address if they apply for a place at a community school. Own admission authority schools may also request proof of address from their applicants.

Appendix A – Changes of address and late applications

New arrivals in the city

Parents/carers moving into the city in the course of the admission process who are making an application based on their new address must provide evidence of either a tenancy agreement of six months or more or an exchange of contracts if they are purchasing a property. Applicants should where possible, return their application by the closing date, especially if their move took place before the closing date. Proof of the move should then be provided at the earliest opportunity. If an application is made and evidence of the move provided by 22 January 2026, the application will be considered on-time and included in the main admission round.

Late applications received before the 22 January 2026.

- I. With the exception of families moving into the area and cases as described at V below, applications received after the closing date will not be considered by the LA until school allocations have been made for those received by the closing date. Any applications received for own admission authority schools will be forwarded to the school, which will decide whether to include the application in the main admission round.
- II. Any applications for community schools received in respect of children in care will be included in the main admission round as valid first preferences at any time up to the allocation date on **21 February 2026**. Where such applications are received after that date, the LA will, if attendance at that school is seen as a necessity for the welfare of the child, seek to offer places at the school of first preference, if necessary, negotiating with that school to admit beyond the published admission number in order to do so. If, however, it is acceptable to offer a place at a lower ranked school without going over numbers, the LA will discuss that possibility with the social worker for the child. Applications for own admission authority schools and schools in other LA areas for children in care will be considered in line with the admission arrangements for those schools and the requirements of the Admissions Code.
- III. Applications received after the closing date but before the 22 January 2026 will be sent a letter or email allocating a school place on 2 March 2026 or as soon as possible after that date if the volume of late applications is high.
- IV. Parents/carers living in the city who change a preference because of a change of address within the city, and who submit the new application and evidence of the address change will have that change considered in the main round of allocations if it is received by **22 January 2026**. They will have to provide evidence of the address change. Those applications received after that date will be considered as late applications.
- V. Other late applications where there is good reason for the delay will be considered in the main round of allocations if received by **22 January 2026** where independent evidence is given by a third party (usually a

professional source such a doctor or social worker) to support the reason for the delay.

Late applications received after the 22 January 2026.

- I. Applications received after 22 January 2026 will be sent a letter or email allocating a school place as soon as possible after 27 March 2026.
- II. Where an application is received after 22 January 2026, from a parent/carer living in the city, they must use the Brighton & Hove online application service or paper application form. If the preference(s) is for a community school, the LA will allocate a place if the school remains under subscribed. If the school(s) is fully subscribed, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to the home address that has a vacancy. Brighton & Hove will seek to make a decision as soon as possible after receiving the application. Where a preference is given for a free school, an academy, a voluntary aided school or a school in a neighbouring LA, the form will be passed to that admission authority for a decision. They will be asked to reach a decision within fourteen days of receiving the application. Brighton & Hove will endeavour to send a decision to the parent /carer as soon as possible once it has either reached a decision or been informed of a decision by the other admission authority.
- III. If a change of preference or preference order is received following the decision letter on 2 March 2026 and the home address has not changed (and there has been no other relevant change of circumstances), that changed preference will not be considered until mid-June 2026. This allows reasonable time for the consideration of late first applications and the operation of the reallocation pool where places have been offered and refused.
- IV. All applications received after 31 August 2026 will be regarded as in-year applications and outside this admission round.

Re-allocation Pool

- I. Brighton & Hove will operate a re-allocation pool system for its community schools. The ranking of re-allocation pools will be based on the Brighton & Hove admission criteria. All children will be automatically placed in the re-allocation pool for all un-met first preferences for community schools. Parents/carers will be asked to indicate if they also wish to be placed in the re-allocation pool for a different preferred school when the allocation emails and letters are sent on 2 March 2026. Places will be offered to children from the pool as soon as a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school and the admission criteria have been applied. This LA will notify other LAs as appropriate if it offers a place from the pool at a Brighton & Hove school to a pupil living outside the city. The pool will operate until the 31 December 2026.
- II. Own admission authority schools (BACA, PACA, Cardinal Newman and Kings) and schools in other local authorities will operate their own waiting list/reallocation arrangements. If they can place a child resident

- in Brighton & Hove in one of their schools, they are asked to notify this LA at the earliest opportunity.
- III. Parents/carers wishing to keep their child's name in the reallocation pool beyond the 31 December must inform the LA. They must renew the position on the reallocation pool at the end of each term thereafter.

School Admission Appeals

- I. Parents/carers wishing to appeal against the LA's or a voluntary aided school's decision not to offer a place at a preferred school should do so in writing or using the online appeal facility by 27 March 2026 if they want to be assured of having their appeal heard in the main appeal round.
- II. The LA will not arrange an appeal or ask an own admission authority school to arrange an appeal for a school that was not included on the original application. It will only arrange an appeal for a school that was listed as a preference, as it will not have given a decision to the parent/carer for schools not included on the application. If a parent/carer wishes to receive a decision for a school not included in their original preferences, and thus acquire a right of appeal, they must complete a further application. However, unless there is a change of address or other change of circumstances leading to the change of preference this new form will not be considered until mid-June 2026.
- III. Parents/carers will receive 10 school days' notice of the date of the appeal hearing and will receive copies of any documentation relating to the appeal 7 days in advance of the hearing.
- IV. Whilst the City Council, other LAs and the Governing Bodies of Academies and voluntary aided schools will make every effort to hear appeals within 40 school days of the deadline for submitting appeals, as suggested in the Appeals Code, they cannot guarantee this time scale. The volume of appeals to be heard and the availability of the appeal panel members, who are volunteers, will have a direct effect on the timing of the appeal hearings.
- V. Appeals for late applications and school transfers outside the normal admission round will be arranged as soon as practicable after the decision to refuse a preference has been conveyed to the parent/carer or if appropriate to the student, and in any case within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.

General Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Support:

An [EIA toolkit](#), [workshop content](#), and guidance for completing an [Equality Impact Assessment \(EIA\) form](#) are available on the [EIA page](#) of the [EDI Internal Hub](#). Please read these before completing this form.

For enquiries and further support if the toolkit and guidance do not answer your questions, contact the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) team by emailing Equalities@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk. If your request is urgent, please mention this in the subject line of your email so we can support as required.

Processing Time:

- EIAs can take up to 10 business days to approve after a completed EIA of a good standard is submitted to the EDI Business Partner. This is not considering unknown and unplanned impacts of capacity, resource constraints, and work pressures on the EDI team at the time your EIA is submitted.
- If your request is urgent, we can explore support exceptionally on request.
- We encourage improved planning and thinking around EIAs to avoid urgent turnarounds as these make EIAs riskier, limiting, and blind spots may remain unaddressed for the 'activity' you are assessing.

Process:

- Once fully completed, submit your EIA to the Equalities team by emailing the Equalities inbox and copying in your Head of Service, Business Improvement Manager (if one exists in your directorate), any other relevant service colleagues to enable EIA communication, tracking and saving.
- Your EIA will be reviewed, discussed, and then approved by the assigned EDI Business Partner and after seeking additional approval as appropriate for your EIA.
- Only approved EIAs are to be attached to Committee reports. Unapproved EIAs are invalid.

1. Assessment details

Throughout this form, 'activity' is used to refer to many different types of proposals being assessed.

Read the [EIA toolkit](#) for more information.

Name of activity or proposal being assessed:	Determining school admission arrangements for September 2026/27
Directorate:	Families, Children and Wellbeing
Service:	Education and Learning
Team:	School Admissions
Is this a new or existing activity?	New – although partly a repeat of what has happened in previous years – we always undertake an annual consultation into our school admission arrangements
Are there related EIAs that could help inform this EIA? Yes or No (If	Yes –previous years and December 2024 Cabinet decision to commence a public consultation

Yes, please use this to inform this assessment)

2. Contributors to the assessment (Name and Job title)

Responsible Lead Officer:	Richard Barker – Head of Education
Accountable Manager:	Georgina Clarke-Green - Director of Education and Learning
Additional stakeholders collaborating or contributing to this assessment:	Carolyn Bristow – Service Manager for Policy and Business Support

3. About the activity

Briefly describe the purpose of the activity being assessed:

The determination of admission arrangements for community schools in Brighton and Hove to take effect from September 2026.

Following a consultation exercise the Council must determine its arrangements for community primary and secondary schools to establish the process by which school places are allocated.

The Council has proposed to make some changes to the existing arrangements, principally introducing a new open admission criteria for secondary schools, the reduction in Published Admission number (PAN) of 3 secondary schools, amending the boundary for one catchment area, and an increase in the number of preferences parents can submit when applying for primary or secondary school places from three to four.

What are the desired outcomes of the activity?

The Council must determine its arrangements by 28 February 2025 and the arrangements need to comply with the requirements of the School Admission Code which outlines that they must be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation.

Which key groups of people do you think are likely to be affected by the activity?

Families with children due to start school or move to secondary school in September 2026 and the community schools who receive them. There are currently 2480 pupils in Year 5 in Brighton and Hove primary schools. The Council's forecast of demand for secondary school places calculates 2284 places will be required.

There is a need to consider groups with protected characteristics and stakeholders whose own work is impacted by the process of allocating school places, such as public transport providers. Currently 26.5% of pupils in the city's primary schools are eligible for Free School Meals. This is equivalent to 657 pupils in Year 5 if FSM eligibility is evenly distributed across school cohorts.

17.2% of the primary school population are at SEN support and this is equivalent to 427 pupils in Year 5 if SEN support is evenly distributed across school cohorts.

In the January 2024 census (equivalent data for 2025 is not yet available) 286 pupils across the city were eligible for FSM, had SEN, were EAL and not white British. Of the 7511 FSM eligible pupils in the city 2046 also had SEN and 307 were FSM, had SEN and were EAL.

In January 2024 34 Year 4 pupils were recorded in all 4 groups, the highest year group in that year's census.

In the January 2025 census, 290 pupils are reported as being Young Carers which has risen from 257 in 2024. There are 36 pupils in Year 5 who would be affected by the proposed changes to secondary school admission arrangements. Approximately 59% of Young Carers do not have any SEND needs recorded, of those that do the biggest primary need is Social Emotional Mental Health and then Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

In the city 32.2% of pupils are recorded as being from an ethnic group other than White British (or refused or not known). The percentage of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) is 16.4%.

The focus of this EIA is on the potential application of the changes to secondary school admission arrangements. Whilst other proposals were included in the consultation these do not hold a material bearing on the process, for example the determination of timelines of the process and the proposal to increase the PAN of Rudyard Kipling Primary School.

4. Consultation and engagement

What consultations or engagement activities have already happened that you can use to inform this assessment?

- For example, relevant stakeholders, groups, people from within the council and externally consulted and engaged on this assessment. **If no consultation** has been done or it is not enough or in process – state this and describe your plans to address any gaps.

The Council undertook an engagement exercise in autumn 2024 on possible models of secondary school catchment areas, details of which can be found in the Cabinet [report](#) seeking permission to start a consultation and the Your Voice [platform](#) that hosted the engagement exercise.

The Council then undertook a formal consultation as part of the statutory process of setting admission arrangements, details of which can be found [here](#). Further details of the combination of meetings, and consultation submissions can be found in the accompanying report. Specific activities were undertaken by partners to seek to obtain a broad range of views including working with the Parent and Carer Council as well as the Trust for Developing Communities.

The consultation hosted on the Council's YourVoice portal was open access, did not requiring pre-registration and remained available throughout the length of the consultation. Over 3800 responses were received this way. 63% of consultees did not want to respond to the equalities questions. Of those that did 977 described their gender as female and 322 as male. 1298 of 1375 replies stated the gender they identify with is the same as their sex registered at birth. 10 stated no and the majority did not give an answer. 1017 consultees stated that their sexual orientation was best described as heterosexual/straight, 195 preferred not to say, 68 were described as Bisexual and 36 lesbian/gay woman.

22.2% of consultees stated that they had no particular religion or belief, 5.4% stated they were Christian, 2.9% were atheist and 64.2% did not answer the question.

23.2% of consultees stated that they were married, 14.8% stated that they had never married or registered in a civil partnership. 64.3% did not offer an answer.

55 consultees stated that they preferred not to say if they have been looked after by a Local Authority, 11 stated that they had been. 65% of consultees did not answer the question.

In total 15 consultees stated that they had served in either regular or reserve armed forces, 38 preferred not to say. 33.7 % of consultees preferred not to say and 64.9% gave no answer.

The Council routinely consults on admission arrangements and has therefore a significant amount of corporate memory and understanding as to the insights this provides.

5. Current data and impact monitoring

Do you currently collect and analyse the following data to enable monitoring of the impact of this activity?
Consider all possible intersections.

(State Yes, No, Not Applicable as appropriate)

Age	YES
Disability and inclusive adjustments, coverage under equality act and not	YES
Ethnicity, 'Race', ethnic heritage (including Gypsy, Roma, Travellers)	YES
Religion, Belief, Spirituality, Faith, or Atheism	NO
Gender Identity and Sex (including non-binary and Intersex people)	NO
Gender Reassignment	NO
Sexual Orientation	NO
Marriage and Civil Partnership	NO
Pregnant people, Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Menopause, (In)fertility (across the gender spectrum)	YES
Armed Forces Personnel, their families, and Veterans	NO
Expatriates, Migrants, Asylum Seekers, and Refugees	YES
Carers	YES
Looked after children, Care Leavers, Care and fostering experienced people	NO
Domestic and/or Sexual Abuse and Violence Survivors, and people in vulnerable situations (All aspects and intersections)	YES
Socio-economic Disadvantage	YES
Homelessness and associated risk and vulnerability	NO
Human Rights	NO
Another relevant group (please specify here and add additional rows as needed)	YES

Additional relevant groups that may be widely disadvantaged and have intersecting experiences that create exclusion and systemic barriers may include:

- Ex-offenders and people with unrelated convictions
- Lone parents
- People experiencing homelessness
- People facing literacy, numeracy and /or digital barriers
- People on a low income and people living in the most deprived areas
- People who have experienced female genital mutilation (FGM)
- People who have experienced human trafficking or modern slavery
- People with experience of or living with addiction and/ or a substance use disorder (SUD)
- Sex workers

If you answered “NO” to any of the above, how will you gather this data to enable improved monitoring of impact for this activity?

The Council is restricted to the information which can be gathered in a common application form when parents apply for a school place. As a result there is a reliance on using contextual information gathered from termly school census regarding the pupils attending each school that can then be used to inform decisions about secondary school places. This will be at a primary school level but as the city does not operate feeder primary schools to its secondary schools no automatic application of the data can be made. The current secondary data will give the context of each school but current cohort data may not be representative after changes have been made to admission arrangements for 2025 and for the proposed changes for 2026.

No equivalent data source is available for those pupils whose application will be to start school in Reception in September 2026.

Additional insight may come from the process of parent’s applying under criteria 2 (exceptional and compelling reasons) or appealing to an independent panel following allocation of school places in March (secondary) and April (primary) each year.

What are the arrangements you and your service have for monitoring, and reviewing the impact of this activity?

The Council is required to provide some limited information to the DfE on the admission process and to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator on a yearly basis. In addition, the Council will monitor and review the termly census data that provides context to the cohorts attending schools in the city. This process can inform how the admission arrangements for September 2027 may be proposed and determined in an activity that cannot start before 1 October 2025.

6. Impacts

Advisory Note:

- **Impact:**
 - Assessing disproportionate impact means understanding potential negative impact (that may cause direct or indirect discrimination) and then assessing the relevance (that is: the potential effect of your activity on people with protected characteristics) and proportionality (that is: how strong the effect is).
 - These impacts should be identified in the EIA and then re-visited regularly as you review the EIA every 12 to 18 months as applicable to the duration of your activity.
- **SMART Actions mean:** Actions that are (SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, T = Time-bound)
- **Cumulative Assessment:** If there is impact on all groups equally, complete **only** the cumulative assessment section.
- **Data analysis and Insights:**
 - In each protected characteristic or group, in answer to the question ‘If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?’, describe what you have learnt from your data analysis about disproportionate impacts, stating relevant insights and data sources.
 - Find and use contextual and wide ranges of data analysis (including community feedback) to describe what the disproportionate positive and negative impacts are on different, and intersecting populations impacted by your activity, especially considering for [Health inequalities](#), review guidance and inter-related impacts, and the impact of various identities.
 - For example: If you are doing road works or closures in a particular street or ward – look at a variety of data and do so from various protected characteristic lenses. Understand and

analyse what that means for your project and its impact on different types of people, residents, family types and so on. State your understanding of impact in both effect of impact and strength of that effect on those impacted.

- **Data Sources:**
 - **Consider a wide range (including but not limited to):**
 - [Population and population groups](#)
 - [Census 2021 population groups Infogram: Brighton & Hove by Brighton and Hove City Council](#)
 - [Census](#) and [local intelligence data](#)
 - Service specific data
 - Community consultations
 - Insights from customer feedback including complaints and survey results
 - Lived experiences and qualitative data
 - [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) data](#)
 - [Health Inequalities data](#)
 - Good practice research
 - National data and reports relevant to the service
 - Workforce, leaver, and recruitment data, surveys, insights
 - Feedback from internal ‘staff as residents’ consultations
 - Insights, gaps, and data analyses on intersectionality, accessibility, sustainability requirements, and impacts.
 - Insights, gaps, and data analyses on ‘who’ the most intersectionally marginalised and excluded under-represented people and communities are in the context of this EIA.
- Learn more about the [Equality Act 2010](#) and about our [Public Sector Equality Duty](#).

6.1 Age

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to any particular Age group? For example: people who may be housebound, those under 16, young adults, with other intersections.	YES
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

The admission arrangements will apply to those due to start primary and secondary school in September 2026 so those born before 31 August 2022 and between 1 September 2015 – 31 August 2026. The most significant impact of the proposed changes in admission arrangements will be for those children, seeking a place in a community secondary school, who live in a catchment area and who do not have an older sibling attending the catchment school and are not eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). Their priority for a place will be lower than in previous years should the proposed arrangements be determined.

Those children who are due to start secondary school who are entitled to FSM or live in a catchment area served by one school will receive a higher priority for a school place than in previous years.

We do not hold data on the number of younger siblings due to start school in September 2026 or the number of single children or eldest siblings due to the start school that year.

We have 2480 pupils in Year 5 who are due to start school in September 2026. Not all of these pupils will require a secondary school in Brighton and Hove and the Council currently forecasts the number of places required to be 2284 places.

Of the 1403 responses to the question in the consultation, most identified as being in the age range 35-44 (17.5%), 12.8% were in the 45-54 age range. There was one response from someone aged 0-15 and 5 from those aged 16-24.

6.2 Disability:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Disability, considering our anticipatory duty?	YES
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

Pupils whose special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) needs qualify them for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are not impacted by the school admission arrangements being consulted upon. 17.2% of the school population in January 2025 were SEN support, taken consistently across Year groups would be 427 pupils.

We know that in the current year 5, as at a snapshot in October 2024, there were 220 children who were eligible for FSM **and** on the SEN Support register – this is 8.9% of that year group. So far, data indicates that percentage drops as the children get younger.

Therefore some SEN children will be able to be prioritised for admission to school via their FSM status.

Some examples of schools where this is over 20% - City Academy Whitehawk, Coombe Road, Queens Park, Moulsecoomb, Rudyard Kipling, Bevendean.

Some examples of schools where this is under 5% - Balfour, Downs Junior, Stanford Junior,

Schools that have the highest proportion of SEN Support include Moulsecoomb, Rudyard Kipling, Mile Oak, Coldean, Coombe Road, Bevendean, Fairlight, Carlton Hill, Queens Park and City Academy Whitehawk

Of the affected secondary schools the current percentage of pupils on SEN support is as follows:

Blatchington Mill School - 13.9

Brighton Aldridge Community Academy*- 29.8

Cardinal Newman Catholic School - 16.2

Dorothy Stringer School - 14.0

Hove Park School* - 21.4

King's School - 18.3

Longhill High School* - 25.0

Patcham High School - 23.3

Portslade Aldridge Community Academy - 18.4

Varndean School - 25

Mainstream community schools are expected to meet the needs of all pupils without an EHCP (as well as many that do) and are required to make reasonable adjustments in line with equality duties.

Where these proposals may impact on pupils with disabilities is where mitigations that are in place to minimise the negative impacts of managing within a community school are affected. For example, being able to be placed with a friendship group or trusted and recognised adults. Or where journeys to secondary school are longer and/or undertaken using public transport.

Where these proposals may impact on parents with disabilities is when the mitigations they have put in place to minimise the impact on their child(ren) in accessing a community school are affected. For example, having their child travel to school over a longer distance or needing public transport, being able to utilise a support network to help manage practical/logistical arrangements and when the combination of having a child attend secondary school impacts on family life.

These factors are likely to have a negative impact when a child's allocation of a school place is either outside of the catchment area or not one of the family's preferred schools. The risk of this occurring will be increased when a child's priority for a school place is affected by changes to the admission arrangements. In the case of these proposals this may affect children living in a catchment area where places allocated to those with a higher priority mean insufficient places for all children living in the catchment area or when the opportunity to apply for a school outside of the catchment area is restricted by being able to attend that school.

Families have identified in the engagement exercise that without an EHCP children may be more likely to not receive a place at a catchment area school and those with disabilities will be adversely affected.

The engagement exercise showed that many consultees did not want to see changes being made to the admission arrangements in relation to specific changes and collectively because of the potential impact of generating more uncertainty in the school application process, the risk of being placed away from support networks and friendship groups. Thereby creating additional logistical issues that would place additional strains on family life.

Parents with disabilities identified that they may struggle to make the arrangements required to fulfil their statutory responsibilities to ensure their child attended regularly. This includes ensuring their child's regular attendance at school. Whilst the home to school transport policy can take account of a parent's ability to accompany their child or make their own arrangements we do not hold data specifically on those whose entitlement to transport was based solely on the parent's disabilities.

A child's mental health was an often used example of a negative impact that may follow the implementation of these proposals.

The Parent and Carer Council's submission stated parents found the proposals difficult to understand, particularly the 20% school place allocation and the increase in preferences from three to four. They felt the criteria for Criteria 2 admissions are unclear and may exclude many SEND children, especially those without an EHCP. Transport concerns were a significant theme, with worries about the impact of long daily journeys on students, potentially leading to 'child commuter burn out'. The reduction in available school places at certain schools could increase competition and make it harder for children with SEND to access appropriate placements. There are barriers for children with SEND in terms of long-distance travel and unclear placement priorities under the 20% allocation system. Parents fear that separating autistic children from stable friendship groups could negatively impact their emotional regulation and mental health. Parents described exhaustion from constantly fighting for SEND support and felt excluded from meaningful participation in the consultation process. The proposals risk breaking up SEND support networks, making it harder for children to access peer-led emotional and social support. Parents lack confidence in the decision-making process and feel that SEND needs were not properly assessed before the proposals were developed. Parents need at least 18 months' notice to prepare their child for school transitions, but the current system provides certainty only six months before. Parents shared recommendations such as ensuring every child has a priority placement, modifying the tie-break system, improving certainty for families, reassessing school placements based on location needs, clarifying Criteria 2 admissions, increasing transparency on the 20% allocation process, and improving consultation and co-production.

Additionally, consultees to the consultation outlined concerns that the proposals could overwhelm services with requests for children to be assessed for potential SEN such as Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) In terms of the proposed changes in catchment areas, the following data is available from the October 2024 school census.

Current Catchment Areas		Proposed catchment areas	
Dorothy Stringer	Longhill	Dorothy Stringer	Longhill

	Varndean		Varndean	
EHCPs	47 – 6.71%	26 – 7.95%	53 – 7.24%	20 – 6.56%
SEN Support	117 – 16.71%	74 – 22.63%	126 – 17.45%	65 – 21.31%

This shows us that under the proposed arrangements a greater number of children with identified SEN in the current school system (data taken from current year 5 in October 2024) will have the opportunity to be in a dual school catchment area.

Approximately 59% of Young Carers do not have SEN needs, yet 5% have an EHCP and 36% are recorded as being at SEN Support.

27.9% of the consultees to the consultation stated that their day to day activities were not limited because of health problems or disability. 5.3% stated they were, a little and 1.5% stated yes, a lot.

560 responses answered if any of a list of conditions or illnesses reduced their ability to carry out day to day activities. The highest ranked responses were for mental health condition (94), long standing illness (87) and physical impairment (84). 252 replies stated that they preferred not to say.

What [inclusive adjustments](#) are you making for diverse disabled people impacted? For example: those who are housebound due to disability or disabling circumstances, D/deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, blind, neurodivergent people, those with non-visible disabilities, and with access requirements that may not identify as disabled or meet the legal definition of disability, and have various intersections (Black and disabled, LGBTQIA+ and disabled).

The EHCP process identifies when a child's SEND requires additional support determined within the content of a statutory document.

Criteria 2 of the admission arrangements allows for priority to be applied where there is supporting evidence to indicate that a child must attend a school because of compelling or exceptional reasons.

After the allocation of a school place, the appeal process, overseen by an independent panel, can examine the reasons as to why a child should be considered for a place at an alternative school and this can be agreed outside of the published arrangements.

The Council has responsibility to ensure pupils receive travel assistance when their needs determine it, in line with statutory guidance and the Council's own home to school transport policy.

All schools are expected to be accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND in line with duties under the Equality Act.

Outside of criteria 2 (which allows the consideration of individual circumstances) the School Admission Code does not allow for consideration to be taken of friendship groups, pupil or parent needs or family logistics in the school admission process.

As per the current arrangements, it is possible that a child with additional needs does not gain a place at a school of preference / at a catchment area school. As above, all community schools in the city are able to support a range of child's needs and so if children do have to attend a school which is not the school of parental preference, they will receive the necessary support.

The declarations made by consultees to the consultation indicated that 6.8% stated that they had a disability.

The Parent and Carer Council's submission identified possible considerations for alternatives as outlined above such as ensuring every child has a priority placement, modifying the tie-break system, improving certainty for families, reassessing school placements based on location needs, clarifying Criteria 2

admissions, increasing transparency on the 20% allocation process, and improving consultation and co-production.

6.3 Ethnicity, 'Race', ethnic heritage (including Gypsy, Roma, Travellers):

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to ethnicity?	YES
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If "YES", what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

Appendix 11 provides a detailed summary of the consultees to the consultation, including where they've indicated their ethnicity.

The common application form does not ask any questions on a child's ethnicity, race or ethnic heritage. The school census in January 2024 (we await data for 2025) highlighted that 31.8% of the primary phase were categorised using DfE terminology as BAME. In secondary schools the percentage was 30.4%.

The primary schools with the highest levels of BAME pupils were: St Mary Magdalen's, St Paul's, Queen's Park, St John the Baptist and West Blatchington. The lowest percentage were at Mile Oak, St Nicolas, Rudyard Kipling, Patcham Infant and Peter Gladwin schools.

The highest proportion in secondary schools were at: Blatchington Mill, CNCS and Hove Park. The lowest being at Patcham High, PACA and Longhill.

The admission criteria do not prioritise places in accordance with these characteristics. From information gathered about pupils attending primary schools it would be possible to determine the context of a secondary school's catchment area but as parents are not compelled to apply for their catchment area school any examination of a possible outcome is difficult to achieve.

In relation to children from minority ethnic backgrounds the responses to the consultation commenting upon this suggests that the council should consider the mix of pupils in areas of the city and how any change to the proportion of pupils attending a secondary school may affect pupil's sense of belonging and academic performance.

Where there are catchment areas served by one school with a greater proportion of children and families from different ethnic groups the proposed arrangements will provide them with a greater opportunity than they would have previously had to attend a school outside of their catchment area. Where those from different ethnic groups are in two school catchment areas if they are not eligible under Criteria 1-6 they will be negatively affected by the implementation of the proposals due to greater priority being available to others if seeking a school in their local catchment area.

Random allocation is used as a tie-break and therefore takes no account of ethnicity or other protected characteristics.

In January 2024, a total of 1363 pupils entitled to FSM had English as an additional language and they have an opportunity to be prioritised for a school place above other groups and therefore can be considered to have a greater priority under the proposed arrangements than currently.

Children with English as a Second Language: There is a concern that the current application guide is complicated and may be difficult for parents with lower educational achievement or those who have English as a second language to understand. They may also apply late for a school place and this would not provide them with the opportunity to benefit from the admission criteria because late applications are handled after all on time applications. The council's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) responds to the diverse and changing demands of the English as an Additional Language population in primary and secondary schools across the city. The service is aware of the difficulties families may have in understanding and completing school applications and provide support where appropriate. The

council's school admissions team also provide a range of ways in which parents/carers can seek advice or support from emails, telephone calls and by seeing the team in person at secondary school open events. The information provided on the council's website is designed to be accessible and the text can be translated into a wide range of languages.

In January 2025 18.3% of primary pupils had language other than English.

6.4 Religion, Belief, Spirituality, Faith, or Atheism:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Religion, Belief, Spirituality, Faith, or Atheism?	NO
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If "YES", what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

6.5 Gender Identity and Sex:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Gender Identity and Sex (including non-binary and intersex people)?	NO
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If "YES", what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

6.6 Gender Reassignment:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Gender Reassignment ?	NO
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If "YES", what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

6.7 Sexual Orientation:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Sexual Orientation ?	NO
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If "YES", what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

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6.8 Marriage and Civil Partnership:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Marriage and Civil Partnership?	NO
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

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6.9 Pregnant people, Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Menopause, (In)fertility (across the gender spectrum):

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Pregnant people, Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Menopause, (In)fertility (across the gender spectrum)?	YES
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

<p>In such ways as those people with these characteristics with children due to start secondary school in September 2026 and where expectations have been as to how school places will be allocated and this has facilitated their family life.</p> <p>Should the circumstances of their school application be affected by the introduction of a higher criteria that prioritises other children it will risk potentially disadvantaging them if their characteristic means it would assist them to have their child placed in their catchment area school. Appropriate transport arrangements for children allocated a school out of their local catchment will assist in mitigating this.</p> <p>This is a similar impact to those with a disability whereby the logistical ease, friendship groups and sense of community support those with these characteristics to ensure their parental responsibility for regular school attendance.</p>
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6.10 Armed Forces Personnel, their families, and Veterans:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Armed Forces Members and Veterans?	NO
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

6.11 Expatriates, Migrants, Asylum Seekers, and Refugees:

<p>Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Expatriates, Migrants, Asylum seekers, Refugees, those New to the UK, and UK visa or assigned legal status? (Especially considering for age, ethnicity, language, and various intersections)</p>	<p>YES</p>
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

<p>The common application form does not ask any questions on a child or family’s status.</p> <p>The admission criteria do not prioritise places in accordance with these characteristics. From information gathered about pupils attending primary schools it would be possible to determine the context of a secondary school’s catchment area but as parents are not compelled to apply for their catchment area school any examination of a possible outcome is difficult to achieve.</p> <p>The Council’s Ethnic Minority Achievement Service provides support to certain families where English is an additional language and are able to provide some contextual information as to where there is a need.</p> <p>The January 2025 Census indicated that in terms of English as an additional language (EAL) the overall percentage increased to 16.4%. The EAL proportion ranges in our schools between 4.5% and 69% and there were 128 distinct languages other than English recorded.</p> <p>In January 2025 16.4% of pupils were recorded as being EAL. The proportion of pupils in primary schools was 17.7%. The percentage of pupils where parent/carer/self-identified ethnic group is other than White British, Refused or Not Known is 32.2%, the range in the city’s schools was between 12.1 % and 82.7%. The primary schools with the highest proportion of pupils with EAL are: St Mary Magdalen Catholic Primary School, St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School, St Mark’s CofE Primary School, St Paul’s CofE Primary School and Nursery, Queen’s Park Primary School, Brunswick Primary School, Fairlight Primary School, Moulsecomb Primary School, West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School, St Andrew’s CofE Primary School and St Bernadette’s Catholic Primary School. The secondary schools with the highest proportion of EAL pupils are: Hove Park School, CNCS, King’s School and Blatchington Mill School.</p> <p>All community schools are expected to meet the needs of pupils without an EHCP and in many cases when they have an EHCP as well. Schools have access to support and guidance for families with these characteristics.</p> <p>Where there are catchment areas served by one school with a greater proportion of children and families with these characteristics the proposed arrangements will provide them with a greater opportunity than they would have previously had to attend a school outside of their catchment area. Where those from different ethnic groups are in two school catchment areas they will be negatively affected by the implementation of the proposals due to greater priority being available to others.</p> <p>Random allocation is used as a tie-break and therefore takes no account of these characteristics.</p> <p>Of those pupils entitled to FSM and recorded as being EAL they have an opportunity to be prioritised for a school place above other groups and therefore can be considered to have a greater priority under the proposed arrangements than currently.</p>

Pupils whose special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) needs qualify them for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are not impacted by the school admission arrangements being consulted upon.

Parents with disabilities identified that they may struggle to make the arrangements required to fulfil their statutory responsibilities to ensure their child attended regularly.

It was reported that the complexity of the admission arrangements may have a negative impact on those with these characteristics in relation to their ability to read and understand how the admission process would work.

6.12 [Carers](#):

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Carers (Especially considering for age, ethnicity, language, and various intersections).	YES
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

During the consultation we heard that Young Carers and their families will be as affected by the proposed changes as those with SEND.

The DfE request schools complete a Young Carer indicator in the spring term census. The Young Carer indicator identifies whether children have been identified as a young carer and if so, by whom.

Section 17ZA of the Children Act 1989 says a young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (which isn't to a contract or voluntary work).

The recording and handling of this information is at school's discretion.

The self-reported total of young carers differs from the school recorded list, as outlined below.

- Primary Phase Self -Reported – 8%
- Primary Phase School Reported – 0.7%
- Secondary Phase Self-Reported – 6.4%
- Secondary Phase School Reported – 1.1%

In line with what has been outlined above for those with disabilities, these proposals may impact on pupils with caring responsibilities or their parents if they are carers, if they currently have arrangements in place which minimise any negative impacts managing within a community school. For example, being able to be placed with a friendship group or trusted and recognised adults. Or where journeys to secondary school are longer and/or undertaken using public transport.

The January 2025 census stated there was 290 pupils recorded as being Young Carers. 183 are in secondary schools and 107 in primary schools. The highest number of Young Carers in primary school are in Year 6 (39) then Year 5 (36). 77% are recorded as White British and approximately 59% have no SEND. 19 have English as an additional language. The number of Young Carers reported in the school census has risen from 208 in 2023.

Where these proposals may impact on parents with caring responsibilities is when the mitigations they have put in place to minimise the impact on their child(ren) in accessing a community school are affected. For example, having their child travel to school over a longer distance or needing public transport, being able to utilise a support network to help manage practical/logistical arrangements and when the combination of having a child attend secondary school impacts on family life.

These factors are likely to have a negative impact when a child's allocation of a school place is either outside of the catchment area or not one of the family's preferred schools. The risk of this occurring will be increased when a child's priority for a school place is affected by changes to the admission arrangements. In the case of these proposals this may affect children living in a catchment area where places allocated to those with a higher priority mean insufficient places for all children living in the catchment area or when the opportunity to apply for a school outside of the catchment area is restricted by being able to attend that school.

The engagement exercise showed that many consultees did not want to see changes being made to the admission arrangements in relation to specific changes and collectively because of the potential impact of generating more uncertainty in the school application process, the risk of being placed away from support networks and friendship groups, and the impact of longer journeys to school. Thereby creating additional logistical issues that would place additional strains on family life.

Parents with caring responsibilities identified that they may struggle to make the arrangements required to fulfil their statutory responsibilities to ensure their child attended regularly.

A child's mental health was an often used example of a negative impact that may follow the implementation of these proposals.

The Parent and Carer Council's submission, which not written to either support or contest the proposals questioned if Young Carers would be given Criteria 2 status. It was felt that this group should be afforded protection as a vulnerable group at risk of disadvantage and wanted their need to be recognised by the Council's admission arrangements.

349 consultees to the consultation stated that they were a carer which was 9% of responses. Consultees were then asked, if 'Yes' was provided to the question about being a carer, who they cared for. 418 replies stated parent and 119 a child with SEN. If they care for more than one person, all that apply could be ticked. We asked people to mark other if none apply.

6.13 Looked after children, Care Leavers, Care and fostering experienced people:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Looked after children, Care Leavers, Care and fostering experienced children and adults (Especially considering for age, ethnicity, language, and various intersections).

NO

Also consider our [Corporate Parenting Responsibility](#) in connection to your activity.

If "YES", what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

6.14 Homelessness:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to people experiencing homelessness, and associated risk and vulnerability? (Especially considering for age, veteran, ethnicity, language, and various intersections)

NO

If "YES", what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

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6.15 Domestic and/or Sexual Abuse and Violence Survivors, people in vulnerable situations:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Domestic Abuse and Violence Survivors, and people in vulnerable situations (All aspects and intersections)?	YES
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

<p>Mainstream community schools are expected to meet the needs of all pupils without an EHCP (as well as many that do) and are required to make reasonable adjustments in line with equality duties thereby providing support to pupils whose circumstances have been affected by domestic and/or sexual abuse and violence survivors, as well as those in vulnerable situations.</p> <p>Where these proposals may impact on pupils who face or live within a family that faces these circumstances are where mitigations are in place to minimise the negative impacts of managing within a community school are affected. For example, being able to be placed with a friendship group or trusted and recognised adults. Or where journeys to secondary school are longer and/or undertaken using public transport.</p> <p>Where these proposals may impact on parents who have experienced vulnerable situations is when the mitigations they have put in place to minimise the impact on their child(ren) in accessing a community school are affected. For example, having their child travel to school over a longer distance or needing public transport, being able to utilise a support network to help manage practical/logistical arrangements and when the combination of having a child attend secondary school impacts on family life due to their experiences.</p> <p>These factors may have a negative impact when a child’s allocation of a school place is either outside of the catchment area or not one of the family’s preferred schools. The risk of this occurring will be increased when a child’s priority for a school place is affected by changes to the admission arrangements. In the case of these proposals this may affect children living in a catchment area where places allocated to those with a higher priority mean insufficient places for all children living in the catchment area or when the opportunity to apply for a school outside of the catchment area is restricted by being able to attend that school. Against that for some vulnerable children, especially those in a single school catchment, the proposals provide an enhanced opportunity to address their vulnerability by giving a prospect of being allocated the school of their choice.</p> <p>The engagement exercise showed that many consultees did not want to see changes being made to the admission arrangements in relation to specific changes and collectively because of the potential impact of generating more uncertainty in the school application process, the risk of being placed away from support networks and friendship groups. Thereby creating additional logistical issues that would place additional strains on family life.</p> <p>Parents who have experienced vulnerable situations may struggle to make the arrangements required to fulfil their statutory responsibilities to ensure their child attended regularly. Appropriate transport arrangements and support from the school tailored to an understanding of the vulnerabilities and situation of the pupil and their family will assist with his.</p> <p>A child’s mental health was an often used example of a negative impact that may follow the implementation of these proposals. Several comments from the consultation highlighted the potential</p>

negative impact on children's mental health, especially for those who are already behind due to COVID-19 disruptions. The changes were seen as adding stress and uncertainty, which could exacerbate existing mental health issues

Under criteria 2 of the school admission arrangements consideration can be given to exceptional and compelling reasons as to why only one school can meet the needs of a particular child. Those who have experienced children or their families that have experienced vulnerable situations may therefore qualify for consideration under this priority criteria and as such be highly likely to obtain a place at their preferred school, which may well be their catchment school.

Significant concerns raised about the potential for increased journey times for those with protected characteristics and whether they would be further disadvantaged as a result.

Children from Single-Parent Families were identified as a group in a vulnerable situation, because of the impact on supporting the needs of their family, making arrangements to fulfil their statutory duty to ensure regular school attendance and may not quite meet the FSM criteria offering greater opportunity in the oversubscription criteria.

The consultation raised questions about the complexity of the detailed documentation accompanying the consultation noting that it is not the best way to explain changes to time-poor parents, especially those where English isn't their first language or those who have educational needs.

Using January 2024 data the schools with the highest number of pupils with 4 vulnerable factors were: CNCS, Hove Junior, Blatchington Mill. Hove Park, St Mary Magdalen, West Blatchington, Varndean and Patcham High with at least 9 pupils each.

6.16 Socio-economic Disadvantage:

Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact relating to Socio-economic Disadvantage? (Especially considering for age, disability, D/deaf/ blind, ethnicity, expatriate background, and various intersections)

YES

If "YES", what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

Some responses to the consultation felt that the FSM policy and open admission proposal could go a long way to address giving the most disadvantaged children greater choice and opportunity.

Many comments highlight the potential benefits of including Whitehawk in the Dorothy Stringer and Varndean catchment area, as it could provide children from this deprived area with better educational opportunities. However, there are concerns that the changes might not be effective in the long term due to the 20% open admission criteria, which could disadvantage children from Whitehawk who do not have a sibling link or are not eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).

There was a call for admission and catchment areas to be considered in line with fairness for all children, no matter where their families can afford to live. Some felt that plans promoting fairness and opportunities for children from deprived areas must come above the needs of children from affluent areas

Several comments mentioned concerns about the increased travel distances and this was seen as particularly challenging for families without access to private transportation.

The proposed admission arrangements seek to advance the opportunity of admission to a preferred school of those who qualify for free school meals and those who live in a single school catchment area which in the city includes areas of disadvantage.

The School Admission Code only allows limited criteria to be used when forming the oversubscription criteria and elements of the Pupil Premium, including FSM eligibility can be used. The code does not allow any other priority to children according to the occupational, financial or educational status of parents applying.

The consultation received a number of responses both in support and against the proposals on the basis of its potential impact. Those supportive of the proposals often cited the positive impact it could have on those encountering socio-economic disadvantage. Some of those critical to the proposals cited that this was not the only measure of such disadvantage and was therefore not fairly applied to all those experiencing such circumstances. Others outlined that the impact on catchment areas with two schools did not allow for any consideration of families and pupils living in those areas and encountering socio-economic advantage when being considered for the open admission criteria, although they would have the opportunity to apply for other schools under the FSM criteria.

In addition to the proposal to include an additional oversubscription criteria the Council is proposing a change in the catchment boundary between Longhill High School and Dorothy Stringer/Varndean schools. The area involved covered by postcodes BN2 5 and BN2 1 contains areas of disadvantage. As the proposals mean that some pupils and families will be moved from a single catchment area to a dual catchment area it will mean that they are denied an opportunity to use the open admission criteria. In addition, those moving from the dual catchment area may consider their opportunities to be reduced as their catchment area will no longer be served by 2 oversubscribed schools rather a school that is undersubscribed and has a lower Ofsted judgment than the other schools.

The accompanying report and appendix 11 outline the responses received in the consultation.

The number of children who are in receipt of FSM and have SEND was 2046 in January 2024, more current data is not yet available.

6.17 Human Rights:

Will your activity have a disproportionate impact relating to Human Rights?	NO
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If “YES”, what are the positive and negative disproportionate impacts?

Please share relevant insights from data and engagement to show how conclusions about impact have been shaped. Include relevant data sources or references.

6.18 Cumulative, multiple [intersectional](#), and complex impacts (including on additional relevant groups):

What cumulative or complex impacts might the activity have on people who are members of multiple Minoritised groups?

- For example: people belonging to the Gypsy, Roma, and/or Traveller community who are also disabled, LGBTQIA+, older disabled trans and non-binary people, older Black and Racially Minoritised disabled people of faith, young autistic people.
- Also consider wider disadvantaged and intersecting experiences that create exclusion and systemic barriers:
 - People being housebound due to disabilities or disabling circumstances
 - Environmental barriers or mobility barriers impacting those with sight loss, D/deafness, sensory requirements, neurodivergence, various complex disabilities
 - People experiencing homelessness

- People on a low income and people living in the most deprived areas
- People facing literacy, numeracy and/or digital barriers
- Lone parents
- People with experience of or living with addiction and/ or a substance use disorder (SUD)
- Sex workers
- Ex-offenders and people with unrelated convictions
- People who have experienced female genital mutilation (FGM)
- People who have experienced human trafficking or modern slavery

The consultation has predominantly heard concerns about the impact of these proposals on those with protected characteristics in relation to having less opportunity to attend their catchment area school. At the same time, those supporting the introduction of an open admission category for families living in a single school catchment area, increasing the FSM proportion of places available to 30% and the move of catchment boundary lines have cited the positive impact it will have on those with characteristics outlined above.

As concerns have been expressed by those negatively affected about the implications for family life, absence of supportive networks and risks to mental health this could affect lone parents who may also encounter logistical difficulties in relation to getting their child or children to school(s) and managing when illness prevents attendance at school. The potential of a limited support network would add further disruption for this group. The Council is not able to confirm any data in relation to the number of children living in single households in the city, their location and the preferred secondary schools choices that they would hold.

Concerns were expressed about the ability to understand the interplay between the different elements of the oversubscription criteria and the complexity of the information shared in the consultation. As such, people facing literacy, numeracy and /or digital barriers may not have fully understood the implications of the proposals being consulted upon and in future, if determined, how the oversubscription criteria will affect them when applying for as school place.

The council engaged with other community groups to ensure that a wide range of views were gathered including at events that were run in a different way to an open, public consultation.

The Council knows that the vast majority of applications are made online and also ensures that parents can make contact with the school admission team as part of the application process. The team regularly attend secondary school open evenings and speak directly to families about the process.

Cumulative effects are likely to be experienced by those whose children have SEND as a result of the impact of managing a child's needs before and after formal schooling together with the demands that schooling itself places on the child. We know that there can be a high correlation between families with children with SEND and socio-economic disadvantage and this will be compounded if the family live in a dual catchment areas and the family do not have a sibling link to one of their catchment area schools as those children would have a lower ranking in the oversubscription criteria than they would do under the current arrangements.

Through the analysis the Council needs to be mindful of the impacts on families experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage and the compounding effects of disability, poverty and single parenthood may have. Although no data sources can be used to identify the scale of the impact and the geographical locations of the city where that may be most prevalent.

7. Action planning

What SMART actions will be taken to address the disproportionate and cumulative impacts you have identified?

- Summarise relevant SMART actions from your data insights and disproportionate impacts below for this assessment, listing appropriate activities per action as bullets. (This will help your Business Manager or Fair and Inclusive Action Plan (FIAP) Service representative to add these to the Directorate FIAP, discuss success measures and timelines with you, and monitor this EIA's progress as part of quarterly and regular internal and external auditing and monitoring)

- The Council will seek to ensure its arrangements to consider criteria 2 applications and requests for travel assistance both comply with statutory requirements and ensure that holistic view of the pupil's circumstances can be considered fairly. Where consideration of families facing multiple disadvantages is made, in addition to considering a clear communication strategy in multiple languages regarding the arrangements in place and the appeals process available to them.

- The Council will continue to explore the appropriate travel assistance provided to families on public transport and other means as necessary to ensure that where there is an impact on a family and pupil not receiving a place at their catchment area school this is supported in line the council's relevant policies. A review of the Home to School Transport policy will take place informed by the new admission arrangements adopted
- Schools will be supported to ensure that they remain able to meet the need of the children offered places and that careful consideration is made to consider clear metrics to measure the impact that changes in admission arrangements may bring for those starting school in September 2026. For this to be feedback to school leaders as well as affected families, with regular review points planned to assess outcomes.

Which action plans will the identified actions be transferred to?

- For example: Team or Service Plan, Local Implementation Plan, a project plan related to this EIA, FIAP (Fair and Inclusive Action Plan) – mandatory noting of the EIA on the Directorate EIA Tracker to enable monitoring of all equalities related actions identified in this EIA. This is done as part of FIAP performance reporting and auditing. Speak to your Directorate's Business Improvement Manager (if one exists for your Directorate) or to the Head of Service/ lead who enters actions and performance updates on FIAP and seek support from your Directorate's EDI Business Partner.

If required after determination, these identified actions will be taken into service business plans to ensure oversight and delivery beyond the report's publication and are in place for September 2026 with the enacting of the agreed policy.

8. Outcome of your assessment

What decision have you reached upon completing this Equality Impact Assessment? (Mark 'X' for any ONE option below)

Stop or pause the activity due to unmitigable disproportionate impacts because the evidence shows bias towards one or more groups.	
Adapt or change the activity to eliminate or mitigate disproportionate impacts and/or bias.	
Proceed with the activity as currently planned – no disproportionate impacts have been identified, or impacts will be mitigated by specified SMART actions.	
Proceed with caution – disproportionate impacts have been identified but having considered all available options there are no other or proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the activity (for example, in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore, you are going to proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	X

If your decision is to “Proceed with caution”, please provide a reasoning for this:

It is not unusual for a Local Authority to amend and change admission arrangements and/or changes to catchment areas as demographics and circumstances of a local area changes. In recent months the Council has conducted an engagement exercise on potential changes to secondary school catchment areas and a formal consultation on its admission arrangements for September 2026 with over 5000 responses in total. As such the Council is confident it understands the implications of the proposed changes.

There are some aspects of the School Admissions Code that preclude the Council from making additional adjustments to mitigate the impact of its proposals. The system also provides through Criteria 2 and the statutory independent appeal process a pathway for a child or family’s individual circumstances to be considered. In the case of the appeal panel this is after the allocation has been made.

The views heard about the proposals were not unanimous and care needs to be taken to consider where there are complex impacts.

The School Admissions Code requires admission authorities to ensure that Oversubscription criteria are be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation. Admission authorities must ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs. As such, the Council’s conclusion is that where there may be disadvantage so others with protected characteristics will also benefit. Therefore, no unfair disadvantage occurs rather the arrangements re-prioritise how the admission arrangements for community secondary schools in Brighton and Hove function.

The modelling the council has conducted on the likely outcome of the proposals, taken individually and as a whole, relies on informed assumptions about a number of variants, which it is recognised may change over time. The consultation has drawn out more information from consultees to help inform the decision to be taken. The report details mitigations that can be made to better support families in the city and after its operation in September 2026 more information will be known and as admission arrangements are determined annually it will give the Council an opportunity to reflect and receive feedback on those arrangements in the autumn of 2026 at a time when arrangements for September 2028 will be expected to be consulted upon. This will involve having clear metrics for measuring impact once implemented, regular review points to assess outcomes and implementation of robust mitigation measures for identified negative impacts such as the use of criteria 2, travel assistance and support to school staff to meet the needs of the learners attending their schools. It is also recognised that for all pupils, but especially those pupils and families with protected characteristics, the excellent quality of education and support to which the city aspires should be available to all pupils, irrespective of the school allocated or its location.

Summarise your overall equality impact assessment recommendations to include in any committee papers to help guide and support councillor decision-making:

The recommendation of the EIA is to proceed with caution noting that Council’s will often amend and change admission arrangements and/or changes to catchment areas as demographics and circumstances of a local area change. The Council has recently undertaken two consultation exercises and received over 5000 responses in total meaning that the Council should be confident it understands the implications of the proposed changes.

There are some aspects of the admission arrangements that provide an individual pathway for a child or family’s individual circumstances to be considered. In the case of the appeal panel this is after the allocation has been made.

The views heard about the proposals were not unanimous and care needs to be taken to consider where there are complex impacts. Where there may be disadvantage so others with protected characteristics will also benefit and so it can be concluded that no unfair disadvantage occurs rather the arrangements

re-prioritise how the admission arrangements for community secondary schools in Brighton and Hove function.

The most significant impact will be on children seeking a place in a community secondary school who live in a catchment area but do not have an older sibling attending the catchment school or are not eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). Their priority for a place will be lower than in previous years. Conversely, children entitled to FSM or living in a catchment area served by one school will receive a higher priority for a school place than in previous years, and choice that was not otherwise available to them purely by virtue of their location.

Pupils with SEND who qualify for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are not impacted by the school admission arrangements being consulted upon. Mainstream community schools are expected to meet the needs of all pupils without an EHCP and are required to make reasonable adjustments in line with equality duties. However the proposals may negatively impact pupils with disabilities where mitigations in place to minimise the negative impacts of managing within a community school are affected. For example, being placed with a friendship group or trusted adults, or where journeys to secondary school are longer and/or undertaken using public transport.

A child's mental health was often cited as a potential negative impact following the implementation of these proposals where there would be less prospect and greater uncertainty under the proposals of getting the school of their choice. However, for some children the proposals will mean a greater opportunity to be allocated the school of their choice, especially those with a socio-economic disadvantage as eligible for FSM, or in single school catchment areas with little choice available to them in practice.

Concern was expressed that the complexity of the arrangements being consulted upon meant the implications have not been fully understood and as such people have not been able to comment appropriately to the consultation. Any changes that are determined will need to be clearly explained and any barriers to understanding these will need to be overcome.

Parents with certain protected characteristics may struggle to make the arrangements required to ensure their child attends regularly, especially if the child is allocated a school place outside of the catchment area or not one of the family's preferred schools.

The main report covers many of the issues highlighted within this EIA and provides details on further considerations that will be required.

9. Publication

All Equality Impact Assessments will be published. If you are recommending, and choosing not to publish your EIA, please provide a reason:

This will be published as part of the Full Council paper for its meeting on 27 February 2025

10. Directorate and Service Approval

Signatory:	Name and Job Title:	Date: DD-MMM-YY
Responsible Lead Officer:	Richard Barker, Head of Education	13.2.25
Accountable Manager:	Deb Austin – Corporate Director for Families, Children and Learning	17.02.25

Notes, relevant information, and requests (if any) from Responsible Lead Officer and Accountable Manager submitting this assessment:

EDI Review, Actions, and Approval:

Equality Impact Assessment sign-off

EDI Business Partner to cross-check against aims of the equality duty, public sector duty and our civic responsibilities the activity considers and refer to relevant internal checklists and guidance prior to recommending sign-off.

Once the EDI Business Partner has considered the equalities impact to provide approval for by those submitting the EIA, they will get the EIA signed off and sent to the requester copying the Head of Service, Business Improvement Manager, [Equalities inbox](#), any other service colleagues as appropriate to enable EIA tracking, accountability, and saving for publishing. Budget and Staffing EIAs secure EDI Manager and HEAd of Service level approval via different templates.

Signatory:	Name:	Date: DD-MMM-YY
EDI Business Partner:	Eric Page	13/02/2025
EDI Manager:		
Head of Communities, Equality, and Third Sector (CETS) Service: <i>(For Budget EIAs/ in absence of EDI Manager/ as final approver)</i>		

Notes and recommendations from EDI Business Partner reviewing this assessment:

Notes and recommendations (if any) from EDI Manager reviewing this assessment:

Notes and recommendations (if any) from Head of CETS Service reviewing this assessment:

Appendix 9 - Transport Implications and Considerations

This appendix paper sets out what is known about current transport arrangements and processes and what the impact and therefore actions might need to be about changes to the secondary school admission arrangements in the city.

Policy Overview

The government outlines the Council's statutory duties in relation to providing transport assistance for pupils to attend school. These are detailed in guidance that can be found [here](#). In addition to making provision for eligible children the Council has discretionary power to arrange travel to school for other children.

Travel arrangements need to be suitable for the needs of the children for which they are made and there should be a transparent process so that parents can appeal a decision about travel to school for their child.

The Council also has a duty to promote sustainable and active travel to school.

The guidance notes that schools should support councils to deliver their home-to-school travel functions, for example, by promoting good behaviour on transport.

Statutory walking distances are used to determine whether a child is eligible for free travel to school. They are the distance beyond which a child who is attending their nearest suitable school is eligible for free travel arranged by their local authority. Where a child lives within the statutory walking distance, the parent is responsible for arranging their child's travel to school. There is no expectation that the child will walk. It is for the parent to determine what arrangements would be suitable for their child.

In addition, a child is eligible for free travel to school if they attend their nearest suitable school, and it is within the statutory walking distance of their home, and the nature of the route means they could not be expected to walk there in reasonable safety even if accompanied by their parent, and there is no alternative route within the statutory walking distance that they would be able to walk in reasonable safety, even if accompanied by their parent.

The statutory walking distances are:

- A child under the age of 8 is eligible for free travel to their nearest suitable school if it is more than 2 miles from their home.
- A child aged 8 years or over is eligible for free travel to their nearest suitable school if it is more than 3 miles from their home.

A child is also eligible for free travel to school if they attend their nearest suitable school, and it is within the statutory walking distance of their home, and they could not reasonably be expected to walk there because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problem, even if they were accompanied by their parent.

To be eligible on these grounds, a child does not need to have an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP), attend a special school or live beyond the statutory walking distance.

The guidance also details that entitlement to travel assistance is extended to support low-income families to exercise school choice. A child is eligible for free travel to school if they are eligible for free school meals and they are:

- aged 11 to 16 years, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 6 miles from their home; or
- aged 11 to 16 years, attend a school that is more than 2 but not more than 15 miles from their home that their parents have chosen on the grounds of their religion or belief if, having regard to that religion or belief, there is no suitable school nearer to their home

The guidance confirms that, as a general guide, the maximum journey time for a child of primary school age should be 45 minutes each way, and 75 minutes each way for a child of secondary school age, including any time taken to walk to a pick-up point. It also states that, wherever possible, a pupil should not be expected to make several changes on public transport.

The Council's own home to school transport [policy](#) confirms the local delivery of the requirements set out in the government guidance. All applications are considered individually and discretion is available to the Council to provide assistance with travel when considered appropriate on a case by case basis.

Current local arrangements

There are a number of bus routes in the city that can be used by children to attend secondary school. The table below shows services that specifically support pupils to attend schools in the city. These services are a combination of commercial and supported bus routes.

School	Dedicated School Service*
Blatchington Mill School	93, 27B, 5B
BACA	70
CNCS	14/14C, 55, 48, 59A, 73, 91, 95, 95A
Dorothy Stringer School	55, 94, 94A
Hove Park School	55, 71, 93,
King's School	6, 96, 98
Longhill High School	2, 22, 72, 72A, 76, 76A,
Patcham High School	74, 75
PACA	71A, 55
Varndean	55, 94, 94A

*information supplied by Brighton and Hove Buses

Patronage on services is known but due to commercial sensitivities cannot be shared externally to the Council.

The Council currently spends approximately £339,000 per year on providing supported bus routes. The routes and contributions are detailed below.

Service	Cost £,000
72	68
74	32
75	34
76	28
76A	34
91	44
95	51
95A	48
Total	339

The Council currently supplies approximately 600 bus passes to qualifying pupils attending school at a cost of £445 per pupil. This includes approximately 250 bus passes for pupils eligible for FSM. The cost per pupil will be expected to change to reflect inflationary pressures prior to September 2026. This is a current total spend of approximately £267,000.

The Council does not routinely provide train passes to pupils but are not precluded from doing so. No concessionary fares are agreed between the Council and the train operators. An example of annual season tickets from stations in the city are shown below.

Route	Annual cost (child 5-15)
Brighton – Hove	£352.00
Brighton – Portslade	£472.00
Brighton – Falmer	£510.00
Portslade – Falmer	£770.00
Hove - Falmer	£644.00
Hove – London Road	£466.00
London Road - Falmer	£442.00

There are already mitigations in place to support the safety of pupils travelling on bus routes in the city. All buses are equipped with CCTV cameras for safety and monitoring. Driver training includes dealing with challenging passenger behaviour. Bus supervisors are sometimes deployed on routes where concerns are reported and there is a dedicated schools liaison supervisor. Brighton and Hove Buses also work with schools on behaviour agreements, reporting protocols and offer free travel to teachers to use routes involving pupils.

Any reports of concerning behaviour or incidents will be collected by Brighton and Hove Buses and, where necessary, there will be liaison with Sussex Police. The Council's Education Safeguarding Officer has no record of any referrals or concerns relating to safety on school transport and there are no patterns of incident reporting to the community safety team.

Developing future arrangements

A core public transport network across the city is key to ensure that pupils will be able to travel to school in future years. Should there be adjustments to admission arrangements it will be necessary to ensure that pupils in Years 8 - 11 are able to get to school conveniently whilst adapting the transport options for those starting school in September 2026.

The Council has undertaken work with Jacobs to identify the capacity and coverage of bus routes in the city taking account of the proposals to change the catchment area boundary between Longhill High School and Dorothy Stringer/Varndean schools and reducing the PAN of Longhill High, Dorothy Stringer and Blatchington Mill schools.

Some planning assumptions have been made; the proposals are expected to increase travel between catchments both from pupils in single school catchment areas and from pupils not able to receive a place in their catchment area school.

The analysis relies on an assumption that families will favour adjacent catchments and schools with more positive Ofsted inspection outcomes.

This review focused on expected capacity and coverage impacts for services to each school.

Capacity - risk of overcrowding or pupils unable to board buses has been considered.

- This relies on loading data from Brighton and Hove Buses, mode splits from National Travel Survey data and journey planner / online bus maps for distribution onto services.
- Only 'final leg' services known to be used by pupils to reach schools have been assessed – connecting 'first leg' services have not been considered (e.g. traveling from home to the city centre to connect with a school service).
- The capacity assessment is sensitive to the proportion of spaces available to Open Admissions (OA).
- Results have been 'stress-tested' by considering peak vs mean loadings and vehicle sizes.
- RAG assessment considers if the stress-testing indicates a high (R), medium (A) or low (G) risk of capacity issues.

Coverage – considered the risk that pupils placed through the 'Open Admission' criteria will struggle to use buses to get to their preferred school due to long or difficult journeys and either switch to car or be unable to take up the opportunity.

- This has been assessed using isochrones showing the bus travel time to each school across the catchments (in bands showing 15, 30, 45 and 60-minute maximum journey times, including walk and waiting times).

- This coverage assessment used Podaris, a widely-used and reliable software tool for accessibility analysis, based on data for the current bus network as a confirmed base for analysis.
- Both direct journeys (typically preferred by pupils) and those requiring up to one interchange have been considered.
- RAG assessment has considered if the accessibility analysis indicates a poor (R), partial (A) or acceptable (G) match of student flows to the coverage of the origin catchment.

Summary

The impact review has found that there are a range of potential impacts on the City's bus network resulting from the proposed introduction of Open Admissions (OA), reductions in PANs and boundary changes.

These impacts are predominantly issues with coverage potentially limiting affected pupil's use of bus to get to and from their school, particularly for OA pupils at the central catchment schools.

It should be noted that RAG scoring is high-level and there can be material differences in impact severity within the same RAG score.

It is recommended that as more information emerges about the specific details and context for updated admissions arrangements, more detailed work to assess pupils' needs and to develop a management strategy and mitigations take place.

School	PAN	5% Open Admission RAG		
		Places	Capacity	Coverage
Brighton Aldridge Community Academy	180	0	Green	Green
Hove Park & Blatchington Mill	480	24	Yellow	Red
Longhill High School	210	11	Green	Yellow
Patcham High School	225	12	Green	Yellow
Portslade Aldridge Community Academy	220	0	Yellow	Yellow
Varndean & Dorothy Stringer	600	30	Green	Red

Where there are concerns for coverage and capacity the Council will need to consider what additional analysis and mitigations will need to be put in place for September 2026. Additional analysis will need to be undertaken after National Offer Day (March 2026) and before the start of the new academic year (September 2026). This will be required to assess if there were journeys to school that would exceed the 75 minute journey time or where no suitable service exists.

When doing so consideration must be given to how circumstances can change between a school place being offered and the pupil starting secondary school in September. For pupils starting in September 2024 there were 249 places reallocated

during this time which is 10% of the cohort. A further 24 places at community schools were offered to pupils from a waiting list during the Autumn term 2024.

As a result of this high pupil mobility, prior to the start of term, it is important to ensure the overall network is resilient to changes and by necessity, any additional capacity required will only be apparent in the months leading to September 2026.

Potential implications

The Council already invests £339,000 in the bus network to facilitate pupils getting to school. In future years, this investment could be re-prioritised from the existing routes to support any new journeys that are required.

As part of the consultation on admission arrangements the council has not proposed any changes to its home to school transport policy but has signalled throughout the consultation that a review of the Council’s policy will occur before September 2026. This is where mitigations to the impact of the determined admission arrangements can be considered.

The Council currently meets the statutory requirements placed on it by central government but has the potential to widen qualifying measures if it chooses to do so.

Before forming the current administration, the Labour Group indicated a policy intention to provide free bus travel for under-19s still in education. Any review undertaken will explore how the Council can continue to work to this policy aspiration. In addition, the review can explore what other entitlements to travel assistance beyond the Council’s statutory duties, may be considered appropriate in response to decisions taken on the admission arrangements.

Currently the definition of ‘nearest suitable school’ in relation to secondary education means the catchment area school (or schools in a dual catchment area) for those able to attend a mainstream school, except for children whose family meets the criteria for low income, where the suitable school may be one of the three closest schools.

The definition of ‘nearest suitable school’ could be changed to take account of the introduction of priorities 5 and 6 in the proposed admission arrangements.

The following table is copied from the Cabinet report in December 2024.

September 2026	No. pupils in catchment area requiring a catchment area school	No. FSM places available for out of catchment pupils	No. of pupils unable to be placed in catchment area schools(s)
PACA	221	0	5
Hove Pk & Blatch Mill	434	7	57
DS & Varndean	624	0	144

Longhill	175	0	0
Patcham	205	19	44
BACA	129	0	0

Under the forecast made at that time, it is estimated that in September 2026 26 pupils will be offered a place under criteria 5 and the cost associated with this would be £11,570.

With 5% of places made available under criteria 6 the estimated cost to provide these pupils with travel assistance in September 2026 would be £33,820.

School	Proposed PAN	5 % of places	Estimated cost
Blatchington Mill	300	15	£6,675
Dorothy Stringer	300	15	£6,675
Hove Park	180	9	£4,005
Longhill High	210	11	£4,895
Patcham High	225	11	£4,895
Varndean	300	15	£6,675
Total		76	£33,820

Currently the eligibility criteria to receive travel assistance for distance is 3 miles. The council could determine to reduce this requirement, as part of its own policy initiative to 2 miles and therefore make it the equivalent of the assistance to low income families. This will be part of further exploratory work on transport assistance. On National Offer Day 2024 32 pupils were directed to a school between 2 and 3 miles away, but only 5 of them ended up attending the allocated school in October 2024.

Modeling where all FSM pupils in catchment will be considered under the FSM priority (not asking about FSM eligibility on application) with priority 1-3 included in FSM count						
		20% open admissions	10% open admissions		5% open admissions	
	% of intake FSM eligible	Potential number of catchment area pupils not offered a catchment area school	% of intake FSM eligible	Potential number of catchment area pupils not offered a catchment area school	% of intake FSM eligible	Potential number of catchment area pupils not offered a catchment area school
Dorothy Stringer	35.11%	144	34.46%	84	34.13%	54
Varndean	35.10%		34.37%		34.01%	
Blatchington Mill	33.04%	57	31.52%	9	30.76%	0
Hove Park	21.16%		19.91%		19.96%	
Patcham	27.03%	43	26.04%	21	25.50%	9

Taking the modelling shared in the report showing the potential number of catchment area pupils not offered a catchment school it would be possible to calculate the

maximum cost of providing all these pupils with a bus pass, irrespective of qualifying criteria.

Catchment area	Number of children not offered 5%	Cost at 5%
DS/V	54	£24,030
BM/HP	0	£0
PHS	9	£4,005
Total	63	£28,035

Over the following 5 years costs would rise as new pupils begin secondary school and are considered under the new transport assistance criteria. It will be expected that costs will rise each year although, depending on the policy initiative, the annual uplift in cost may vary depending on factors such as falling overall pupil numbers, varying numbers of pupils in each catchment area, the PAN of each secondary school and the pattern of parental preferences. In addition, the cost of travel assistance can be expected to rise due to inflationary pressures. Therefore the figures in the following table are purely illustrative.

Summary Table of Potential Costs – full cost implementation not reflecting potential factors outlined above

Option	No. of pupils	Year 1 cost – Sept 2026	Estimated full implementation cost (5 years) per year
Provide all pupils offered places under criteria 6 (5%)	76	£33,820	£169,100
Provide all pupils offered places under criteria 5	26	£11,570	£57,850
Provide all pupils not able to be placed in their catchment area school due to open admission at 5%	63	£28,035	£140,175

Brighton & Hove Admission Arrangements September 2026

School Bus Impact Review – Final Report



Background

- Brighton and Hove City Council have formally consulted on admission arrangements for September 2026, including the following changes potentially impacting transport:
 - Introducing an 'Open Admissions' criteria into the admission priorities to open a proportion of school places to those living in the Brighton Aldridge Community Academy (BACA), Portslade Aldridge Community Academy (PACA), Patcham High School (PHS) and Longhill High School (LHS) catchments.
 - Reducing the Published Admission Numbers ('PANs') at Blatchington Mill School, Dorothy Stringer School and Longhill High School.
 - Making changes to the catchment area boundaries between Varndean & Dorothy Stringer schools and Longhill High School
- These changes are expected to increase travel between catchments both from pupils in 'outer' catchments (PACA, PHS, BACA and LHS) taking up the opportunity, and from movement of pupils in the Varndean & Dorothy Stringer (VDS) and Hove Park and Blatchington Mill (HPBM) catchments that become oversubscribed as a result.

Review Purpose and Limitations

- This review has been requested by the Council to provide a high-level understanding of the potential impacts on the City's bus network resulting from the proposed introduction of Open Admissions, reductions in PANs and boundary changes, identifying the impacts to be managed and mitigated.
- In preparing the review, Jacobs has relied on:
 - Information and data provided by the Council on school admissions and bus service information provided by Brighton and Hove Buses
 - Reasonable assumptions around how applicants will respond to the changes with respect to demand for school places and travel behaviour
- The information and assumptions used are considered appropriate for the review purpose only and it is suggested that more detailed work would be needed to develop the management strategy and mitigations.

Estimating Changes to Place Uptake resulting from Open Admissions

- Analysis of changes to uptake of school places 'out-of-catchment' has built upon earlier work by the Council, adding detail on:
 - expected origin catchments for pupils taking up places in another catchment as a direct consequence of Open Admissions ('OA pupils')
 - expected destination catchments for pupils not offered their catchment area school as an indirect consequence of Open Admissions i.e. oversubscription in their local catchment
- The analysis relies on an assumption that pupils changing catchments will favour adjacent catchments and schools with more favourable Ofsted inspection outcomes; pupils not offered their catchment area school may also be limited by available spaces.
- For the Impact Review, analysis has been carried out for:
 - the 20% proportion for 'Open Admission' spaces consulted on;
 - an intermediate 10% option; and a
 - 5% option.

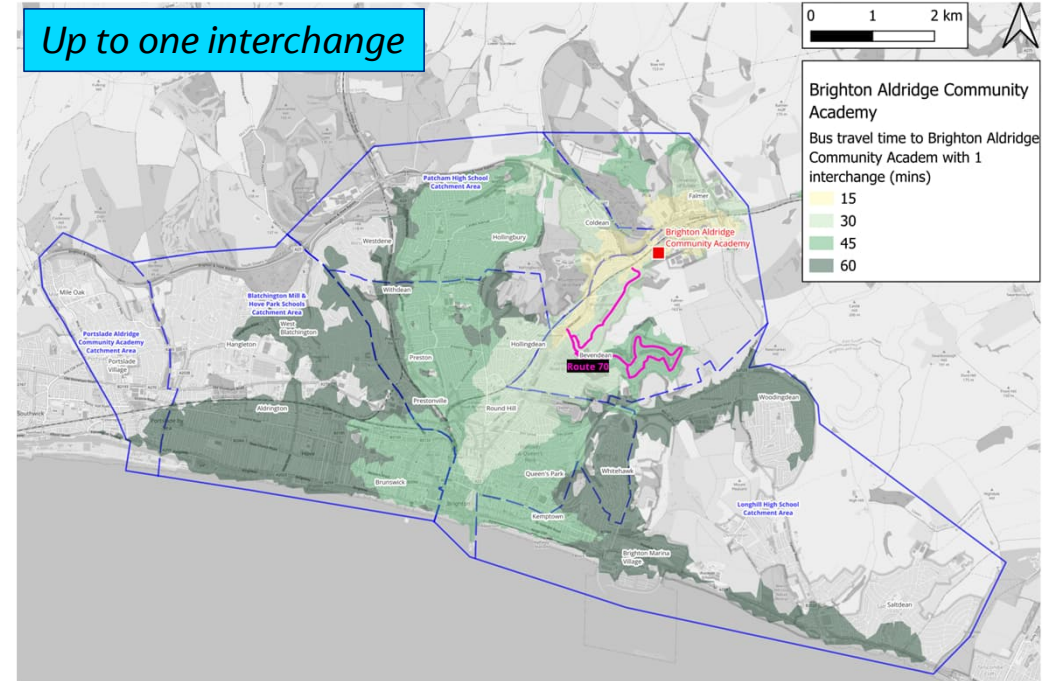
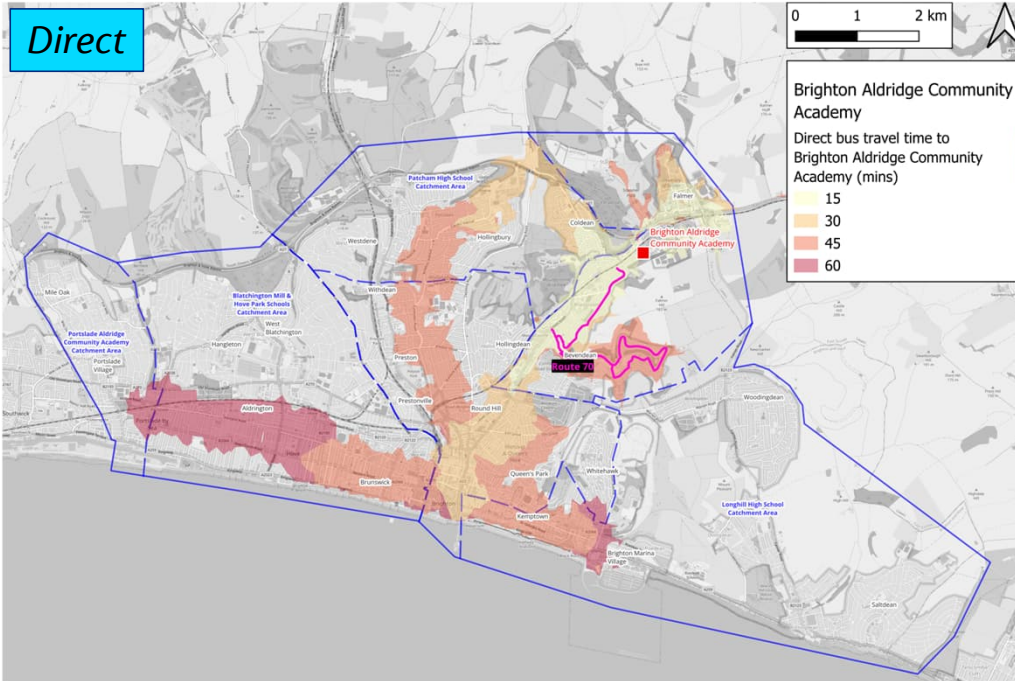
Impact Review - Capacity

- This Impact Review focused on expected capacity and coverage impacts for services to each school
- Capacity – risk of overcrowding or pupils unable to board buses has been considered.
 - This relies on loading data from Brighton and Hove Buses, mode splits from National Travel Survey data and journey planner / online bus maps for distribution onto services.
 - Only ‘final leg’ services known to be used by pupils to reach schools have been assessed – connecting ‘first leg’ services have not been considered (e.g. traveling from home to the city centre to connect with a school service).
 - The capacity assessment is sensitive to the proportion of spaces available to Open Admissions.
 - Results have been ‘stress-tested’ by considering peak vs mean loadings and vehicle sizes.
 - RAG assessment considers if the stress-testing indicates a high (R), medium (A) or low (G) risk of capacity issues.

Impact Review - Coverage

- Coverage – considered the risk that pupils placed through the ‘Open Admission’ criteria will struggle to use buses to get to their preferred school due to long or difficult journeys and either switch to car or be unable to take up the opportunity.
 - This has been assessed using isochrones showing the bus travel time to each school across the catchments (in bands showing 15, 30, 45 and 60-minute maximum journey times, including walk and waiting times).
 - This coverage assessment used Podaris, a widely-used and reliable software tool for accessibility analysis, based on data for the current bus network as a confirmed base for analysis.
 - Both direct journeys (typically preferred by pupils) and those requiring up to one interchange have been considered.
 - RAG assessment has considered if the accessibility analysis indicates a poor (R), partial (A) or acceptable (G) match of pupil flows to the coverage of the origin catchment.

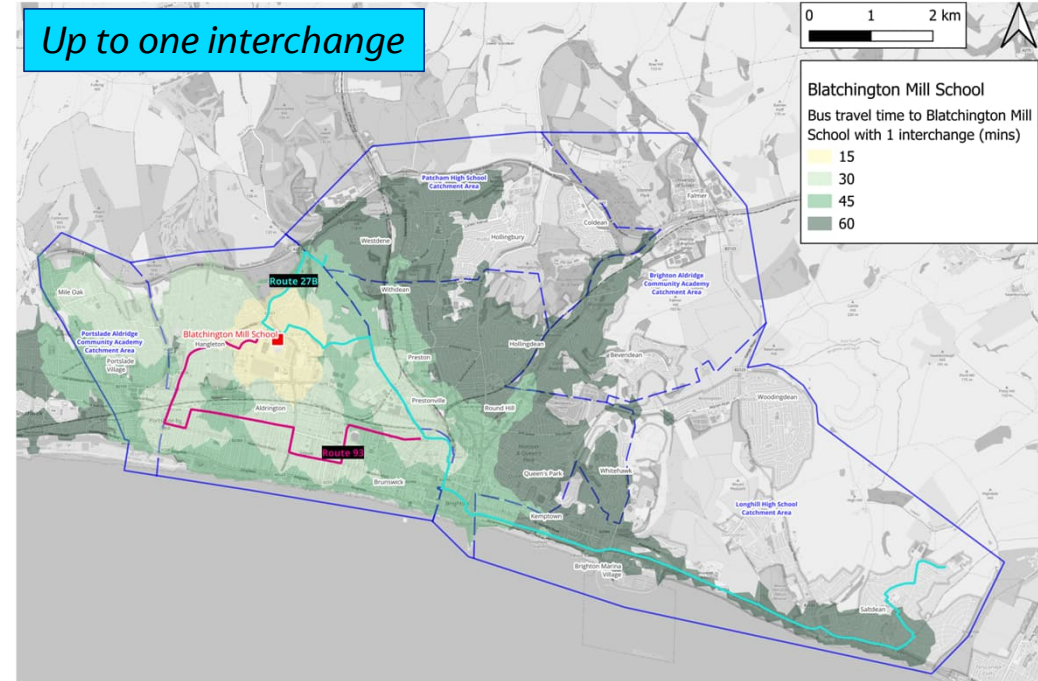
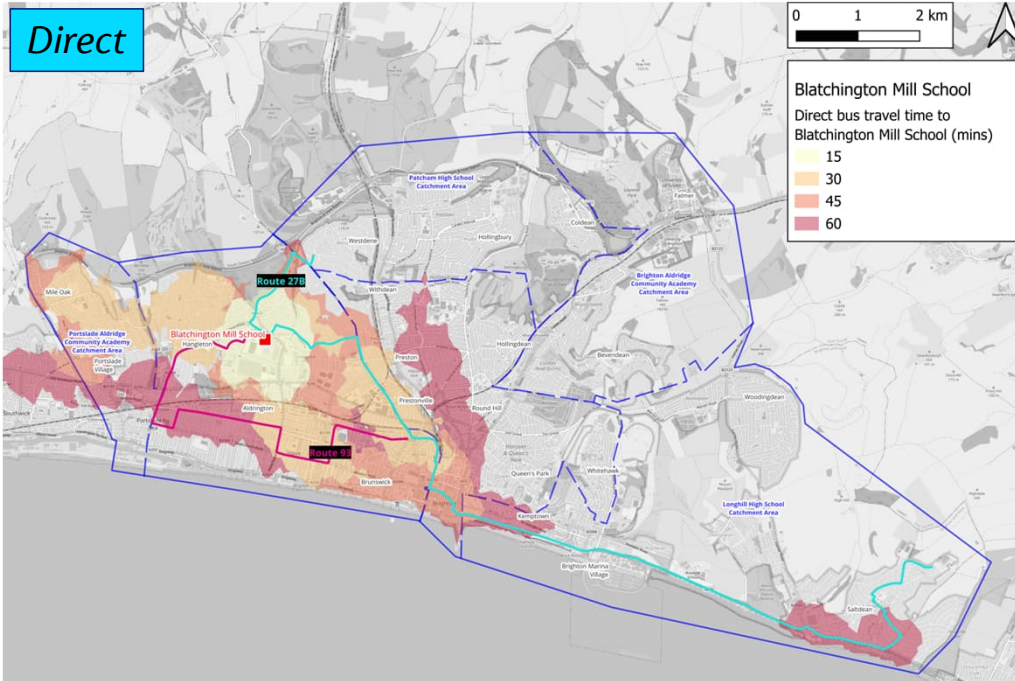
Brighton Aldridge Community Academy



- Additional inter-catchment movements driven by pupils not placed in their Vardean and Dorothy Stringer (VDS) catchment schools.
- No school services from the VDS catchment, but fair coverage provided by general services.

- No data currently available on current general service loadings, but high frequency services provide very high capacity.
- Travel times of 30-45 minutes by bus for pupils in large parts of the VDS catchment, by a mix of direct and connecting journeys.

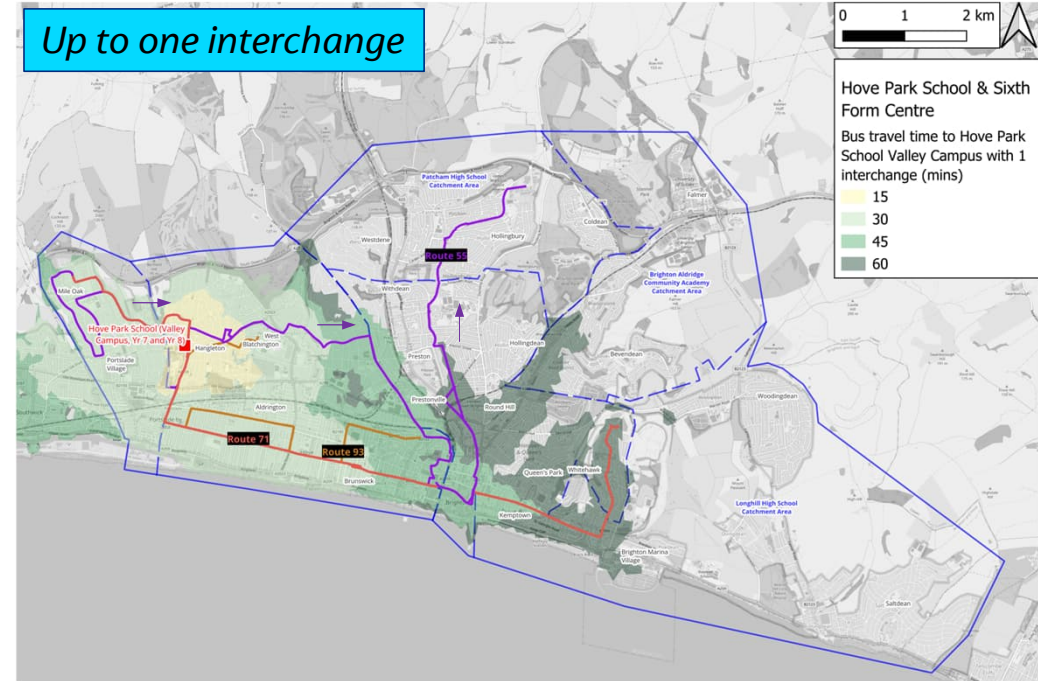
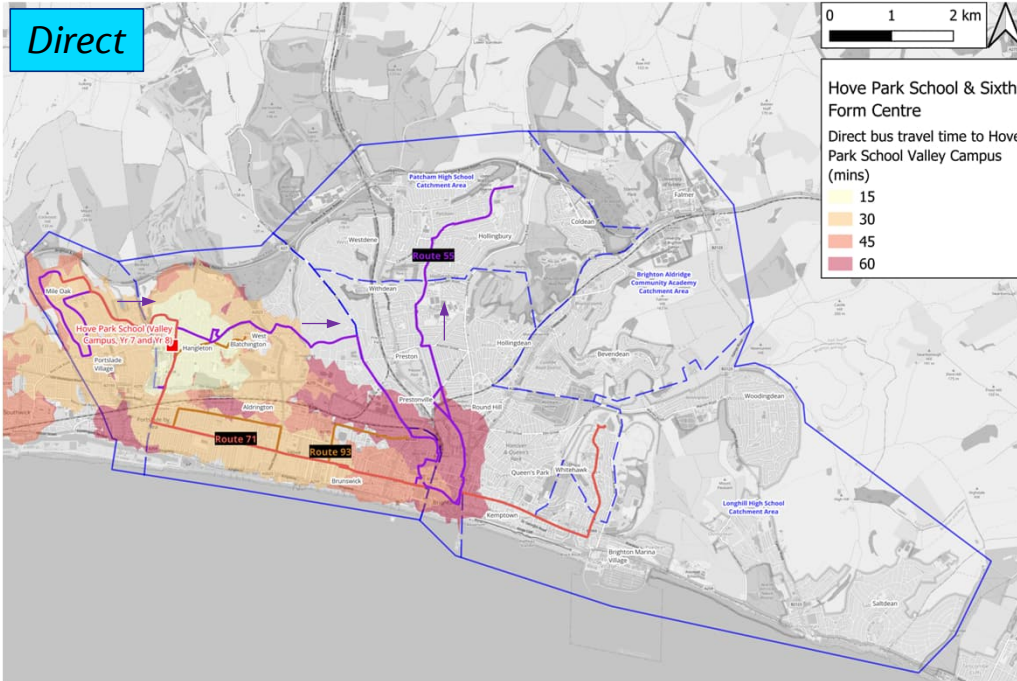
Blatchington Mill School



- OA pupils from Longhill, BACA and Patcham catchments are expected to substantially increase inter-catchment movements.
- School service 27B provides service from Saltdean and Kempton in the Longhill catchment.

- Analysis of loading data for route 27B indicates potential capacity issues at all OA proportions.
- Travel times of at least 45 minutes by bus for pupils in most parts of the origin catchments, with substantial areas taking more than 60 minutes and very limited availability of direct journeys.

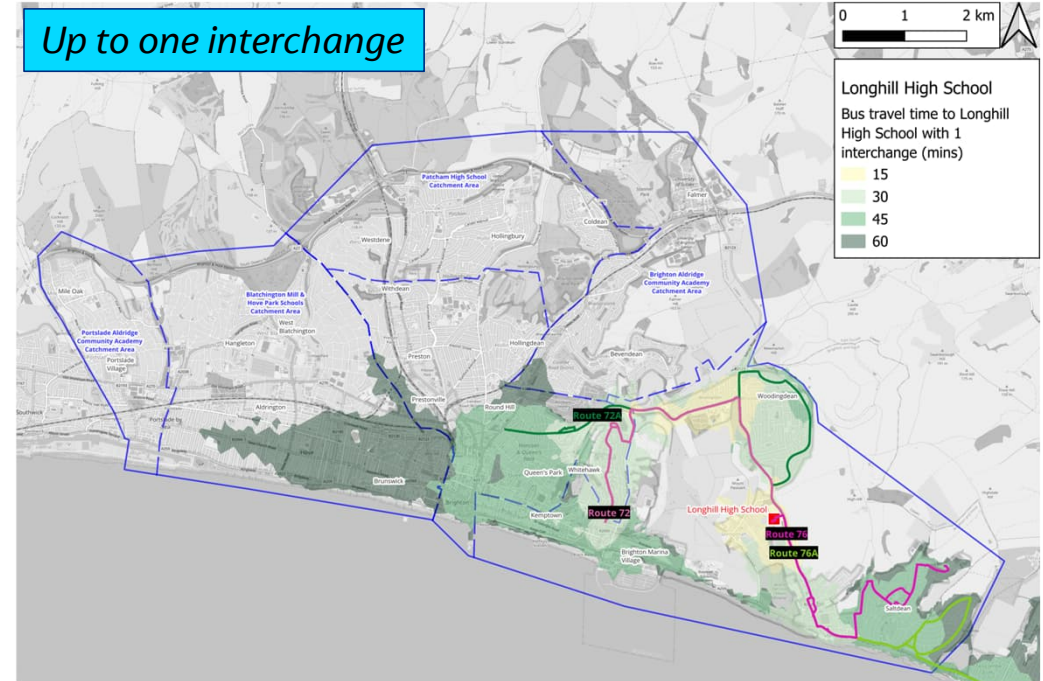
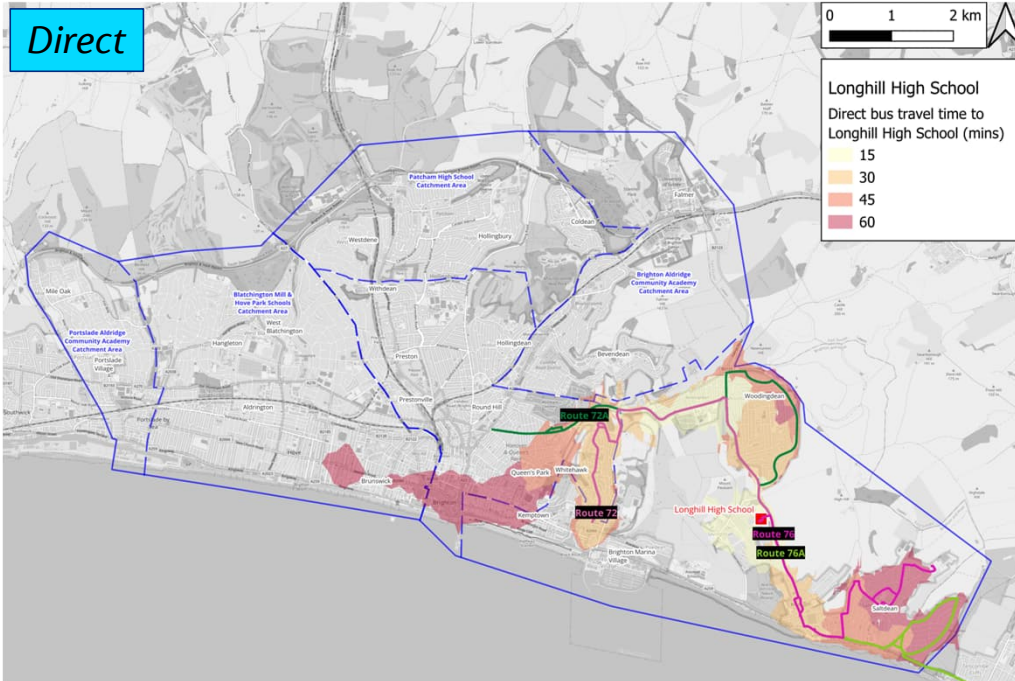
Hove Park School



- Pupils from the Longhill, BACA and possibly Patcham catchments admitted under OA are expected to drive a substantial increase in inter-catchment movements.
- School service 71 provides service from Kempton in the Longhill catchment.

- Analysis of loading data for route 71 indicates potential capacity issues at all OA proportions.
- Travel times of more than 60 minutes by bus for pupils in most parts of the origin catchments, with no direct journeys available.

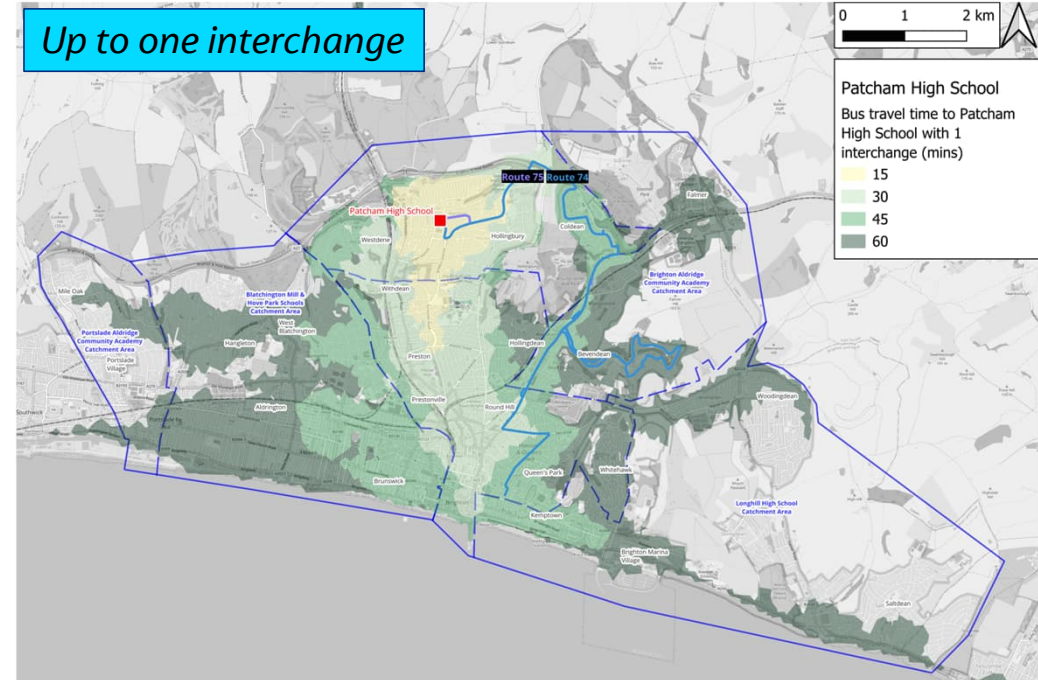
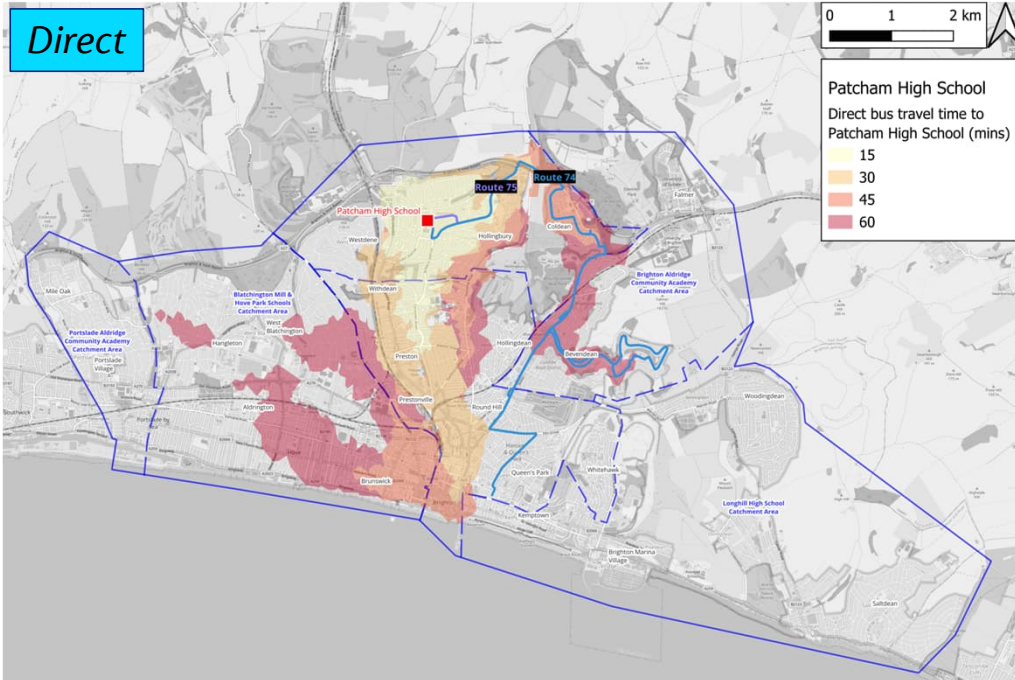
Longhill High School



- Impacts from pupils not placed in their Varndean and Dorothy Stringer catchment schools, and from the Hove Park and Blatchington catchment at 20% OA – in substantial numbers at 10%+ OA.
- No school services from the origin catchments, and limited coverage is provided by general services.

- Analysis of loading data for routes 72 and 72A indicates potential capacity issues at higher (10% and 20%) OA proportions.
- Travel times of 30-45 minutes by bus for pupils in parts of the origin catchments, but large areas taking more than 60 minutes. Direct journeys only available from Queens Park and Whitehawk.

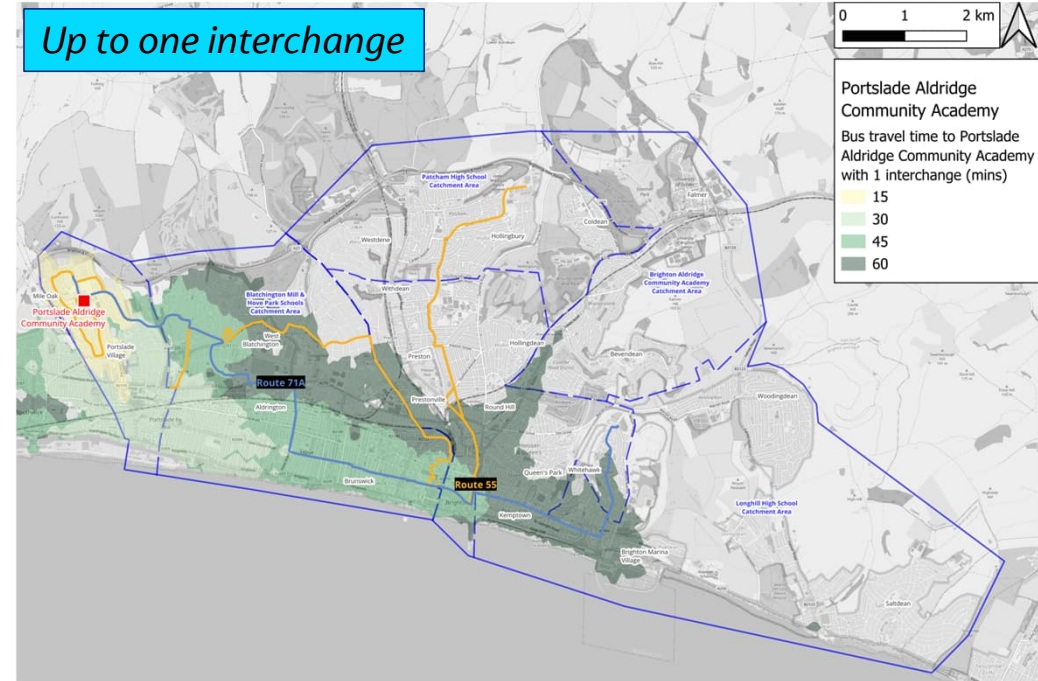
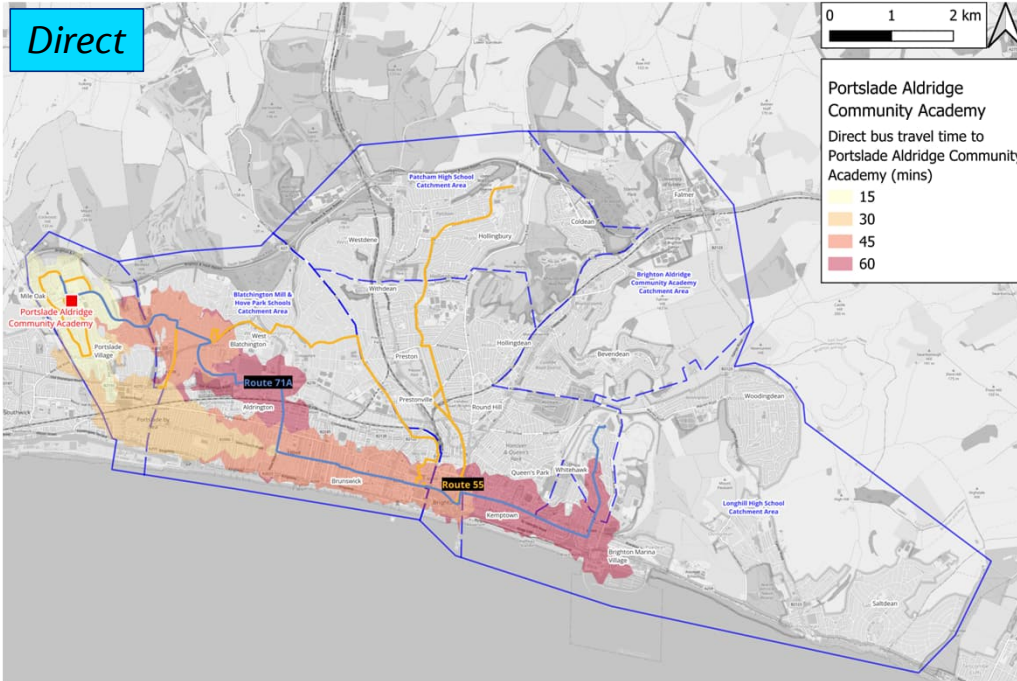
Patcham High School



- Substantial numbers of pupils not placed in their Varndean and Dorothy Stringer (VDS) catchment schools and OA pupils from BACA and Longhill provide substantial extra demand, and from the Hove Park and Blatchington catchment at 20% OA.
- School services 74 and 75 provide service from Kemptown in the Longhill catchment. General bus network provides alternatives.

- Analysis of loading data for routes 74 and 75 does not suggest potential capacity issues at any OA proportions (up to 20%).
- Direct bus travel times of less than 30 minutes from most of the VDS catchment, but access is poorer from the other origin catchments with connecting journey access 30-60 minutes or longer.

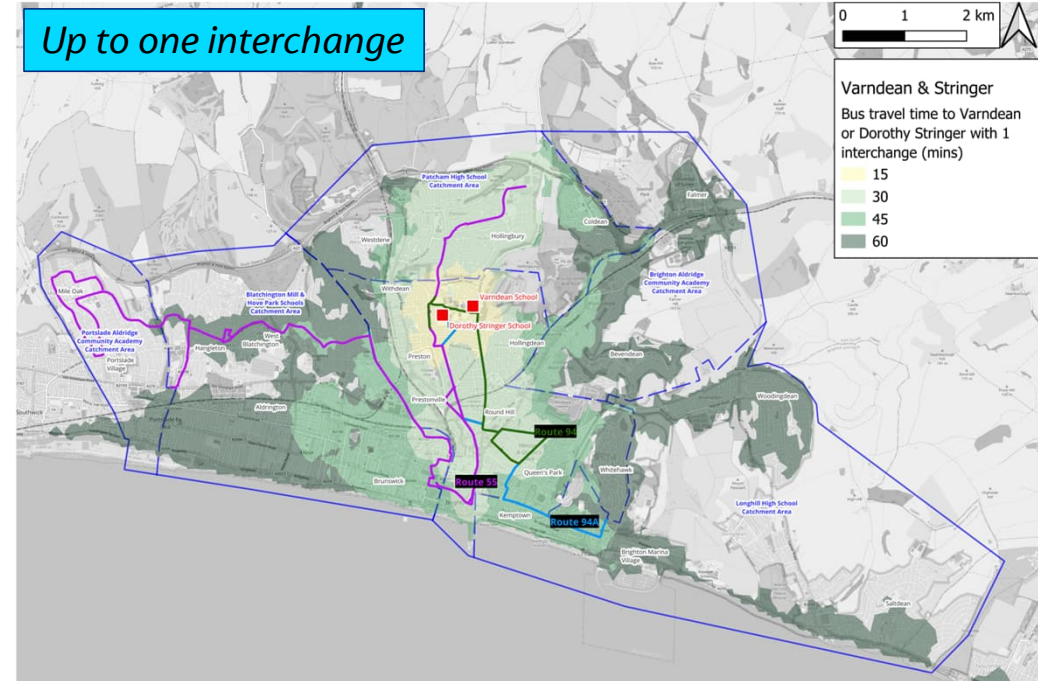
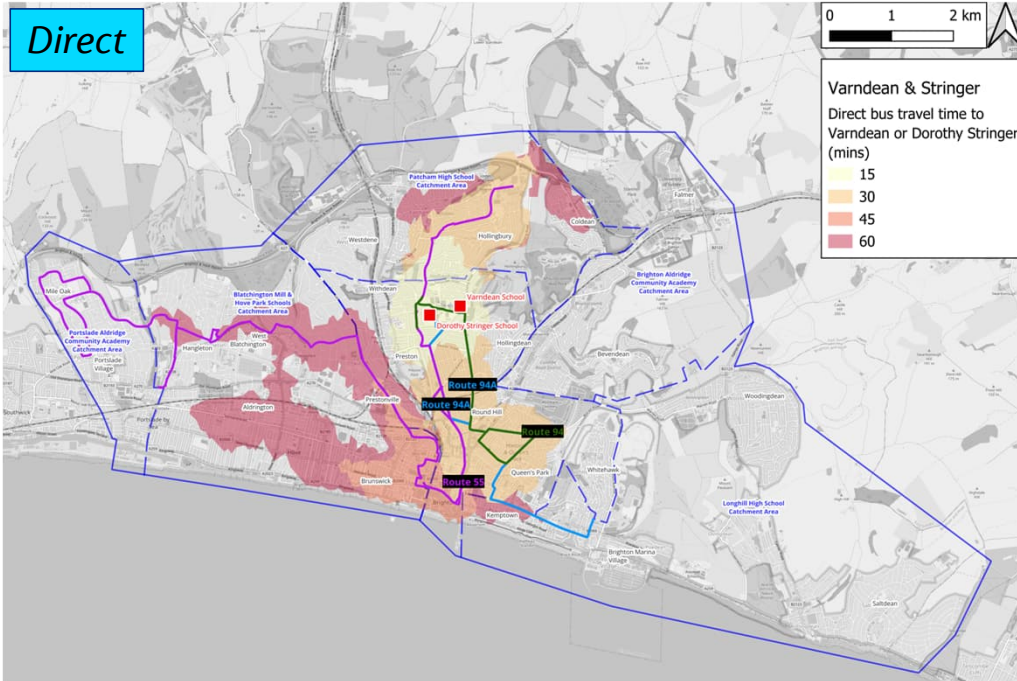
Portslade Aldridge Community Academy



- Limited numbers of pupils not placed in their VDS catchment schools are expected at PACA; in addition to those from the HPBM catchment for the 20% OA scenario.
- School service 71A serves the south of the origin catchments. Loading data for this route indicates existing moderate capacity issues, potentially becoming more serious at higher (10%+) OA.

- Direct bus travel times are around 30-60 minutes from southern parts of the origin catchments, with connecting travel times of 45-60 minutes available from areas south of Prestonville and West Blatchington (inclusive). Access is poorer in substantial areas elsewhere in these catchments, with connecting journeys lasting more than 60 minutes.

Varndean & Dorothy Stringer Schools



- OA pupils from Longhill, BACA and Patcham catchments expected to provide substantial additional demand.
- School service 94A serves Kempton in the Longhill catchment, with connections to services 55 and 94 available in the centre. Analysis of loading data does not suggest potential capacity issues

- A mix of direct and connecting options provide bus travel times of less than 60 minutes from most of the Patcham catchment, but access is poorer from the other origin catchments with some connecting journeys taking 45-60 minutes, but often longer.

Summary

School	PAN	5% Open Admission RAG			10% Open Admission RAG			20% Open Admission RAG		
		Places	Capacity	Coverage	Places	Capacity	Coverage	Places	Capacity	Coverage
Brighton Aldridge Community Academy	180	0	Green	Green	0	Green	Green	0	Green	Green
Hove Park & Blatchington Mill	480	24	Yellow	Red	48	Yellow	Red	96	Yellow	Red
Longhill High School	210	11	Green	Yellow	21	Yellow	Red	42	Yellow	Red
Patcham High School	225	12	Green	Yellow	23	Green	Yellow	45	Green	Yellow
Portslade Aldridge Community Academy	220	0	Yellow	Yellow	0	Red	Yellow	0	Red	Yellow
Varndean & Dorothy Stringer	600	30	Green	Red	60	Green	Red	120	Green	Red

- The Impact Review has found that as shown above, there are a range of potential impacts on the City's bus network resulting from the proposed introduction of Open Admissions, reductions in PANs and boundary changes.
- These impacts are predominantly issues with coverage potentially limiting affected pupils' use of bus to get to and from their school, particularly for OA pupils at the central catchment schools.
- Potential issues with capacity have also been identified, particularly at higher OA proportions.
- It should be noted that RAG scoring is high-level and there can be material differences in impact severity within the same RAG score.
- As more information emerges about the specific details and context for updated admissions arrangements, there will be scope to carry out more detailed work to assess pupils' needs and to develop a management strategy and mitigations.

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Appendix 11 - Proposed Criteria 2 arrangements

During the consultation a range of questions were raised about how criteria 2 within the existing and proposed admission arrangements operates.

Criteria 2 is named: Compelling medical or other exceptional reasons for attending the school.

This appendix provides clarification on the wording proposed for 2026-27 arrangements and how the criteria will be implemented. This criteria applies for applications for secondary, primary, infant and junior main admission rounds and for in year applications for 2026/07 onwards.

This is the wording in our proposed admission arrangements, to be published. Wording in bold shows changes from the 2025/26 arrangements – following feedback received during the consultation.

Exceptional Circumstances - This criteria applies to pupils with a specific need that can only be met by one school rather than any other. This could include medical or social reasons that make it essential for the child to attend a particular school. Independent supporting information **(this could be a report or an assessment for example that specifies why the child's needs can only be met at one school)** must be provided from a professional, for example a doctor, consultant, mental health practitioner, social worker or other professionals working with the family which makes a compelling case as to why the child's needs can only be met at the preferred school and no other. A medical condition or diagnosis in itself will not automatically result in priority being given. Advice **will** be sought from **a panel of relevant professionals** where necessary to determine whether or not the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to qualify under this category.

Following feedback from the consultation, the council wanted to clarify how this criteria works and the process for decision making / communications with families

The supporting information from a professional must be received to the school admission team by the closing date (31 October 2025 for Secondary and 15 January 2026 for Infant, Primary and Junior).

Before the allocations are made in February-March 2026 for secondary schools and March-April 2026 for primary phase schools, the School Admissions Manager will convene a panel meeting of the relevant professionals to consider all priority 2 applications. When there are in-year applications from September 2026 onwards that wish to apply using criteria 2 a virtual convening of a panel will take place to consider the application.

The panel is likely to comprise representatives from the Council's school admissions team, the Consultant Community Paediatrician, an Educational Psychologist, a mental health practitioner and any other relevant professionals.

If a child is going to be offered a place anyway under another criteria area (e.g. sibling link) they will not be considered by the panel as the place will be offered and therefore a decision is not needed.

The outcome of the panel decision will be recorded by the school admissions team and the decisions will be used when allocating the school places.

If a child is unsuccessful in being considered under criteria 2 and doesn't receive the school of first preference, a written description of the panel's decision making will be available to the parent/carer.

The appeal process would be the normal school allocation appeals which can be used after the offers have been made on the 2 March 2026 for Secondary and 16 April 2026 for Infant, Primary and Junior Schools.

Guidance for parents/carers on this priority will be available for when applying for schools for September 2026.

Appendix 12 - School admission arrangements 2026/27 - Summary of the public consultation

How the consultation ran

The public consultation ran from 6 December 2024 to 31 January 2025. This is a period of 8 weeks and therefore 2 weeks longer than the minimum 6 weeks required by legislation. "Consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before those arrangements are to apply." The Council recognises that Christmas fell within that timeframe.

The public consultation followed an engagement exercise that took place across October 2024, the details of which can be reviewed in the [November 2024 Cabinet paper](#).

The consultation included:

- Publishing of a YourVoice survey on 6 December which was open until 31 January 2025. A total of 3836 completed responses were received, a summary of those is given below.
- A notification about the consultation to all primary, secondary and special schools, all early years providers, diocesan boards, neighbouring local authorities and academy trusts in week commencing 9 December 2024.
- A Frequently Asked Questions document and a summary write up of the proposals was uploaded to YourVoice on the 17 December 2024.
- Publicly advertised online consultation meetings held in December with over 100 attendees at each meeting.
- In person consultation meetings held at Hove Town Hall and Jubilee Library
- Meetings held at 10 schools (3 secondary and 7 primary schools) during January 2025 with a mixture of openly advertised and targeted invites to local school communities.
- A face to face and an online meeting facilitated by the city's Parent and Carer Council to enable the voice of families of children with SEND to be heard
- Surgery slots offered with the Lead Cabinet Member for children to discuss concerns around SEND
- Publicly advertised meeting facilitated by Hangleton & Knoll Project to hear from communities in the west of the city.
- Youth work undertaken by the Trust for Developing Communities which gathered the views of 182 young people across five secondary schools and three youth clubs on school admissions and transport.
- A workshop was conducted with the city's Youth Council.

There was a general email address available for questions and representations – schoolorganisation@brighton-hove.gov.uk plus residents submitted Member enquiries and enquiries to the customer feedback team. During the engagement exercise and the consultation a number of FOI requests were also made.

Who responded to the consultation and how

- 3836 completed responses were made to the YourVoice survey – this could include individuals making multiple entries
- 45 Member enquiries were received during the consultation

- 26 enquiries were received during the consultation during to the customer feedback team
- Over 300 emails were sent to schoolorganisation@brighton-hove.gov.uk which have been accepted as responses to the consultation. One letter was also received in the post.
- Hundreds of people engaged with public and targeted consultation meetings

Summary of the consultation

Explanatory note: This Appendix provides a summary overview of responses received to the public consultation. It includes a summary analysis of the Your Voice survey, of the emails received directly to the council, of school and group responses and a summary of the comments/questions raised at the meetings facilitated by the council.

Members of Full Council (all 54 elected Members) have been provided with access to the full responses received by the council – the full results of the survey, all emails and letters received. These cannot be shared publicly in full for 2 reasons – they contain personal and sensitive information which might identify the consultee and which the council is therefore not able to put into the public domain. Consultees can also rightly expect their submissions to be dealt with in a confidential and private manner. However, there is a requirement on decision makers to conscientiously consider the responses to this public consultation, therefore in addition to the summary provided below, all responses have been shared on a confidential basis with Councillors.

Please note that AI has been used to support the summary analysis of:

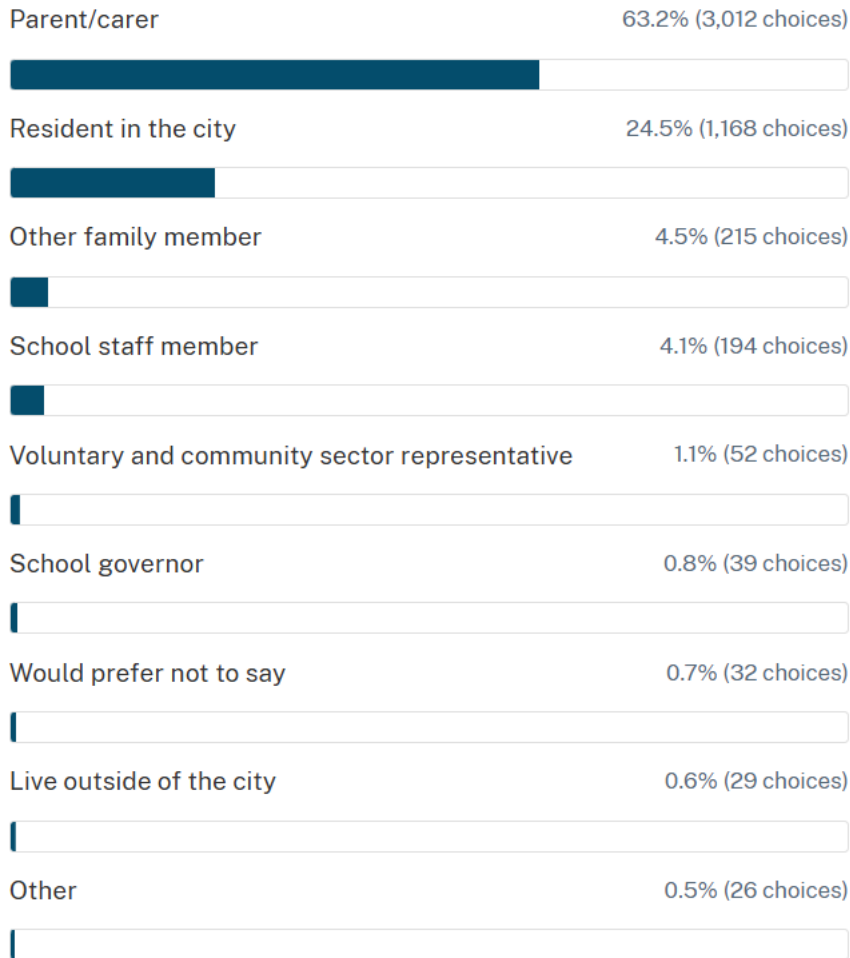
- the free text responses to the YourVoice survey
- The summary analysis of the email and group responses

Officers have read all individual responses and AI has been used to support the collation of themes and support the phrasing of summaries.

AI was also used to help inform the wider analysis of themes that is provided within the cover officer report on this item.

Summary analysis of the YourVoice survey main questions responses

Survey Question: In what capacity are you responding to this survey? This was a required question where respondents could chose as many of the multiple choice options as they wished to. All survey respondents replied to this question.



We then asked survey users to leave a comment if they'd like to explain why they were provided a response to the survey. This was an optional answer and 618 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

Many respondents commented that they had children being educated in the city, either still to go to secondary school or had been through the system and were interested in how the arrangements may change in the future.

Many respondents also provided views on the proposals themselves.

Concerns were raised about whether the proposals would solve inequality issues and whether in fact they may cause further division. There were comments highlighting the negative impact of long journeys for children – particularly for those with SEND or where this could affect the mental health of children. There were doubts raised about whether these proposals would improve educational outcomes and that resources should be focussed on improving schools rather than redistributing pupils.

There were calls for more evidence-based decision-making and a slower, more considered approach to implementing changes.

Some respondents left comments supporting the proposals, citing them as a necessary step to addressing long-standing inequalities in the city's education

system. People expressed believe that the changes could provide better opportunities for disadvantaged children. There was support shared for the idea of creating a fairer system for school allocations. Some comments highlighted the benefits for underrepresented communities such as North Whitehawk.

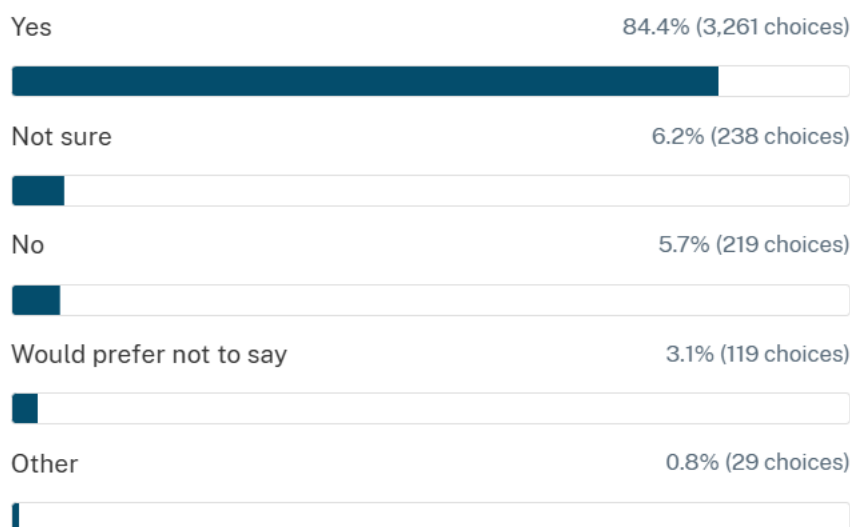
Survey question: What is your postcode This was a required question where consultees were asked to provide details of their postcode. It was recommended that people provide the first 4 or 5 digits of their postcode eg BN3 4 or BN41 2. People were invited to write 'no answer' if they didn't want to provide this detail.

Data was inputted manually by consultees so the resulting data is subject to inaccuracies,/differences in how postcodes are written. However the data indicates the following:

Out of the responses provided to this question in the survey:

- 24 (0.63%) where it was not possible to determine what the postcode was
- 55 (1.43%) were from outside of the city
- 1698 (44.26%) were from the BN1 area – with 819 (21.35%) from BN1 6 specifically (mentioned because it had a significant level of responses compared to other postcode groups in BN1)
- 1452 (37.84%) were from the BN2 area – with 431 (11.23%) from BN2 4 specifically (mentioned because it had a significant level of responses compared to other postcode groups in BN2)
- 317 (8.27%) were from the BN3 area
- 55 (1.43%) were from the BN41 area
- 235 (6.13%) said no answer or left a mark in the answer so they could move on to the next question.

Do you consider yourself affected by these proposals? This was a required question where respondents could chose as many of the multiple choice options as they wished to. All survey respondents replied to this question.



We then asked survey users to leave a comment on why they felt they were impacted by the proposals. This was an optional answer and 598 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

Many people felt they were impacted because they have children who are due to attend secondary school from next September onwards.

Many expressed worries about the ability of their child to gain a place at a local school.

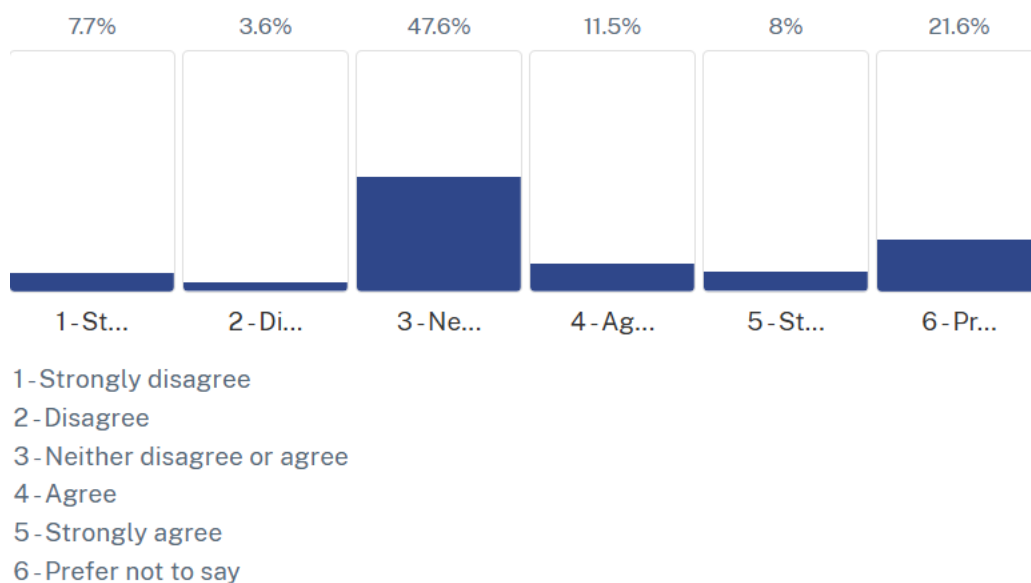
Many respondents expressed worries about the stress and anxiety the proposed changes may cause for their families and for their children. There were concerns that the proposals would fracture communities with children having to attend schools far from their homes. This would disrupt existing friendship groups and community ties.

The potential for increased travel times were a concern for many. Parents fear that long commutes will lead to more road accidents, absenteeism, and lower academic attainment. They also worry about the safety of their children traveling long distances, especially in the dark. People also expressed concern about the cost of additional travel. Concerns were raised about the safety of girls on buses.

Parents of children with special educational needs (SEND) worried that the proposals could increase the challenges their children face, as longer travel times and unfamiliar environments could negatively impact their education and well-being.

There were calls for a focus to be on school improvement rather than amending the school admission arrangements.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed PAN increase at Rudyard Kipling School from 30 to 45? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



We then asked survey users if they wished to leave a thought or comment on their answer to the Rudyard Kipling PAN question. This was an optional answer and 297 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

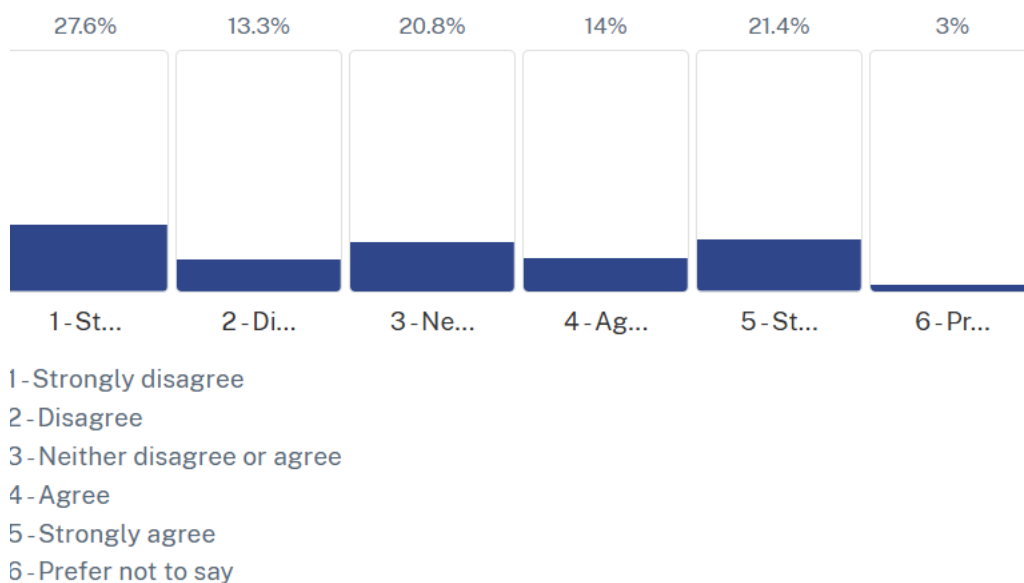
A mixture of views were expressed in the comments.

Concerns were raised around whether this would mean larger class sizes and related concerns about the quality of education or where individual support may be needed for individual children and whether this proposal impacts on that. A couple of comments raised concerns about the practicality and effectiveness of mixed year teaching. A small number of respondents questioned why the council would expand a primary school PAN when there are falling pupil numbers across the city and others questioned whether this PAN increase may cause any negative impacts on other local schools.

There were also comments supporting the Schools' Governing Board and saying that trust should be placed in their request for this increase and that the proposal appeared to be logical and proportionate. Some felt that this proposal would support children being able to attend local schools and therefore reduce potential travel times for some. There were positive remarks about the school's quality and that this proposal may support further diversity and providing opportunities for children from different socio-economic backgrounds. However there were also some counter views to that expressed, that widening the intake of the school may not always lead to a diversifying of that intake.

There were a number of comments raised about a lack of information or understanding of the question – with consultees questioning whether they were able to provide an informed response. There were also some questions about whether this question was relevant within a survey about secondary school admissions. TO clarify – the survey was about the full range of admission arrangements in the city's community schools including where we were proposing any changes, such as in Rudyard Kipling Primary School.

Survey question: Regarding the Free School Meals priority, how much do you agree or disagree with the proposal to use the 30% figure rather than a calculation each year for the city average . This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



We then asked survey users if they wished to leave a thought or comment on their answer to the FSMs quota. This was an optional answer and 658 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

Many respondents expressed support for the principle of prioritising places for children eligible for free school meals with support for this policy promoting fairness and social equity by giving disadvantaged children better access to a quality education offer. Some further comments were made about the perceived benefits of this policy around promoting social diversity and inclusion in schools and in addressing issues of social segregation in schools

Comments were shared about the admirable nature of the policy and hopes that other schools, and places would follow and take up this policy. Some felt the proposal would allow families to have more certainty when making their applications.

However some respondents questioned the ‘setting’ of the quota and wondered if it would be better to review this regularly in order to ensure it meets the needs of the city and local communities.

There were also concerns raised about whether prioritising children through this policy would lead some schools to have a disproportionate number of FSM children and therefore not achieve the council’s desired social mix – with concerns about some schools changing and getting a much higher concentration of FSM children – potentially impacting on the community cohesion of those schools.

Concerns were also raised about the increased journey times for those children taking up this policy offer and whether it could force children to attend schools far from their homes. There were additional comments made about what the impact might be on those children’s mental health and wellbeing because of those increased journey times.

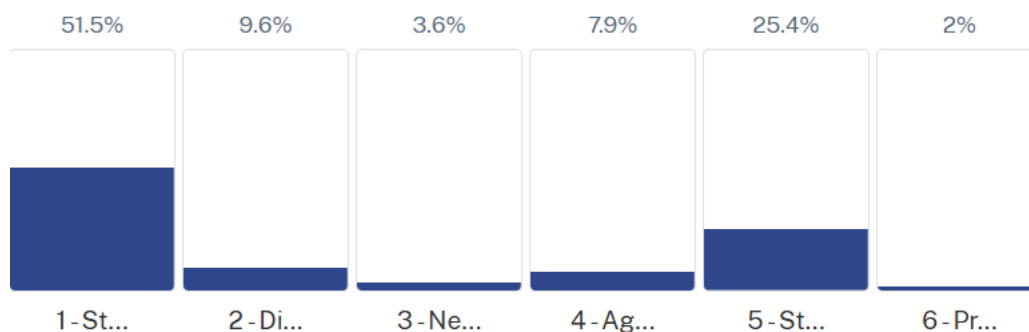
Some also questioned the fairness of the policy, arguing that it may disadvantage children facing financial difficulties but not eligible for free school meals – who would

benefit from a similar priority but are not able to get it through this policy. A concern was raised about whether this policy provided families with a disincentive to find paid employment and lose their FSM eligibility.

There were also concerns raised about whether the council’s policy and its implementation had been adequately and clearly explained. Some respondents felt that the council’s consultation communications had not been clear on this matter and therefore it made it difficult for people to understand the potential impact of the policy and this proposal. #

In summary, there is broad appreciation of the policy in principle but questions raised about its implementation and whether that had been explained clearly and the concerns about changing the balance of FSMs children at some schools.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed introduction of a new Open Admission priority? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



- 1-Strongly disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neither disagree or agree
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly agree
- 6-Prefer not to say

We then asked survey users to share any thoughts or comments about their answer to the question on introducing an open admissions priority. This was an optional answer and 1078 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

Some respondents believe that the changes could disadvantage children in dual catchment areas, as they may have less chance of getting into their local schools. This was accompanied by questions on whether it was unjust to prioritise children from outside the catchment area over those that live within it. There are also concerns that the changes could lead to a loss of parental choice and control over their children’s education

Others argue that the changes could exacerbate existing inequalities, as children from more affluent areas may still have more choices than those from disadvantaged backgrounds. There were also comments questioning whether there would be

unintended consequences such as people leaving the city or not taking up the offer of other schools in the city.

Some felt there was a lack of clear evidence supporting the effectiveness of the proposed changes and the potential for increased absenteeism and associated reduced educational attainment.

Several comments highlight the potential negative impact on specific groups of children. For instance, there are concerns that children with special educational needs (SEN) could be disproportionately affected by the changes.

However, positive feedback was also received for this proposal. There was appreciation for the efforts to give children from less advantaged areas of the city a choice of schools and a belief that the proposals could create a more mixed and diverse school system.

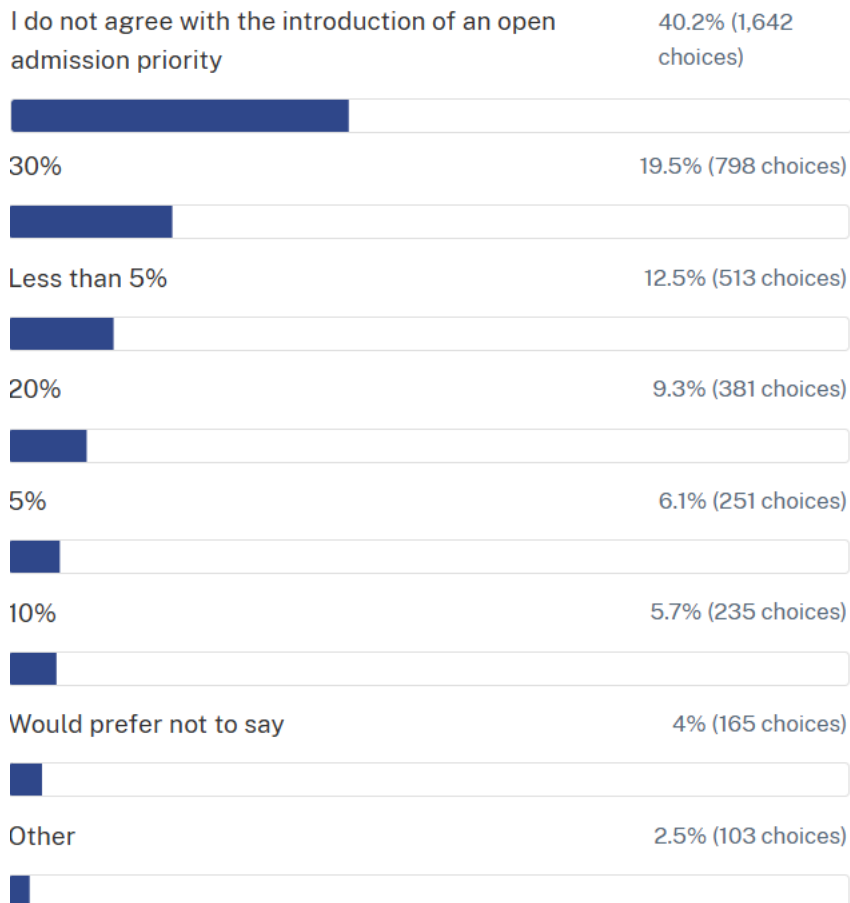
There are also comments that highlight the potential benefits of the changes for specific groups. For example, children from 'council estates' having the same opportunities as other children in the city. Other comments were about the increased opportunity for some families not eligible for free school meals but living in single school catchment areas.

There were calls from some for a more gradual approach, starting with a lower percentage for open admissions and assessing the impact of existing changes before introducing new ones.

The lack of a clear and published plan for safe and reliable transport for children who would need to travel further was also a common theme, with many worried about the safety of young children traveling alone and the financial burden on families.

Some respondents felt that the proposals were rushed and lacked sufficient consultation and impact assessment. There was a call for investment in underperforming schools and a more equitable distribution of resources to ensure high educational standards across all schools in Brighton & Hove.

Survey question: Regarding the proposed introduction of a new open admission priority, what % allocation do you think should be used for September 2026 entry into community secondary schools? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer. It was a multiple choice answer and people could choose as many as they wished to.



40% of people answered that they didn't want to see an open admissions criteria introduced – however, a proportion of those also ticked 'less than 5%' or ticked '5%' too.

41% of consultees provided a response that said it should be 5% or higher. This includes where people said other and provided a response plus those that said 'would prefer not to say' but also provided a response for 5% or above.

We then asked survey users if they wished to leave a thought or comment on their answer to the question on what % of open admissions did they think the council should introduce. This was an optional answer and 696 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

There were a range of comments left for this question.

Some supported a gradual implementation of this new proposed policy – starting with a lower percentage and gradually increasing it. This was seen by some as a way of bringing it in without the stress and impact on the 2026 cohort. It also enables a better understand of its impact before making significant changes.

There were calls to wait and see what the impact of the FSM policy was before bringing in a further change.

Calls for inclusivity and fairness were made – saying that this may provide important choices to children in deprived areas.

There were positive comments made on the benefits of socioeconomic mixing in schools which can lead to a more balanced and inclusive educational environment.

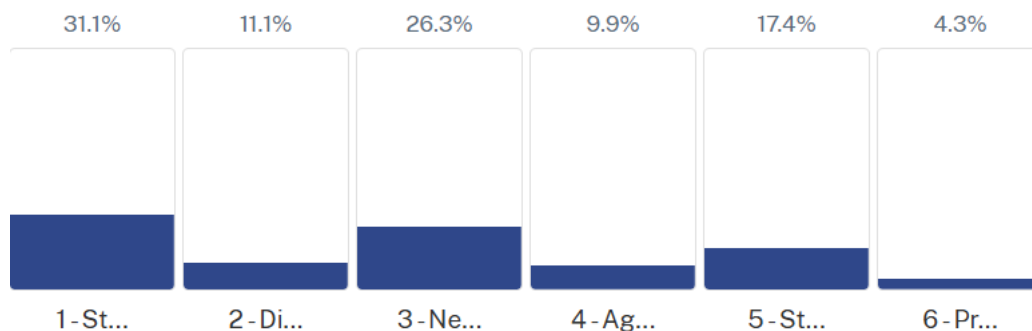
Many respondents were concerned about local children not being able to gain a place and the impact of this on the children and on the breaking up of communities.

Some respondents highlighted the potential negative impact on disadvantaged children and particularly those with SEND. There were worries those children could be disproportionately affected by the changes.

Many comments gave concerns about the uncertainty and anxiety that the proposed changes could cause for families and children. Respondents felt that the changes could lead to increased stress and negatively impact children's education and well-being

Several respondents were critical on a lack of data and impact assessments, making it difficult for them to make informed decisions. Others felt that the proposals were confusing and lacked transparency.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed PAN reduction at Blatchington Mill School from 330 places to 300 places? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



- 1-Strongly disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neither disagree or agree
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly agree
- 6-Prefer not to say

We then asked survey users to share any thoughts or comments about their answer to the question on the PAN at Blatchington Mill School. This was an optional answer and 588 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

Many respondents highlighted that the school in question is performing well and achieving good results. Some believe that reducing the number of places at such a successful school would be detrimental to the pupils and the community.

Several comments were made in favour of allowing local children to attend their local school. If the number of places available were reduced there were concerns that the children will have to travel further.

Some respondents talked about the importance of being able to choose a school that best fits their child's needs. This led to comments of concern about the choice potentially being reduced in this proposal. There were concerns that this would lead to their children being sent to schools that are less desirable.

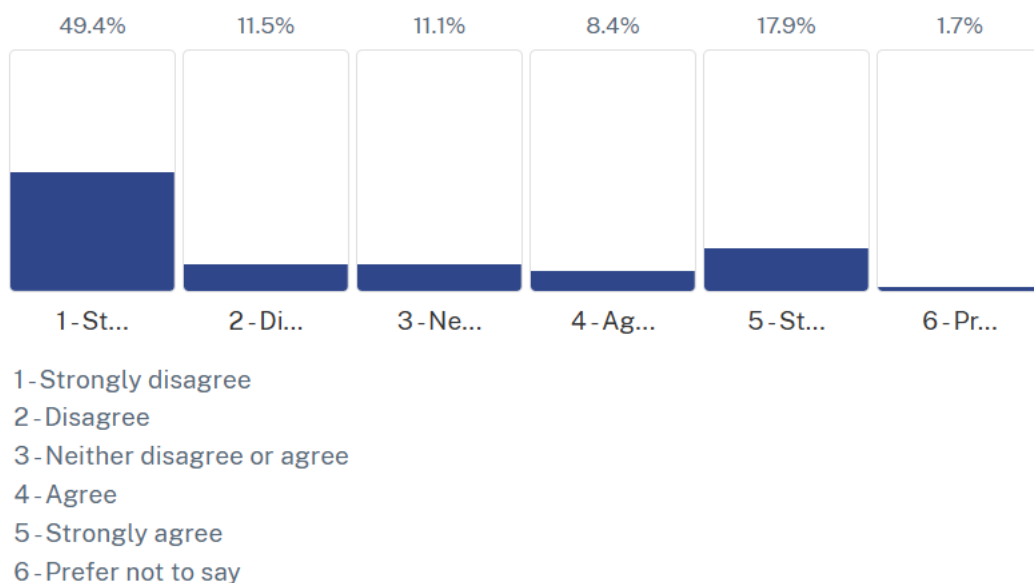
The school's popularity and reputation were cited as reasons to maintain or increase its PAN. Some respondents felt the schools' success should be supported and therefore the school should be expanded, not reduced. There were also comments about whether this proposal was counter to the intention of the School Admissions Code, which supports the principle of parental preference.

However some respondents were concerned about the potential for overcrowding at such a large school, if the numbers were not reduced. There were also arguments made that unless a reduction here was made, it could lead to lower pupils and reduced viability for other schools. Some felt this was a point of fairness – that reducing places here would help a more balanced distribution of pupils across all schools in the area.

Financial impact was mentioned with some being concerned about the budget reduction the school would face if the PAN reduction went ahead and with some suggesting that a reduction would help the school better balance its budget and help with its long term sustainability.

The governors of the school made a formal response to the consultation and said that they oppose the proposal for the 2026/27 academic year to reduce the PAN at Blatchington Mill. The reasons given were concerns about the financial impact of reducing the PAN and in whether a reduced PAN would negatively affect the school's ability to deliver the current level of attainment.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed PAN reduction at Dorothy Stringer School from 330 places to 300 places? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



We then asked survey users to share any thoughts or comments about the question on the PAN at Dorothy Stringer. This was an optional answer and 799 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

There was a strong feeling of opposition to the proposals based on the comments left. Dorothy Stringer School is seen as a popular and successful institution and many responses were concerned that this reduction, combined with other proposed changes such as open admissions and an increased catchment area, will lead to even more local children being unable to attend their preferred school.

Several comments were made about how this proposal may contradict the School Admissions Code, which generally favours parental preference.

While some respondents acknowledge that the school struggles with capacity issues, others argue that reducing the PAN is not the right solution and suggest other ways to manage overcrowding.

Concerns were raised around the potential impact of not being able to gain a place at a local school and the need then to travel a longer journey to another school.

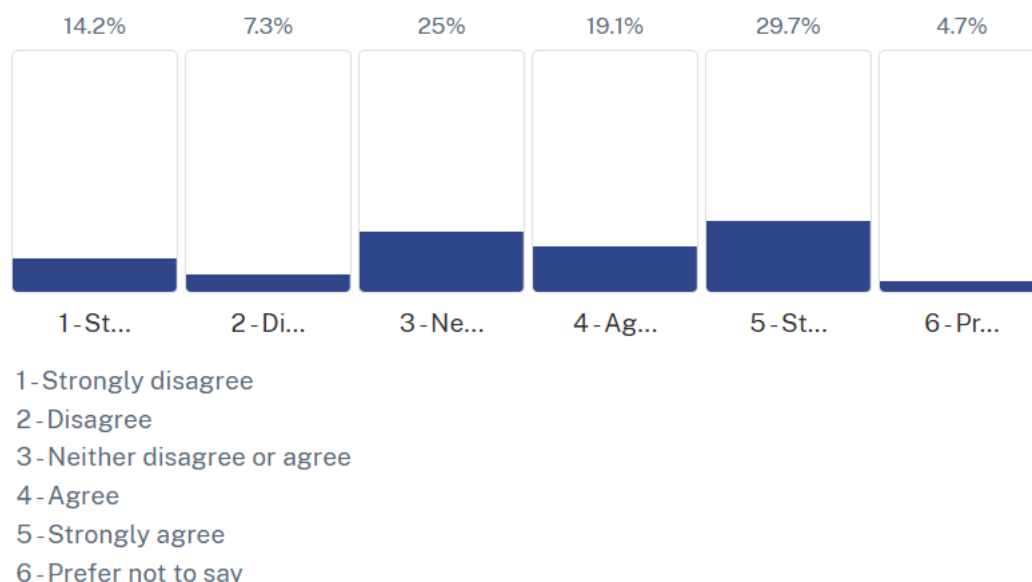
Some respondents suggest that instead of reducing PAN at popular schools, efforts should be focused on improving underperforming schools or managing the decline in student numbers more gradually.

For some there was a sense of frustration and disbelief at the perceived lack of logic in the proposals, with comments that the changes are poorly thought out and could lead to negative outcomes for children's education and well-being.

Where responses were supportive of this proposal there were comments about the current size being too large and about the perceived importance of ensuring all schools are able to survive with sufficient pupil numbers. Plus, support was given to the intention to avoid further school closures.

The Governing Board of the school provided a response to the consultation and within that they supported the proposal to reduce the PAN.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed PAN reduction at Longhill High School from 270 places to 210 places? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



We then asked survey users to share any thoughts or comments about their answer to the question about the Longhill PAN. This was an optional answer and 664 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

Respondents generally agreed with the reduction of the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Longhill High School, citing its consistent under-subscription and the school's location in an area with a lower population density.

Many respondents acknowledged the financial challenges faced by the school and agreed that reducing the Published Admission Number (PAN) was a sensible decision.

Some suggested the reduction should be greater, with some proposing a PAN as low as 150 to 180, reflecting the school's recent admission numbers which have not exceeded 200 for some years. Some noted that that the school has been undersubscribed for many years, and reducing the PAN would help the school manage its resources more effectively.

There were comments made about the schools' popularity and calls for further steps to be taken around. There were also comments made about the long term viability of the schools future without different interventions or models of governance.

There were comments made about fears the proposed policy was designed to force children to go to Longhill – with associated worries about long travelling distances, and a related impact on wellbeing.

Some comments highlighted the efforts of the current headteacher and staff, expressing confidence that the school is improving and could do further with the right support and investment.

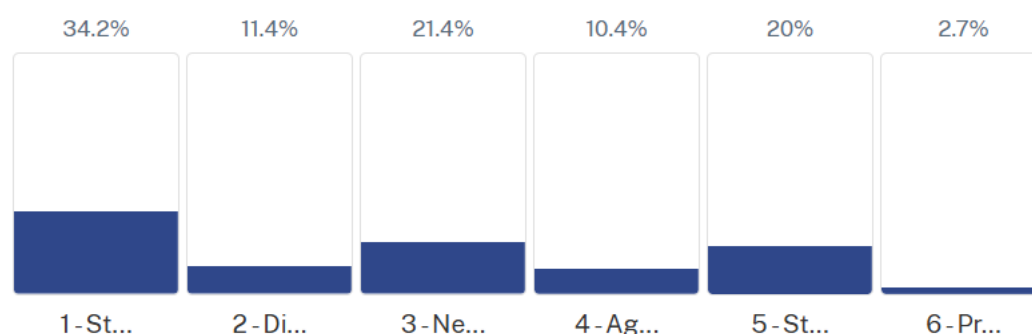
There was also a recognition that the school's location posed challenges, and some suggested that moving the school closer to the city centre or improving transport links could help attract more pupils.

Additionally, a few respondents mentioned that reducing the PAN could lead to a more focused and supportive environment for the pupils who do attend.

The Governing Board made a formal response to the consultation and within that they supported the reduction of the PAN. They made reference to concerns about open admissions but also in the need to improve elements of the transport arrangements for children to get to school across the city.

Overall, there is a consensus that Longhill's PAN should be aligned more closely with actual demand and that efforts should be made to improve the school's attractiveness to its local community.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed catchment area changes? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neither disagree or agree
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Prefer not to say

We then asked survey users to share any thoughts or comments about their answer to the question about the catchment area change. This was an optional answer and 758 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

Many respondents expressed support for the inclusion of Whitehawk in the Dorothy Stringer and Varndean catchment area, believing this change will provide children from one of Brighton's most deprived areas with access to better educational

opportunities. Some said they were in favour of the changes due to the potential for improved access to high-performing schools for children from deprived areas.

However some concerns were expressed about the increase in catchment area may exacerbate the demand for schools that are already oversubscribed, like Dorothy Stringer and Varndean.

Many are worried about the implications of larger catchment areas, particularly in terms of increased travel times, safety, and the impact on community cohesion.

Comments expressed views that the consultation has been poorly managed, with a lack of clear, accessible information and insufficient evidence of community support for the changes.

There is also concern that the proposals are being rushed through without adequate consideration of their long-term impact.

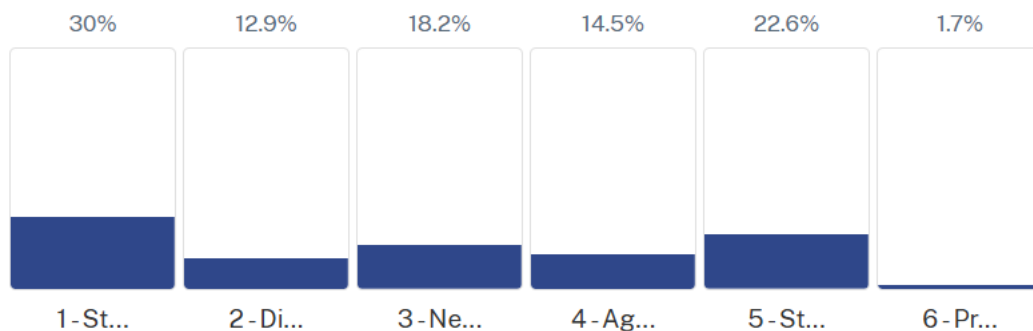
A significant number of respondents were worried about the potential negative impact on children who would have to travel long distances to attend school. A worry was expressed that proposed changes will put a strain and significant hardship on all families involved, as children will have to travel long distances to attend school. The potential for increased traffic and pollution, as well as the negative effects on children's education and well-being due to longer travel times, are also mentioned.

Some respondents suggest that instead of changing catchment areas, efforts should focus on improving all schools within the council to ensure equitable access to quality education.

Some noted that that the changes will reduce the number of places available for children in the catchment area, leading to more uncertainty for families.

Some respondents also question the rationale behind the proposed changes and whether they will actually lead to improved outcomes for disadvantaged students. It was questioned whether this was like social engineering and that the council should focus on improving underperforming schools rather than moving children around.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed increase in the number of school preferences from 3 to 4? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neither disagree or agree
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Prefer not to say

3

We then asked survey users to share any thoughts or comments about their answer to the question about increase the preferences from 3 to 4. This was an optional answer and 801 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

There were a number of responses which referred to this proposal being about an illusion of choice rather than it actually increasing options. Several felt that the additional preference is a way for the council to claim that more people received one of their preferred schools, even if it's not truly preferred.

There were comments around how the overall proposals meant that parental 'choice' was being limited and not expanded as is implied.

Some expressed the view that the proposals are designed to manipulate statistics rather than provide meaningful choices.

Some people felt they'd need to use the fourth option to explore how to avoid being sent to a school much further away. Others felt this was a cynical and intentional move by the council to force people to select a fourth school, to avoid being directed to an unwanted school and to reduce appeals for the council.

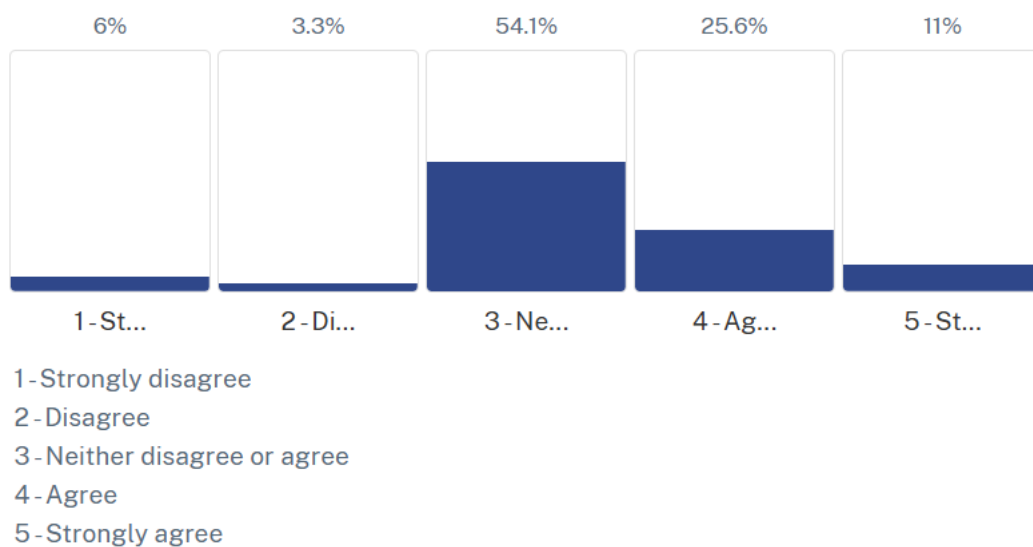
There were repeated views on the need to ensure all schools are improved and popular.

Several made the point that families prefer a local school, rather than a range of options further away.

Some felt that the overall proposals were confusing and therefore offering an informed opinion on this and other questions was difficult. Some added that because it was difficult to ascertain the changes of their child gaining a place at a local school, it was likely the application process as a 'guessing game'.

However, positive comments were also made. Some respondents felt that increasing the number of preferences would give families more choice and flexibility in selecting schools. Some referred to this proposal helping reduce stress for families through that increased choice. Some felt that increasing the number of preferences would reduce the chance of a child being allocated to a school that was not a preference. Some who agreed felt the proposal should have gone further and that the preferences offered should be raised to 6 – meaning families do not need to be so strategic with their submitted preferences. Currently some feel that they have to omit a preferred school from the shortlist if the probability is very low.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposal to keep the 'relevant area' the same? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



We then asked survey users to share any thoughts or comments about their answer to the question about keeping the relevant area the same. This was an optional answer and 282 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

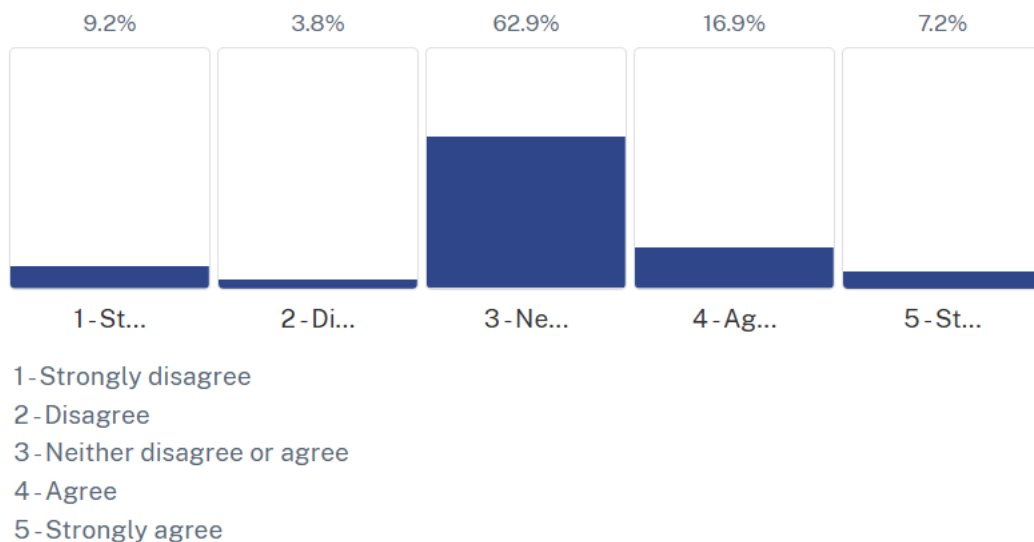
There was a view expressed that the relevant area (being the city boundary) was sensible with some saying it was a reasonable proposal. Additionally, there were comments supporting the idea that maintaining the current relevant area within the city boundary ensures that admission consultations remain focused on the local community. This approach was seen as promoting a cohesive educational environment.

Some respondents suggest that the city's tax-paying families should have priority for school admissions over those from outside the city boundaries, while others propose expanding the area to attract children from neighbouring towns.

There is also concern about the potential impact of unifying Sussex counties on the consultation.

A significant number of respondents expressed confusion and frustration over the lack of clarity in the question. Many indicated that they were not able to provide an informed view as they did not understand the question.

Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed coordinated schemes of admission? This was a required question so all survey consultees provided an answer.



We then asked survey users to share any thoughts or comments about their answer to the question about the coordinated schemes of admission. This was an optional answer and 394 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

Some respondents felt that a coordinated approach seems sensible and could ensure that all children in Brighton & Hove have fair access to education.

Others support the idea of transparency and coordination.

Additionally, beliefs were expressed that all schools within the city should aim for the common goal of providing quality education to all children.

However, a significant number of respondents expressed confusion and frustration over the lack of clarity of this question and on the lack of detailed information provided by the council. Many comments felt that the questions in the survey are unclear, making it difficult for respondents to provide informed answers.

Survey question: In addition to feedback provided above, we invite you to share any general comments you may have about the proposed admission arrangements for 2026 to 2027 and the ordering of the proposed priorities for admission into community secondary schools. This was an optional answer and 1715 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

There were a wide range in comments provided in this answer.

Some respondents highlighted the potential positives behind many of the proposals and suggested that they would be a significant step forward in addressing inequalities. Others felt that perhaps with more time or amended proposals, more support could be gained from the city.

There was support for the FSM criteria and some respondents expressed strong support for creating a more equitable system, for some even where it did not favour their own children.

The idea of giving every parent a choice on secondary schools and empowering parents to get involved in consultations was also positively received.

There was recognition of the council's positive intentions and ambition in trying to address inequalities and disparities and create a fairer system. Some respondents appreciated the council's efforts to support disadvantaged children and families.

However a significant number of respondents felt the package of proposals was rushed, poorly thought through and believed more time was needed to develop a better solution. Concerns were also shared on the consultation being confusing and difficult to understand.

Many expressed worries about the potential impact on children and families – particularly those with additional needs and / or those who may now face a much longer journey to school. There were particular concerns raised about the risk of children not being able to access places at their local schools. Concerns about a negative impact on the environment (for example congestion and pollution) were made.

Concerns were raised about children with SEND and about those families who are not eligible for FSM but are struggling financially and whether these families would be disadvantaged by the proposals.

A number of comments were made on the council ignoring expert advice and waiting longer to assess the impact of the new FSM policy before making further changes.

Survey question: Any final thoughts or comments about proposed school admission arrangements in the city? This was an optional answer and 1379 written responses were provided and a summary of these is given below.

This question prompted a wide range of comments, reflecting positive and negative views on the proposals.

Many respondents criticised the package of proposals for being complex and difficult to understand. Concerns were expressed for families that didn't have the time or ability to understand the detailed proposals. There were questions about whether these were evidenced-based proposals and there were calls for more research and data to be needed on this subject.

Many comments were made about the potential for negative impacts on local communities. There were worries about not gaining a place at a local school and the disruption that could have on established social networks.

Particular concerns were raised about the potential for children to travel longer journeys to school and for the knock on effects that can have on children, their families and on the wider environment. Some also highlighted a contradiction with the council's active travel campaigns and environmental goals. Concerns were raised about the safety of girls on public transport.

Thoughts were shared on the potential for financial and emotional toll on families.

There was criticism of the consultation content and the process that had been undertaken with concerns that their feedback was not being taken seriously and whether the consultation was 'just for show'.

Some were highlighting the potential for schools to close as a result of the proposals and how the council may bring about what it is saying it is trying to avoid.

The impact on children's wellbeing was a common concern – long commutes, separation from peer and support groups and the potential impact on academic performance were all referred to. Concerns were raised about the impact on mental health this could have.

Many raised fears that proposals could lead to unintended consequences with more families choosing to leave the city, take up private school places or cause an increase in children being home educated.

Concerns were raised about the impact on children with SEND and whether this had been fully considered before the consultation was launched.

Some felt there were a lack of proper impact assessments conducted before the consultation meaning that there was a lack of data to support the proposals.

The importance of maintaining sibling links in school admissions was emphasised by some, with concerns that changes could separate siblings into different schools or effectively limiting the choices for some families where a sibling link couldn't be offered.

However, some respondents expressed support for the proposals' aim to provide equal opportunities for more children in the city. Appreciation was made for the efforts to provide children from disadvantaged background to have access to high-performing schools.

Some comments highlighted the importance of creating a more socially mixed environment in schools with respondents believing that a diverse school system would benefit all children by fostering mutual understanding and reducing social divisions.

Emails received to School Organisation inbox that have been accepted as a response to the consultation

Over 300 emails were received into the school organisation inbox that have been included as responses to the consultation.

The responses broadly mirror many of the comments shared in the survey free text responses.

Repeated themes are concerns about the impact on travel, on children with SEND and on the potential for children not to gain a place at a local school.

Summary analysis of enquiries received via the customer feedback team

26 enquiries were received via the council's customer feedback team during the timeline of the public consultation – relating to the consultation and the proposals.

The majority were concerns about the Council's handling of the secondary school admissions consultation. The main issues raised include:

- The Council has altered the information provided in the consultation papers while the consultation is live, leading to confusion and difficulty in responding.
- The consultation documents have been changed multiple times, and the explanations of the proposals are not clear or consistent.
- The Council initially used inadequate Cabinet papers for the public consultation and later added new documents with differently described content.
- There was an error in the estimated number of children affected by the proposed changes, which was corrected late, causing further confusion.
- The admission criteria for children receiving Free School Meals (FSM) is unclear, with contradictory information provided by the Council.
- The Council is not complying with the School Admissions Code, as it keeps changing its proposals and explanations.

The enquiries suggest pausing the consultation until a clear and accurate set of consultation papers is available and allowing the public to resubmit their comments based on the revised information.

Other points raised in the enquiries:

- Unfairness of a community group submitted consented responses in on behalf of other residents.
- Concerns around the objectiveness of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee item on this topic
- Concerns about the impact on the educational offer in the city

Summary analysis of enquiries received to Councillors and submitted through the Member enquiry system

45 Member enquiries were logged through the Member enquiry system during the consultation period.

A summary of the views/comments/questions shared are given below:

The enquiries list numerous concerns from parents regarding the proposed changes to secondary school admission arrangements. The main issues highlighted include the potential for children to be forced to travel long distances to attend schools outside their local community, which could negatively impact their mental health, well-being, and academic performance. Parents are worried about the disruption of established friendship groups and the increased risk of absenteeism due to longer commutes. There are also concerns about the environmental impact of increased car use and traffic congestion.

Many parents feel that the consultation process has been unclear and rushed, with insufficient time for proper impact assessment. They argue that the proposals do not adequately address the issues faced by schools in disadvantaged areas and may exacerbate existing inequalities.

Additionally, there is frustration over the lack of transparency and communication from the council, with parents seeking clearer information and more meaningful engagement in the decision-making process.

Submissions made by school Governing Boards

A number of schools responded directly to the council and their views have been represented in the main cover report.

A private joint letter from community secondary schools was received which supported the introduction of the FSM admission criteria 4 and 5 but opposed the proposed addition of an 'open admissions' criteria 6, whilst reiterating they remained committed to working collaboratively with the Council, families, and the wider community to develop a sustainable and inspiring long-term vision for education and the city child.

Summary analysis of submissions made by groups

The council received a number of submissions from groups. A summary of these are provided below.

Parent and Carer Council - they facilitated two discrete listening events for parents/carers as well as attended some of the public meetings. They submitted a response which can be read here: [Microsoft Word - PaCC Position Statement Schools Catchment 2024 - Updated Version.docx](#)

PaCC represents all parent carers in the city and therefore did not take a position on whether the proposals should be approved or not but sought a solution to ensure school placements do not place undue strain on children with SEND, young carers and their families.

Parent and carer feedback provided in a formal consultation submission from PaCC included the following themes:

- Complexity and lack of clarity about the proposals and hard to understand impact for their children
- Inequity in priority 2 of the admission arrangements – unclear how this priority will work
- Transport – concern about ‘child commuter burnout’ and whether this might trigger Emotional Based School Avoidance
- Impact on families and children with SEND with a concern about potentially not getting a school in their catchment area
- Accessibility and equity concerns - worries that these proposals do not consider the need for some children to have reasonable adjustments and some children will struggle with increased journeys
- Safety and mental health risks – concern about children being away from friendship groups and uncertainty making transition planning more difficult. Concerns about the risk of self harm.
- Parental burnout and emotional toll – families feel tired from fighting for what their children need
- Fractured SEN community – the risk of breaking up SEND support networks under the proposals and concerns about ‘competition’ between families for priority 2 places
- Lack of transparency and trust in the process – concerns that SEND needs and impacts have not been properly assessed and concerns about future decision making under priority 2
- Loss of stability and certainty – parents raising concerns about transition planning needing to be longer and under proposals placements may be more unpredictable, particularly affecting autistic children

Some suggestions from parents and carers included:

- Altering the random allocation tie-break to allow for greater certainty
- Improve certainty for families to assist better planning of transition for families
- Re-site school provision to that it better meets the geographical needs of the city, where children live
- Clarify priority 2 arrangements
- Ensure peer group stability for autistic children
- Improve co-production before final decisions are made.

The response concludes by asking all Councillors to ensure that sufficient time is given to debate the feedback from parent carers and that the needs of children with SEND remain at the heart of the decision-making process.

Youth reports

The council received feedback from youth work coordinated by Trust for Developing Communities and from the city's Youth Council.

The activities reached 190 young people from the city's secondary schools and from three youth club sessions.

The discussions show that the most important factor influencing school choice for young people was ease of travel, followed by peer networks and having an older sibling at the school.

While academic reputation, extracurricular activities, and facilities were valued, they ranked below logistical and social considerations. Concerns about bullying also played a significant role, with students emphasising the importance of feeling safe in their school environment.

Most young people felt they had some choice in their school selection, though many were influenced by family expectations, travel convenience, or school catchment policy.

Participants described a good school as one that is safe, inclusive, and supportive, with strong teaching, good facilities, a range of clubs of interest and a welcoming atmosphere.

Class Divide

Class Divide, a group of local residents, parents, education experts, and community members, supports the council's proposals in detail, which are looking to improve educational equity in Brighton and Hove.

They emphasised the need for fair access to education, particularly for working-class and low-income families. In their view the proposals aim to expand school choice, reduce barriers for disadvantaged families, and create a more integrated and sustainable school system.

Class Divide believe these changes will benefit all students by promoting social mixing and ensuring that every child has a fair chance at a great education.

Equity in Education

The submission from Equity in Education highlights the need for change in the city and the unfairness faced by families in single-school catchment areas and supports proposals to amend admissions priorities for disadvantaged pupils and increase school choice. The report also emphasises the importance of maintaining sibling link

priority, increasing the number of school preferences, and addressing the needs of children with special educational needs.

It also calls for more engagement with marginalised communities and a review of home-to-school transport to ensure safe and reliable options

Parent Support Group

The Parent Support Group response was developed from a working group, representing a wider group consisting of over 500 parents. It expresses concerns about the proposals to change secondary school admissions arrangements. The group is particularly worried about the displacement of children, which would require many to travel long distances to school. They argue that the Council's proposals lack evidence on the impact on various factors such as attainment, attendance, and wellbeing. The group also criticises the consultation process, highlighting confusion and misrepresentation of information.

They urge the Council to reconsider its approach and focus on ensuring enough places within each catchment area.

Port Hall / Prestonville families

The submission expresses strong opposition to the new 'open admissions' policy. The policy is criticised for potentially displacing 144 children from their local catchment area schools, exacerbating persistent absence rates, and creating a lottery system that lacks fairness.

The report highlights concerns about the consultation process, the impact on community cohesion, and the physical barriers to school attendance.

Parents from the Port Hall/Prestonville community argue that the policy will disrupt family life, increase absenteeism, and force some families to consider home education or moving away from the city.

Summary of questions/comments raised at Council facilitated meetings during public consultation

The following Council facilitated meetings were held. Thank you to schools, Hangleton and Knoll project and Jubilee Library for hosting meetings - these enabled a wide range of residents to attend.

Meetings were arranged in areas and at schools specifically affected by proposals such as PAN reductions and changes to catchment areas. Dorothy Stringer wasn't able to host the meeting due to events at the school., however Varndean were able to. We also invited schools to seek a meeting at their setting, for their community if they wished.

Typically the meetings comprised of a presentation at the start of the proposals, example of the presentation provided given below, followed by an opportunity for questions/comments/points of clarification. Where the meetings were smaller they tended to be more discursive and informal in nature enabling free conversation around the slides. The slides can be [viewed on YourVoice](#).

Below is a list of the meetings held and a summary of the main points and questions raised during the meetings.

- 12 December 2024_- Online open meeting
- 16 December 2024_- Online open meeting
- 11 January 2025_- public meeting at Jubilee Library
- 13 January 2025_- Public meeting at Varndean School
- 14 January 2025_-Public meeting at Blatchington Mill School
- 15 January 2025_- Public meeting at Longhill High School
- 16 January 2025_- Meeting for parents/carers at Queens Park Primary School
- 20 January 2025_- Meeting for parents/carers held in person at Mile Oak Primary School – hosted on behalf of the Portslade Primary School Partnership
- 21 January 2025_- Meeting for parents/carers held in person at Fairlight Primary School
- 24 January 2025 _Parent/carer consultation meeting hosted by Coombe Road primary schools
- 25 January 2025_-Open lunchtime workshop, facilitated by the Hangleton and Knoll Projected
- 27 January 2025_-Parent/carer consultation meeting hosted by City Academy Whitehawk (a primary school located within one of the catchment areas with proposed changes)
- 28 January 2025_-Parent/carer consultation meeting hosted by St Mark's CE Primary School (a primary school located within one of the catchment areas with proposed changes).
- 29 January 2025_- Parent/carer consultation meeting hosted by Bevendean Primary School

Comments and questions raised in the meetings

- Concerns about the fairness of the new school admission proposals, particularly regarding the low chances of children getting into certain schools without specific priorities.
- Issues raised about the impact of long travel times on children's mental health and the practicality of commuting across the city.
- Emotional trauma and safety concerns related to long commutes and crime rates.
- Concerns about the impact of the proposals on children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- The complexity and perceived unfairness of the proposals, leading to confusion and dissatisfaction.
- The potential stress and negative impact on families relying on the appeals process.

- The impact of travel time on accessing extracurricular activities and the overall well-being of students.
- The potential economic impact of increased traffic congestion due to parents driving their children across the city.
- Concerns about the impact of the proposals on statutory services and the holistic impact on families.
- The potential unintended negative consequences of the proposals, such as families choosing to home-school or move to private schooling.
- Recognition of the importance of consulting with teachers and the impact of travel on behaviour policies.
- Support for the efforts to balance the system and address educational inequalities.
- Appreciation for the council's efforts to reduce inequality and support disadvantaged communities.
- Acknowledgment of the council's work on improving school transport routes and policies.
- Support for the introduction of open admissions priority to give more choice to families living in single school catchment areas.
- Recognition of the council's efforts to address falling pupil numbers and make schools more viable
- Appreciation for the council's transparency and willingness to listen to feedback during the consultation process.
- Support for the council's efforts to improve the inclusivity and support for children with SEND.
- Recognition of the council's work on school improvement and collaboration between schools.
- Appreciation for the council's efforts to provide clear and accessible information to help families understand the proposals.

Themed areas

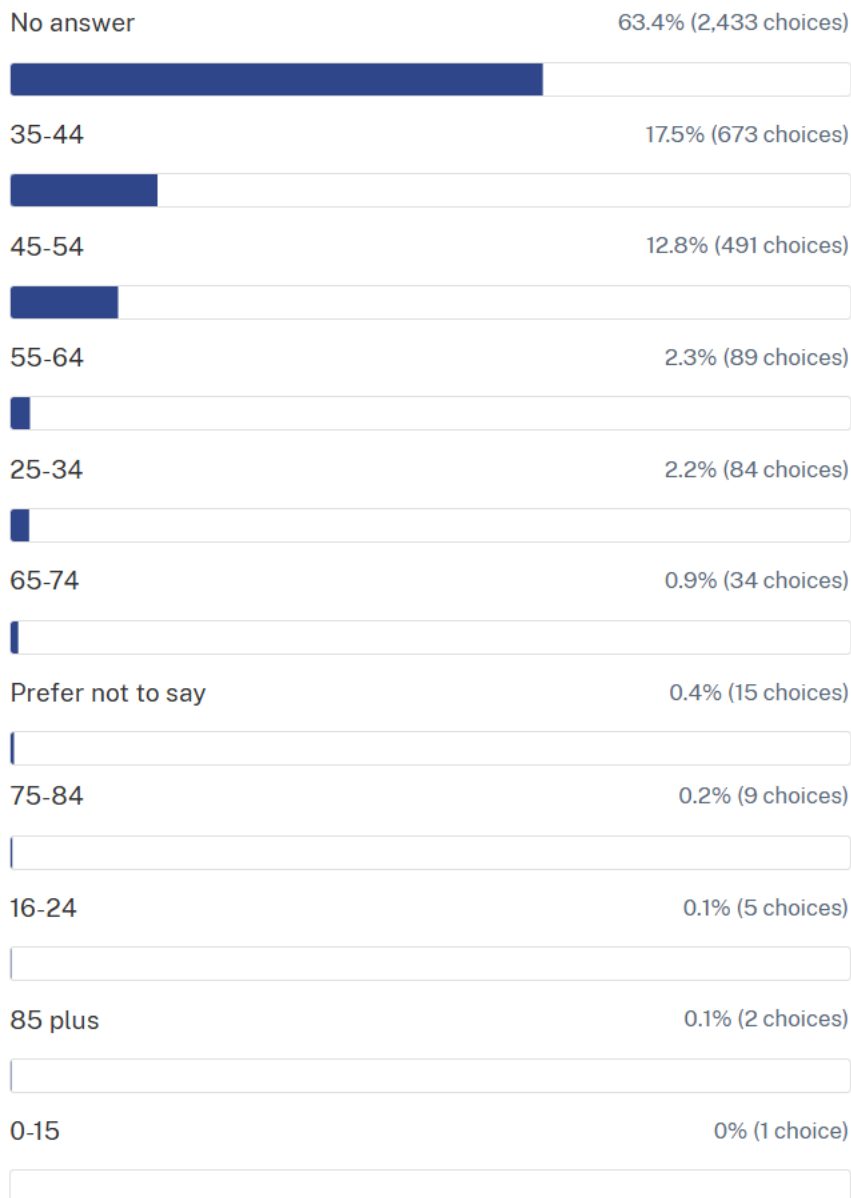
There were a number of themes that came through the consultation responses and in the public meetings that apply across more than one of the proposals and in recognition of the interplay amongst them some broad themes are explored in the report prior to consideration of each individual proposal, detailed further in the main report to Full Council 27 February 2025. A short summary paper is also provided on YourVoice.

YourVoice survey – equalities monitoring questions and responses

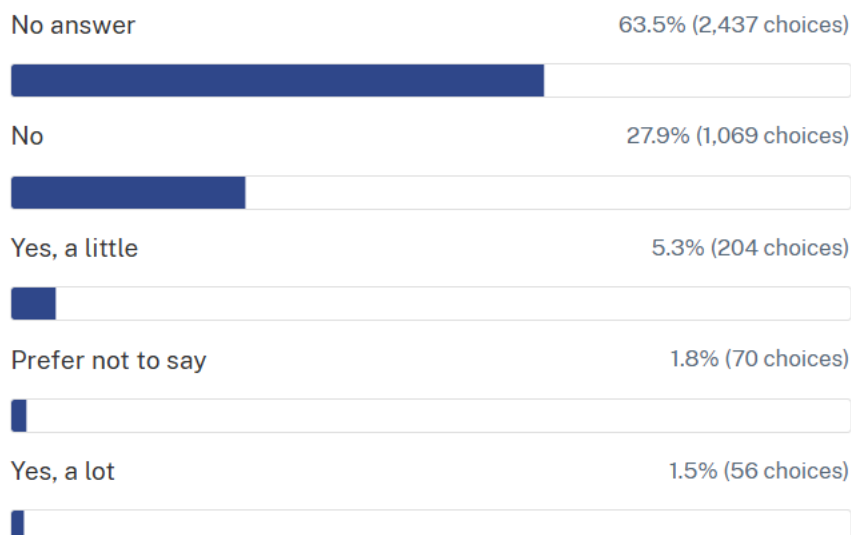
Survey question: Do you wish to respond to the equalities questions. This was a required question, with an accompanying note to say that if Yes was selected, there was still an option at each subsequent question to decline to answer.



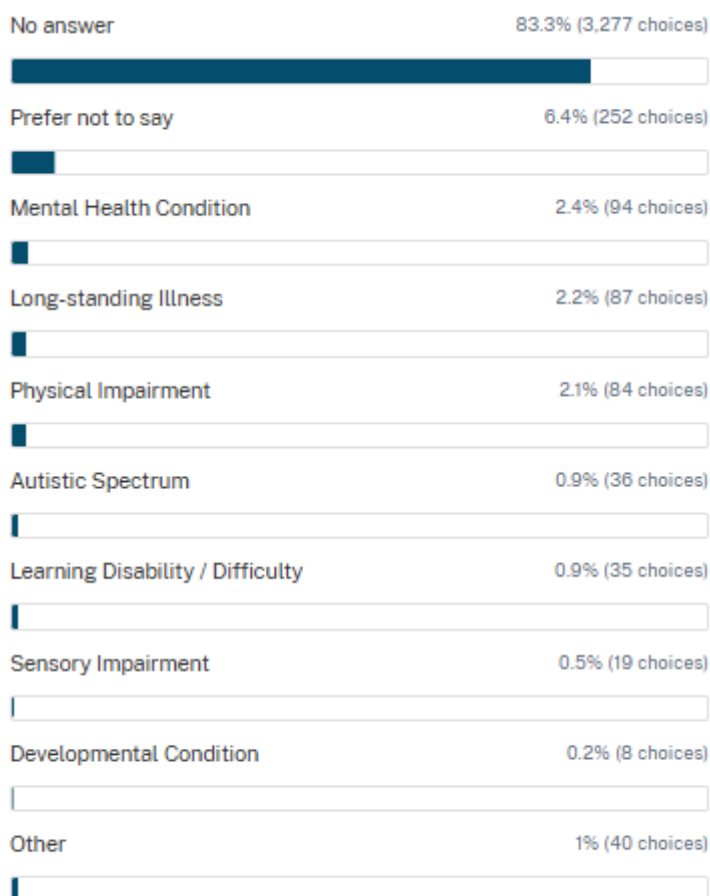
Survey question: What is your age? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1403 responses were made to this question.



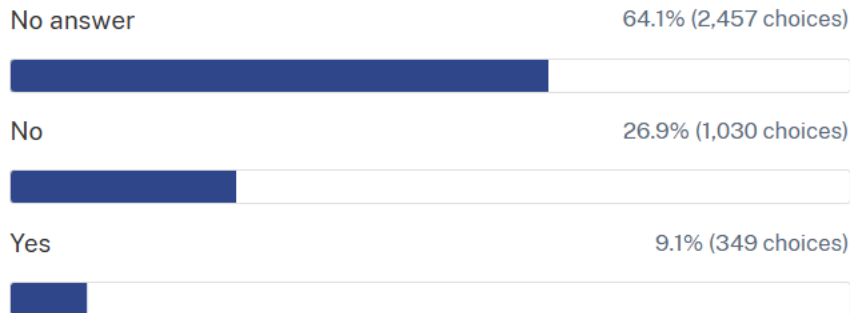
Survey question: Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1399 responses were made to this question.



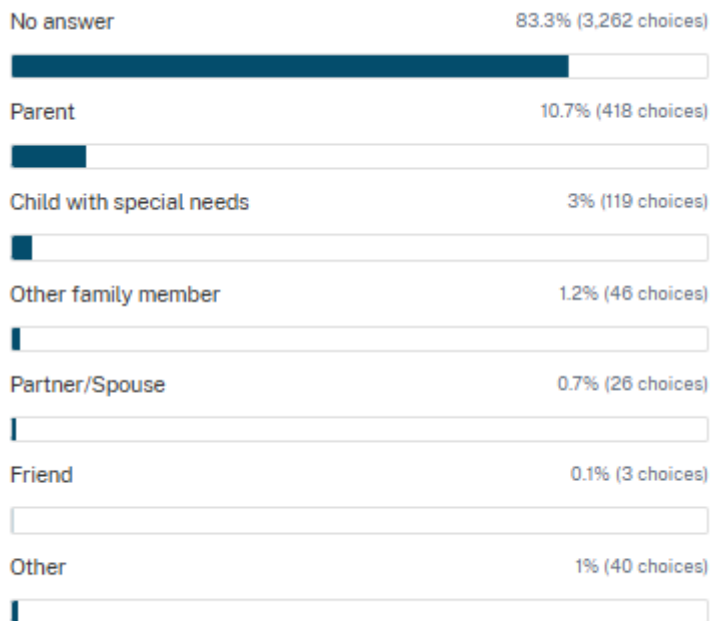
Survey question: Do any of these conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day to day activities? This was an optional multiple choice answer where as many options as required could be chosen. 560 responses were made to this question.



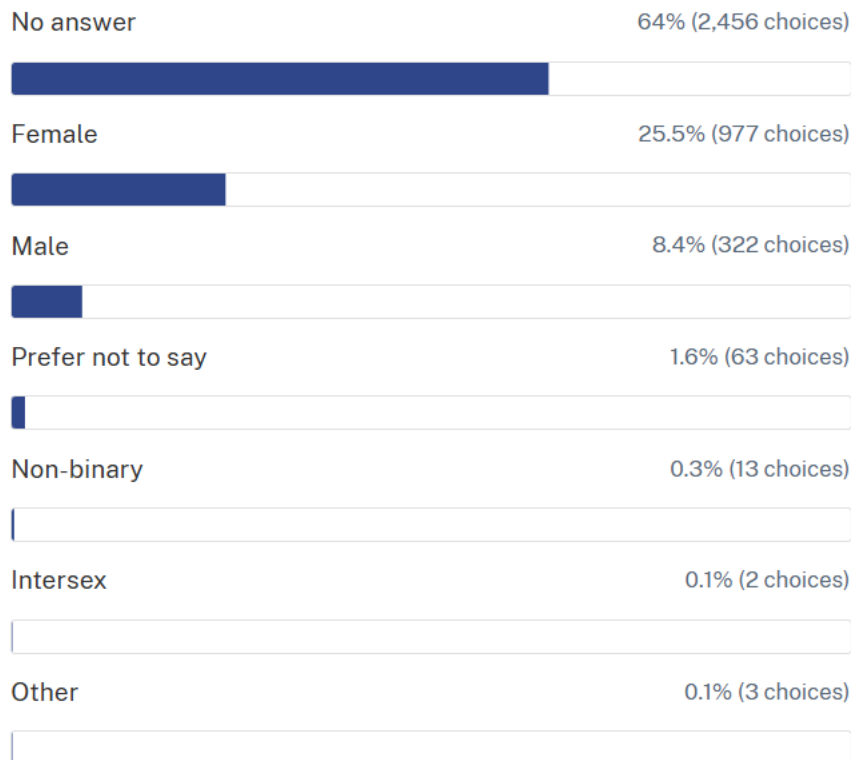
Survey question: Are you a carer? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1379 responses were made to this question.



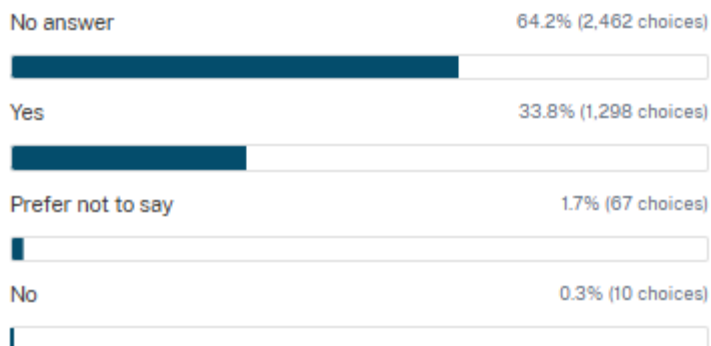
We then asked, if 'Yes' was provided to the question about being a care, we asked who they care for. If they care for more than one person, all that apply could be ticked. We asked people to mark other if none apply. 575 responses were made to this question.



Survey question: What best describes your sex and gender? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1380 responses were made to this question.



Survey question: Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1375 responses were made to this question.



Survey question: How would you describe your ethnic origin? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1378 responses were made to this question.

Asian / Asian British: Pakistani 0% (1 choice)

White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller 0% (1 choice)

Other Ethnic Group: Arab 0.1% (3 choices)

Asian / Asian British: Bangladeshi 0.1% (4 choices)

Asian / Asian British: Other (please share details below) 0.1% (4 choices)

Black / Black British: Other (please share details below) 0.1% (4 choices)

Mixed: Black African and White 0.1% (4 choices)

Black / Black British: Caribbean 0.1% (5 choices)

Asian / Asian British: Chinese 0.2% (6 choices)

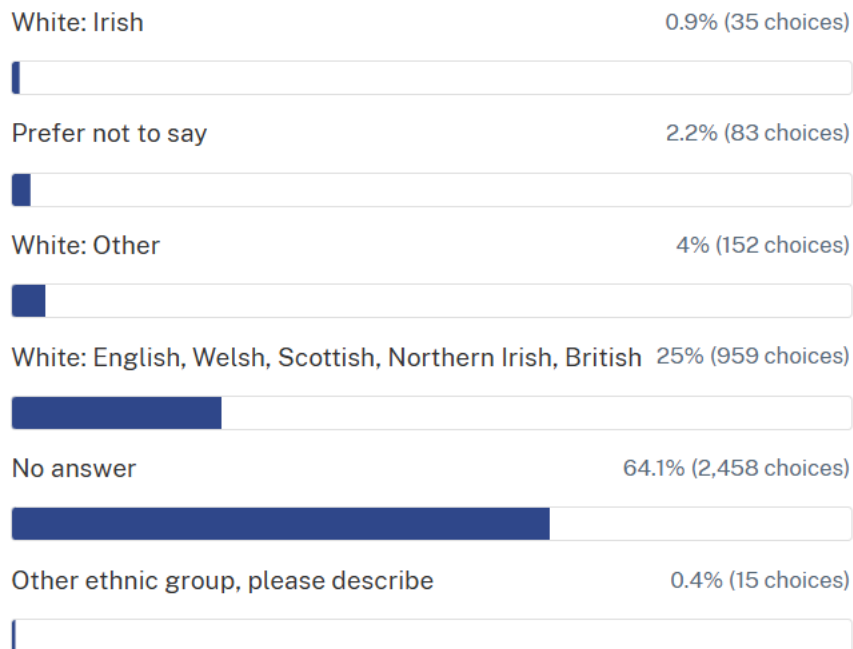
Black / Black British: African 0.2% (8 choices)

Mixed: Black Caribbean and White 0.3% (10 choices)

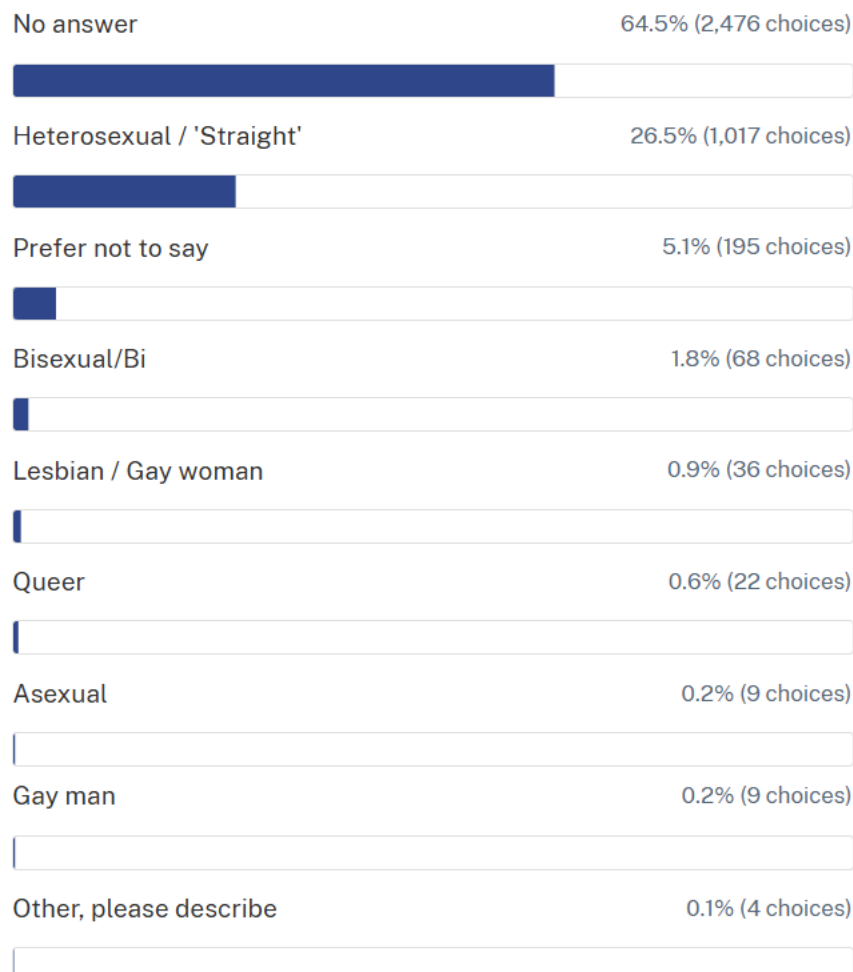
Asian / Asian British: Indian 0.5% (18 choices)

Mixed: Asian and White 0.8% (32 choices)

Mixed: Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background 0.9% (34 choices)

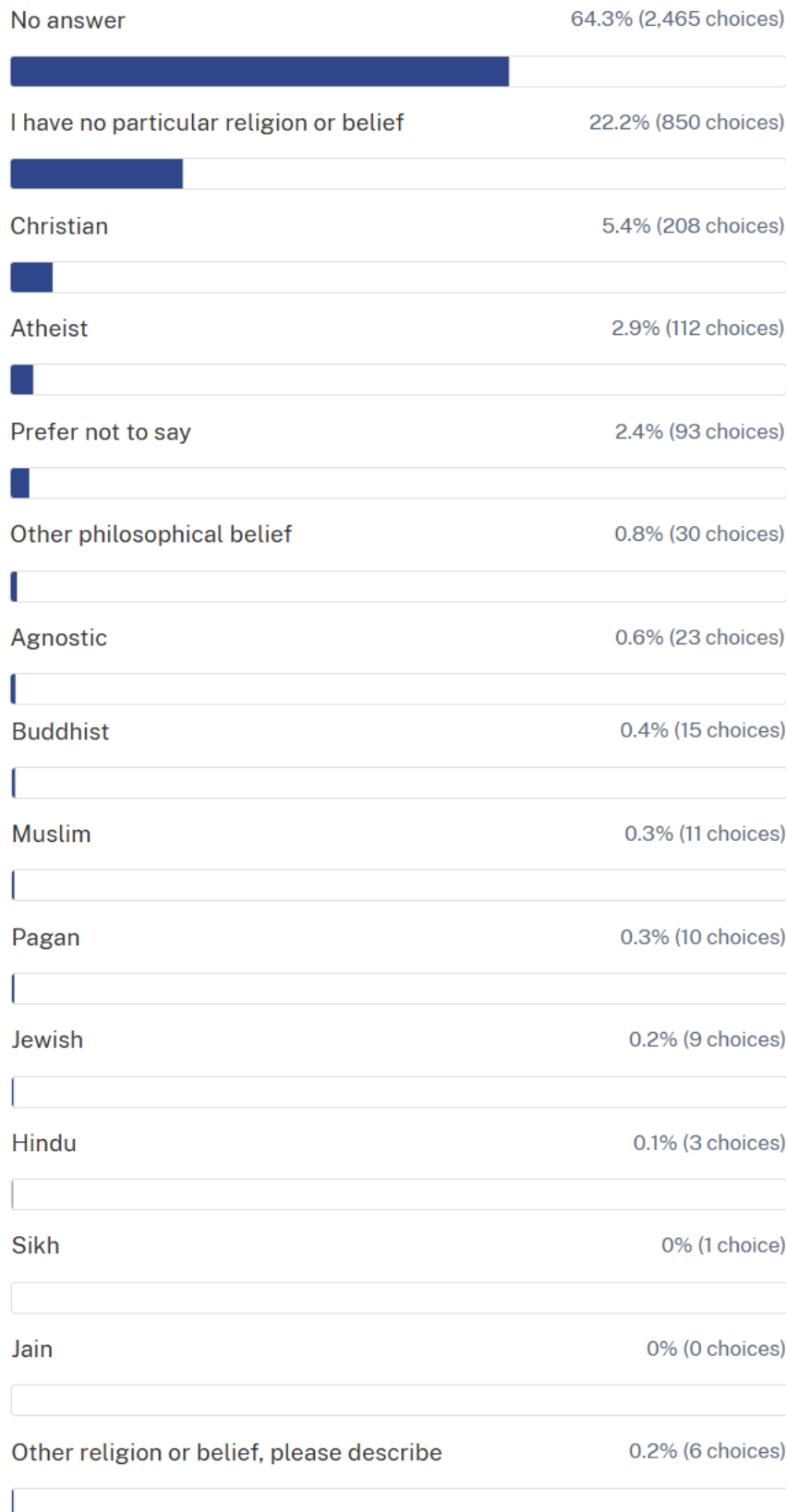


Survey question: Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1360 responses were made to this question.



Survey question: What is your religion or belief?

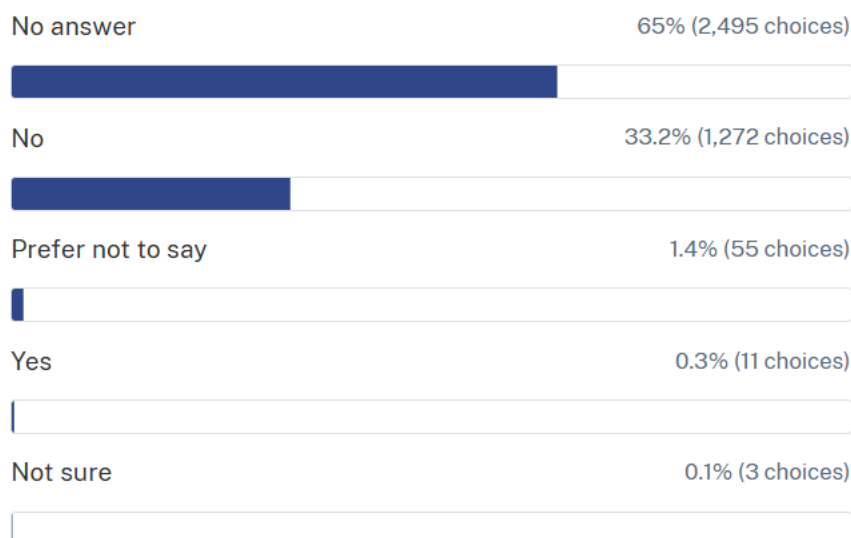
This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen.
1371 responses were made to this question.



Survey question: What is your legal marital or registered civil partnership status? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1329 responses were made to this question.

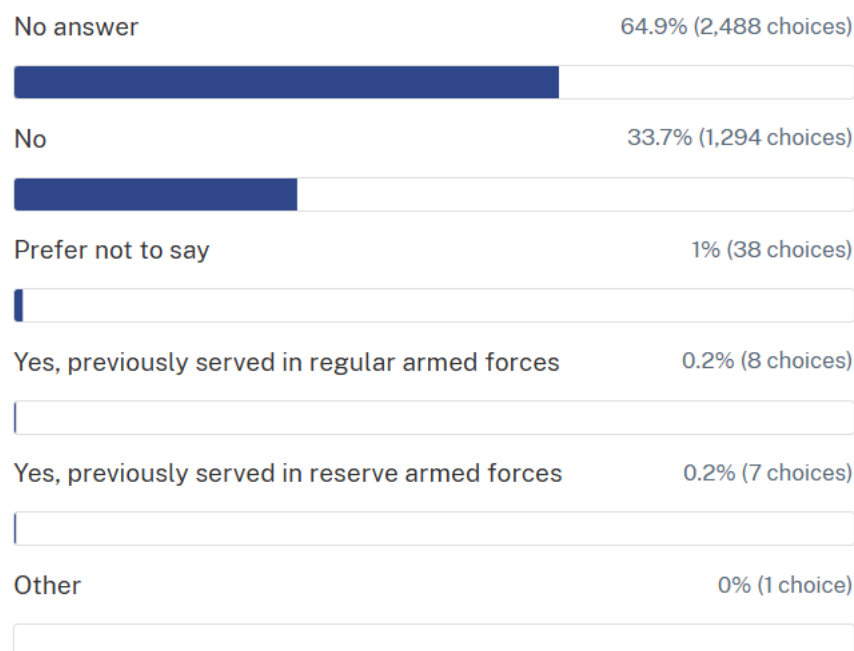


Survey question: Are you, or have you been, looked after by a local authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14? This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1341 responses were made to this question.



Survey question: Have you previously served in the UK armed forces?

This was an optional multiple choice answer where one option could be chosen. 1348 responses were made to this question.



This equalities information needs to be considered alongside the Council's Equality Impact Assessment, appendix 9 of the report to Full Council.

