

## **Statutory proposal for school closure – Middle Street Primary School**

In accordance with section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, Brighton & Hove City Council proposes to close Middle Street Primary School with effect from 31 August 2026.

### **Contact details**

The name and contact address of the proposing authority:

Head of Education  
Brighton & Hove City Council  
Hove Town Hall  
Norton Road  
Hove  
BN3 3BG  
schoolorganisation@brighton-hove.gov.uk

The name, address and category of the school proposed to be discontinued:

Middle Street Primary School  
Middle Street  
Brighton  
BN1 1AL

### **Implementation**

It is proposed that the school will be closed on 31 August 2026. It is not intended to implement this proposal in stages.

### **Reason for closure**

The city is seeing a significant decline in the number of children seeking a school place. School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus Reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all city primary phase schools to allow for parental preference and for movers across or into the city.

Since 2017 the Council has been seeking to reduce the number of surplus places in its primary phase schools, through proposed reductions in published admission numbers. Not all of these proposals have been able to be implemented, leaving the city with a significant 187 number of surplus places and, with the impact of parental preference, meaning some schools remain full and viable and others not.

The Council's own projection of pupil numbers starting Reception in the coming years forecasts that there will be 482 surplus places in 2026 and 638 surplus places in 2027. The earliest indication for 2028 suggests that number will rise to 573 unfilled places.

Therefore, with 2,460 starting school places the city will have over 20% surplus capacity from September 2026.

School Year	Pupil Forecast	Unfilled Places	Surplus Capacity
September 2025	2,021	439	18%
September 2026	1,978	482	20%
September 2027	1,823	638	26%
September 2028	1,887	573	23%

Beyond the city-wide picture, Middle Street Primary School faces acute financial and governance challenges. An Interim Executive Board (IEB) was appointed in June 2025 to replace the Governing Board to address serious concerns about governance and finances. Despite considerable efforts over a seven-month period, on 15 January 2026 the IEB concluded that the school does not have a viable future and recommended closure with effect from 31 August 2026.

The school is currently operating with a significant budget deficit. The forecast deficit for 2025/2026 is in the region of £400k and the school is currently unable to forecast reaching a balanced budget position in the longer term. The declining enrolment, combined with increasing costs, means the school faces an unsustainable financial situation that severely limits its ability to continue operating effectively.

### **Pupil numbers and admissions**

Middle Street Primary School is a one-form entry co-educational community primary school catering for children aged 4–11. Pupils are able to start school before they reach compulsory school age if their parents choose to send them to school at the start of the academic year rather than at the start of the term they would become 5. All pupils are day pupils.

Middle Street has a published admission number of 30 and capacity for 210 pupils.

The school has been consistently under-subscribed in recent years. In the January 2026 census, the school had 141 pupils on roll across Reception to Year 6. Since the announcement of the public consultation on the proposed closure launched on 26 January 2026, the numbers on roll have decreased to 71 pupils, representing a 66% surplus against its capacity of 210 places.

With pupil numbers in the city projected to fall further, there is no credible financial plan that demonstrates the school returning to a sustainable budget position.

School	Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Middle Street Primary – current pupil numbers	7	5	9	9	11	3

*There are 27 pupils in Year 6 that will be transitioning to secondary schools in September 2026*

### **Displaced pupils**

It is expected that pupils in Year 6 will continue to attend the school until its proposed closure at the end of the academic year 2025–2026 and will transition to secondary school in September 2026.

The table below shows the number of pupils likely to be displaced. The Council is confident that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils if the school is to close. As at January 2026, there are 534 available spaces in schools within 1.5 miles of Middle Street Primary School, with availability across all year groups.

School	(Miles)	R	1	2	3	4	5
St Paul's CE Primary School	0.38	7	11	11	14	7	0
St Mary Magdalen's RC School	0.47	5	9	3	6	6	1
Carlton Hill Primary School	0.71	1	0	0	0	0	0
Queens Park Primary School	0.96	26	8	27	19	16	15
Brunswick Primary School	0.98	10	19	6	14	19	24
Stanford Junior School	1.10	~	~	~	11	39	2
Hove Junior School - Holland Rd	1.10	~	~	~	4	13	23
West Hove Infant School - Holland Road	1.10	6	1	16	~	~	~
Stanford Infant School	1.33	1	17	24	~	~	~
St Luke's Primary School	1.35	0	0	0	2	0	3
Elm Grove Primary School	1.37	7	2	0	10	3	2
Fairlight Primary School	1.40	9	3	0	7	6	4
Downs Infant School	1.45	1	0	10	~	~	~
St Martin's CE Primary School	1.49	2	2	9	8	0	3

*(Year 6 pupils are in their final year and expected to transition to secondary school in September 2026)*

The Council maintains that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils at a reasonable distance if the school is to close, even when taking into account sibling links of children in primary school classes.

Parents who have not applied by the end of the Spring Term for a new school place will be contacted by the Schools Admissions Team and asked to submit preferences for new school places. Any families who have already applied for Reception places at Middle Street will be contacted about the consultation and supported to change preferences.

### **Impact on the community**

The Council recognises that the proposed closure of Middle Street Primary School will have a significant impact on the school community. For pupils, families and staff, the school is not just an educational setting but an important part of their lives and the local area. The closure of any school affects the wider community, and the Council understands the sense of loss and uncertainty this proposal creates.

Through the consultation process, concerns have been expressed about the potential harm a school closure would have on families and children who have special educational needs or other vulnerabilities. The Council is committed to minimising the harmful impact of any transition in conjunction with Middle Street Primary School staff and the receiving schools.

The closure of Middle Street Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the city. Allowing surplus places to remain at current levels through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many local schools, which in turn would have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

### **Special educational needs provision**

At Middle Street Primary School, no specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special educational needs.

There are currently 8 pupils (Reception to Year 5) with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), representing 11% of the school population. Pupils in Year 6 with EHCPs will be picked up through the phase transfer process to secondary school.

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN (or for those with a range of additional needs or vulnerabilities) can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. All pupils with EHCPs will have an individual annual review to inform the decision about future provision. Pupils who are currently undergoing statutory assessment will see no disruption to that process. Evidence collected for pupils in advance of a formal request for statutory assessment will be made available to a receiving school.

Dedicated support from a senior SEN Casework Officer and Team Manager will oversee the transfer of pupils known to the Council's SEN service. The Council is confident that the needs of all pupils can be met within other mainstream settings, subject to updated information obtained during the annual review process.

### **Supporting transition**

A transition support group will be established, including educational psychologists and admissions staff, to assist families in selecting schools and to support pupils through transitions. This group will work closely with Middle Street Primary School staff and

staff at receiving schools to ensure the transition of pupils is managed in a child-centred, caring and considered way.

Information on pupils' needs and on strategies and interventions that work to support pupils in learning will be made available to receiving schools, and staff will be encouraged to discuss individual pupils as part of the transition process. All schools in the city will be reminded of their role in supporting the children who need to move school.

### **Travel**

Information is provided above to demonstrate that alternative school places can be provided within a reasonable distance. The Council therefore considers it will be possible to re-allocate pupils to alternative school places within a reasonable distance of Middle Street Primary School should the school close.

The Council is unable to forecast what preferences parents will have for alternative schools. Most families will be able to choose a school within a reasonable walking distance given the number of places available in nearby schools.

The Council's Home to School transport policy reflects the legislation and sets out that the Council has a duty to provide assistance with transport for children of compulsory school age between home and school if the child is under the age of 8 and lives more than two miles from their nearest suitable school, or the child is aged between 8 and 16 years and lives more than three miles from their nearest suitable school. Families may therefore be eligible for transport assistance from the Council, depending on their circumstances and once a new school place is known.

The Council will work with schools who receive pupils from Middle Street Primary School to develop their school travel plans to seek to mitigate against increased car use.

### **Sixth form provision**

Not applicable to this proposal.

### **Rural primary schools**

Not applicable — this school is not a designated rural primary school.

### **Ownership of the site**

As a community school, the site is owned by Brighton & Hove City Council.

### **Consultation**

All applicable consultation was carried out prior to publishing this full proposal.

Ward Councillors and unions were notified of the proposal to undertake a public consultation on the closure of Middle Street Primary School on 19 January 2026. Staff, parents, headteachers of all Brighton & Hove City Council schools and Academies, and the DfE Regional Director and Ofsted were informed on 20 January 2026.

A consultation document was prepared and the public consultation ran between 26 January 2026 and 9 March 2026. It was published online on the school's website and

on the Brighton & Hove City Council website, and was circulated to the parents, staff and governors of Middle Street Primary School and to Headteachers of all schools in the city via the Council's weekly Schools Bulletin.

During the consultation stage, three public meetings were held: 10 February 2026, 25 February 2026 and 4 March 2026.

### **Where and when the Statutory Notice and Full Proposal Information will be available**

Brighton & Hove City Council will publish the statutory notice for this proposal on Wednesday 8 April 2026. Within four weeks of the date of publication any person may object to or make comments on the proposal ie until 5pm on Tuesday 5 May 2026. A copy of the statutory notice is provided alongside this document.

On 8 April 2026 the full proposal information (this document plus appendices) will be sent to the following recipients:

- The Interim Executive Board of the school
- The Diocese of Chichester
- The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton
- Leader of the Council
- Local Ward Councillors
- The Member of Parliament for Brighton Pavilion
- The Secretary of State ([schoolorganisation.notifications@education.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation.notifications@education.gov.uk))

It will also be published on the Brighton & Hove City Council website at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools) and on Middle Street Primary School's website.

Any person may request a copy of the full proposal information either by writing to Head of Education, Brighton & Hove City Council, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ or by contacting the Education and Learning Service on 01273 293653 or via email on [schoolorganisation@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

### **How to make a representation or comment on the proposal**

Any person may object or make a representation or comment on the proposal either by responding in writing to Head of Education, Brighton & Hove City Council, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ before the closing date of 5 May 2026 or via email to [schoolorganisation@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Following the closing date for representations, comments and objections, a report will be prepared for Full Council to consider and determine the proposal within 2 months, i.e. no later than 5 July 2026. At the present time it is anticipated that Full Council will make a decision on the proposal on 21 May 2026.