

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 6

Subject: Proposed Closure of Middle Street Primary School

Date of meeting: 21 May 2026

Report of: Corporate Director for Families, Children & Wellbeing

Contact Officer: Name: Richard Barker, Head of Education
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Ward(s) affected: All

Key Decision: Yes

Reason(s) Key: Significant impact on 2 or more Wards

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 On the 19 March 2026 Cabinet approved the publication of a Statutory Notice in respect of the proposed closure of Middle Street Primary School with effect from 31 August 2026. The four week statutory representation period ran from 8 April to 5 May 2026. This report presents the representations received during that period, addresses the matters raised, and seeks Full Council's approval to proceed with the closure.

1.2 In response to the fall in primary numbers both in Brighton and Hove and nationally, and the consequential impact on schools' finances and the Council's own funding position, in addition to specific school based specific factors, it is proposed that Middle Street Primary School is closed. This proposal will assist in addressing the number of unfilled places in the city, having considered the longer-term viability of the school in relation to pupil numbers, financial viability and the availability of places in the surrounding area.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Full Council notes the eleven formal representations received during the statutory representation period (ten individual and one communal) and the Council's response to the matters raised, as set out in Section 4 of this report.

2.2 That Full Council agrees to the proposal to close Middle Street Primary School with effect from 31 August 2026.

2.3 That Full Council notes the arrangements in place to support the transition of pupils, staff and families.

3. Context and background information

School Context

- 3.1 An Interim Executive Board (IEB) was appointed in June 2025 following serious concerns about governance and financial viability. Over seven months the IEB assessed a range of options for the school's future, including continuing as a standalone school, joining a Multi-Academy Trust, and forming a federation with another local school. In December 2025 the IEB voted to pursue federation as its preferred option, subject to financial modelling.
- 3.2 Between December 2025 and January 2026, the school experienced a rapid decline in pupil numbers. By January 2026, 42 pupils had left the school since the start of the academic year and only three first-preference applications had been received for Reception in September 2026, against a planned admission number of 30. The financial model underpinning the federation plan required a minimum annual Reception intake of 15 pupils; the January figures made this untenable.
- 3.3 On 15 January 2026 the IEB unanimously concluded that the school no longer had a viable future and recommended that the Council launch a public consultation on closure with effect from 31 August 2026.
- 3.4 The school currently has 37 children on roll, with more pupils planning to leave in the following weeks, against a capacity of 210 pupils. The school is forecasting a final deficit of around £332,000 for 2025/2026 and there is no financial plan that demonstrates a return to a balanced budget, in a reasonable timescale. Current pupil numbers, by year group, are set out below:

School	Yr R	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6*
Middle Street Primary School	1	2	2	2	1	2	27

**Year 6 pupils will transition to secondary school in September 2026.*

Statutory Process

- 3.5 Middle Street Primary School is a community primary school, and the Council has the power under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to put forward proposals to close the school and to subsequently make a decision on those proposals.
- 3.6 The Department for Education has issued Statutory Guidance (“the guidance”) on the process that must be followed to close a maintained school “Opening and closing maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers (October 2024)”.
- 3.7 The statutory guidance details some of the reasons why a school closure might be considered including where there are surplus places elsewhere in

the local area which can accommodate pupils requiring an alternative school place, and where there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium to long term and the school is no longer considered viable.

- 3.8 When seeking to close a school the Council is required to follow the processes set out in the Guidance. In particular the Guidance sets out the considerations that should be taken into account by the decision maker when deciding proposals to discontinue (close) a school. It requires that the decision maker should have due regard to all responses received during the representation period and be satisfied that the proposer has carried out the requirements of the statutory process satisfactorily.
- 3.9 As required under the statutory process, a public consultation on the proposals was held and ran from 26 January 2026 to 9 March 2026. Three public meetings were held, and a staff meeting took place on 26 February 2026. Cabinet considered the outcome of the consultation at its meeting on 19 March 2026 and approved publication of a statutory notice, noting that a further report would be brought to Full Council for a final decision. The March 2026 report is included as Appendix 4. The evidence and rationale for the decision to move to the statutory notice period is set out in that report.
- 3.10 The statutory notice was published on 8 April 2026. The representation period ran from 8 April 2026 to 5 May 2026. During this time eleven formal representations were received.

Representations Received

- 3.11 Eleven representations were received: ten from individuals and one submitted on behalf of the Middle Street community and signed by 22 named individuals. The communal representation is a considered and substantive document, and the Council is grateful to those who took the time to prepare it. Its authors expressly acknowledge the wider pressures facing the city’s school estate and do not assert that closure is necessarily the wrong outcome: rather, they ask the Council to satisfy itself that the evidential basis for the decision is complete, transparent, and robust.
- 3.12 The representation raises six broad matters which are addressed below.
- 3.13 **Completeness of the decision-making record** – the representation notes a significant and rapid deterioration in the school’s position between late 2024 and early 2026 and asks whether decision-makers and consultees were provided with a full and consistent account of the chronology of key risks and decisions. The Council accepts that the pace of deterioration was rapid, and that this created difficulties for all involved, including those seeking to understand how the school’s position had developed. The following chronology is provided by the Council for completeness:

May 2025	Warning Notice issued to Middle Street Governing Board by the Council
June 2025	IEB appointed by the Council to replace the Governing Board, follow escalating concerns about governance and financial management

July to November 2025	IEB undertook a detailed assessment of the school's position, including review of finances, staffing, pupil projections and options for the future.
16 December 2025	IEB voted to pursue federation as the preferred option, subject to a financial model requiring a minimum Reception intake of 15 pupils.
January 2026	Pupil numbers fell sharply. Only 3 first preference Reception applications were received for September 2026. The IEB assessed that the December federation model was no longer financially tenable and increased risks that had been previously identified.
15 January 2026	IEB unanimously concluded that the school was not financially viable and recommended that the Council undertake a consultation on closure.
19 January 2026	Ward Councillors and Unions were notified of the intention to consult on a proposal to close the school.
26 January 2026	Staff, parents, Headteachers across the city, the DFE Regional Director and Ofsted were informed of the public consultation. Public consultation was launched.
February – March 2026	Two in-person public consultation meetings were held (10 and 25 February), an in-person staff consultation meeting was held (26 February) and an online consultation meeting was held (4 March).
19 March 2026	Cabinet considered the consultation outcomes and approved publication of a statutory notice.
8 April 2026	Statutory notice was published and the representation period opened.
8 April – 5 May 2026	Representation period of 4 weeks was in place.

- 3.14 The Council acknowledges that the IEB Governing Board minutes prior to 16 January 2026 did not signal imminent closure, however this reflected the genuine position had changed as the financial and admissions picture developed. The December 2025 federation option was the IEB's preferred route at that point, it became untenable in January 2026 once the admissions data was confirmed and the financial assumptions underpinning it could not be met.
- 3.15 The Council is satisfied that the decision-making record is complete and that the chronology above, read alongside the IEB's published minutes and the Cabinet Report of 19 March 2026 provides a full account of the process.
- 3.16 **Consultation Fairness** – the representation raised awareness of whether the consultation met the standard of fairness required under public law. In particular, confidentiality constraints limited meaningful understanding, and

whether the timing of the proposal itself contributed to declining pupil numbers.

3.17 The Council is satisfied that the consultation was conducted in accordance with public law requirements and the DfE's guidance. Three public meetings were held, a staff meeting was convened, written consultation was open for six weeks, and all relevant parties were notified at the outset. The Council acknowledges that some information relating to the school's governance and HR position could not be fully disclosed in a public forum. This was not a decision taken to manage the narrative, but reflected the Council's legal obligations around data protection, employment law, and the fair treatment of individuals. The IEB's published minutes set out as much of the relevant context as could lawfully be shared. The interaction between the statutory proposal process and the admissions cycle is an unavoidable structural feature of school closure processes. Parents facing uncertainty about a school's future need to assess the situation and make reasonable decisions in the best interests of their children. Although the loss of pupils was unfortunate and did not follow the pattern of previous proposed closures, it did not affect the underlying financial position before the consultation was announced and the January 2026 admissions data confirmed a picture that was already emerging.

3.18 **Consideration of Alternatives** – the representation asked for greater transparency about what specific steps were taken to explore alternatives to closure, which organisations were approached and what financial or operational assumptions were applied. The IEB assessed the following options in detail:

- Continuing as a standalone primary school with a substantive Headteacher, this was assessed as not financially viable given the scale of the deficit and the trajectory of pupil numbers.
- Joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), the IEB explored whether a MAT would consider taking on the school. No MAT was willing to absorb a school with a deficit of the scale projected without significant financial underwriting from the Council. The Council's own financial position does not allow for this level of ongoing subsidy.
- Federation with another local primary school under a full-time Headteacher model, this was assessed as potentially viable in principle, but requiring a minimum Reception intake of 15 pupils per year to be financial sustainable. The January 2026 admissions position made this untenable.
- Federation with a part-time Executive Headteacher and Head of School model to reduce costs, similarly assessed as requiring a minimum Reception intake of 15 and additional stability of numbers across year groups that could not be guaranteed.
- A four-class structure, modelled as potentially balancing by 2028 under optimal conditions, but requiring full classes and capped staffing costs. The January 2026 pupil numbers made this unachievable within a reasonable planning horizon.

3.19 The Council is therefore satisfied that the IEB conducted a thorough and

detailed alternatives appraisal. The conclusion that closure was the only viable course of action was not reached without serious and sustained consideration of other options. The IEB's published minutes (attached at Appendix 5) set out this analysis and explored whether a structured transitional period could stabilise the school's position before a more permanent model was put in place. The rapid deterioration in pupil numbers in January 2026 meant that any transitional model would have required the Council to underwrite an escalating deficit with no credible prospect of recovery within a manageable timeframe.

- 3.20 **Role of governance and oversight factors** – the representation asks the Council to consider whether governance contributed to the school's current position, and whether this has been adequately investigated. The Council accepts that the school experienced a prolonged period of governance and staffing instability, and that this had an impact on the school's reputation and on parental confidence. The appointment of the IEB in June 2025 was a direct response to those concerns. One of the IEB's responsibilities was to assess the school's position including the extent to which its current circumstances were the product of identifiable and addressable failures, or whether they reflected structural factors that would persist regardless of any intervention. The IEB's conclusion, reached after seven months of intensive engagement with the schools, was that it was the combination of factors, financial, organisational and reputational that had produced a position from which the school could not recover within a timeframe consistent with financial sustainability.
- 3.21 The Council acknowledges that questions have been raised, both during the consultation and in the formal representation, about the adequacy of the Council's oversight of the school prior to the IEB's appointment. The Council is committed to reviewing the lessons learnt from this process as part of its broader school improvement and governance oversight work. However, the main consideration when considering the closure proposal is the current position of the school and whether there is a credible and sustainable path forward. On the evidence available, the Council is satisfied that there is not.
- 3.22 **Equality and Community Impact** – the representation emphasised the disproportionate impacts identified in the Equalities Impact Assessment on pupils with SEND, families from racially minoritised backgrounds, English as an Additional Language families and vulnerable or disadvantaged households and asks that these impacts receive full and conscientious consideration rather than being treated as a procedural requirement. The Council takes disproportionate impacts seriously and a full Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and appended to this report.
- 3.23 The Council acknowledges that Middle Street Primary School serves a diverse community, including families for whom the school's non-faith status, central location, inclusive ethos, and EAL support were decisive factors in their choice of school. The potential loss of that provision will have a genuine and material impact.

3.24 Of the 10 children remaining in Reception to Year 5 after May half-term, the pupil group breakdown is below:

Indicator	Number	%
EAL	3	30%
EHCP	4	40%
FSM	7	70%
LAC	0	0%

Ethnicity	Number	%
White British	6	60%
Any Other Asian Background	2	20%
Other/Not Stated	2	20%

A transition support group, including educational psychologists and admissions staff are working closely with receiving schools to ensure that the needs of all pupils, including those with protected characteristics, are identified and met.

3.25 **Request for further clarification** – the representation requests clarification on five specific matters. The Council’s responses are set out above.

The representation additionally queried considerations relating to the future use of the site might have influenced the proposal. The Council confirms that the proposal to close the school has been made solely on educational and financial grounds. As a community school, the building and land are the responsibility of the Council and any decisions about the future use of the site are a separate matter that will be subject to its own statutory processes, including the appropriate engagement with Councillors.

3.26 **Representations received via the Your Voice portal** – ten of the eleven formal representations were submitted by individuals through the Council’s Your Voice portal during the statutory representation period. The representations are largely opposed to the closure and raise a consistent set of themes, which the Council has considered carefully. Several respondents emphasise the school’s distinctive central Brighton location, its non-faith and inclusive ethos, its provision for pupils who do not thrive in larger settings, and its support for pupils with SEND and EAL needs. A number of respondents also question the management of the school’s decline, suggesting that earlier intervention and stronger oversight could have prevented the current position, and that the timing of the consultation contributed to the loss of pupils. Other respondents highlight accessibility for families without cars, longer journeys to alternative schools, and the broader value of the school as a community asset. The matters raised through the portal substantially overlap with those addressed in the communal representation above and the Council’s responses on the completeness of the decision-making record, the fairness of the consultation, the consideration of alternatives, the role of governance and oversight, and equality and community impact apply equally to those

representations. The full representations received through the Your Voice portal are appended to this report (Appendix 3).

- 3.27 **Integration and community cohesion** - the statutory guidance requires decision makers to consider the impact of a closure proposal on integration and community cohesion, having regard to the Integrated Communities Action Plan and any local strategies. Middle Street Primary School serves a diverse community, and its non-faith status, central location, and inclusive ethos have been important to many of the families who chose the school. The Council recognises that closure will represent a loss to that community. However, all of the receiving schools within 1.5 miles offer a broad and balanced curriculum, promote fundamental British values, and welcome pupils of all faiths and none. The transition support group, working with admissions staff and educational psychologists, will support displaced pupils to settle into receiving schools and to maintain the relationships and sense of belonging they have built. The Council is therefore satisfied that the proposal does not undermine integration or community cohesion across the city, and that displaced pupils will continue to be educated within welcoming inclusive school communities.
- 3.28 **Travel** – the statutory guidance requires the decision maker to consider how children will travel to school, including journey times and travel costs for families, and to be satisfied that proposals do not adversely impact any particular group, including those with protected characteristics or who are disadvantaged. The Council has considered these matters carefully. There are 442 available places at primary schools within 1.5 miles of Middle Street Primary School, and the Council expects the majority of families to be able to access an alternative school without significantly extending their journey. Several respondents to the consultation and the representation period have raised the importance of the school’s central location to families without cars, and the Council acknowledges that for some families journey times will increase. Transport assistance will be considered for individual families, once an alternative school place is known, in line with the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy and its statutory duties. Where pupils are eligible for free school meals, pupil premium, or have an EHCP, the Council will give particular attention to ensuring that travel arrangements do not place additional burdens on those families. The Council also notes the submission received from the Living Streets Brighton and Hove Group during the consultation and remains committed to promoting sustainable travel to school across the city.
- 3.29 **Special Educational Needs** – the statutory guidance requires the decision maker to consider the arrangements in place to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). At the time of the representation period, six pupils on roll at Middle Street Primary School (13% of the cohort) had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The Council recognises that the school has been valued by families of children with SEND, and that change can be particularly disruptive for these pupils. A bespoke transition plan will be developed for every pupil with an EHCP, and in consultation with parents and the SEN Team will work with receiving schools to ensure that EHCPs are actively reviewed where necessary. Any

pupils on SEN Support will also be supported through the transition, with information shared between schools to ensure continuity of provision. The Council is satisfied that there is sufficient capacity within receiving primary schools to meet the needs of all displaced pupils with SEND, and that the arrangements in place are consistent with the Council's duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice.

- 3.30 **Staffing** - Should the school close, 21 of the 35 staff posts will be at risk of redundancy. A seven week staff redundancy consultation ran from 9 February to 27 March 2026. The Council will recommend that affected staff are given priority consideration for roles in other schools prior to any external recruitment. Individual HR support, including access to the employee assistance programme, will be available to all affected staff.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 Having considered the representations received, the Council remains of the view that closure of Middle Street Primary School with effect from 31 August 2026 is the appropriate course of action.
- 4.2 The school is operating with a significant deficit, forecast at around £332,000 for 2025/2026 with 37 children on roll, with a further number due to leave in the following weeks, against a capacity of 210, with no credible financial plan that demonstrates a return to viability.
- 4.3 The IEB, appointed specifically to assess the school's position and explore options for recovery, concluded after seven months that critical risk factors severely limit the school's ability to recover. That conclusion followed a thorough consideration of all credible alternatives, as summarised above.
- 4.4 Pupil numbers across Brighton & Hove's primary sector do not indicate a future rise in pupil numbers. The Council forecasts 482 surplus places across the city in September 2026, rising to 638 in September 2027. Maintaining the school open in these circumstances would increase pressure on other schools' budgets and risk widening financial sustainability challenges across the estate.
- 4.5 There are 442 available places within 1.5 miles of Middle Street Primary School. The Council is satisfied that sufficient capacity exists to accommodate all displaced pupils.

School	(Metres)	(Miles)	R	1	2	3	4	5
St Paul's CE Primary School	613.65	0.38	6	5	6	14	3	0
St Mary Magdalen's RC School	757.05	0.47	0	8	*2	6	2	1
Carlton Hill Primary School	1136.81	0.71	0	0	*0	0	0	0
Queens Park Primary School	1548.39	0.96	23	10	25	19	19	18
Brunswick Primary School	1576.36	0.98	7	12	4	13	17	22
Stanford Junior School	1762.99	1.1	~	~	~	10	39	0
Hove Junior School - Holland Rd	1765.93	1.1	~	~	~	6	9	21
West Hove Infant School - Holland Road	1766.3	1.1	4	0	14	~	~	~
Stanford Infant School	2136.59	1.33	0	18	0	~	~	~
St Luke's Primary School	2166.3	1.35	0	0	0	0	0	1
Elm Grove Primary School	2211.32	1.37	2	1	*0	7	0	1
Fairlight Primary School	2247.32	1.4	9	0	0	8	4	6
Downs Infant School	2338.95	1.45	0	0	10	~	~	~
St Martin's CE Primary School	2393.53	1.49	3	2	9	10	0	6

4.6 A Transition Support Group is in place, including educational psychologists and admissions staff, to support pupils and families through the transition process. The group is working closely with Middle Street Primary School staff and with receiving schools to ensure that transitions are managed in a child-centred, caring and considered way.

4.7 Parents who have not yet identified an alternative school place will be contacted by the Schools Admissions Team and supported to submit preferences. Families who have applied to Reception at Middle Street Primary School will be contacted and supported to change their preferences.

4.8 Security plans will be developed for the school site from 31 August 2026, alongside arrangements for asset distribution and records storage.

5. Community engagement and consultation

5.1 The Council has followed the Community Engagement Framework throughout this process and has provided extensive opportunities for engagement at each stage. A six-week public consultation ran from 26 January 2026 to 9 March 2026, providing a range of opportunities for families, staff, pupils and the wider community to engage with the proposal and submit their views. Two in-person public meetings were held at the school on 10 and 25 February 2026, and an in-person staff meeting took place on 26 February 2026, with an additional online meeting held on 4 March 2026, to accommodate those who could not attend in person. Written responses were invited via the Council's Your Voice portal, by email, and by post, and consultation documents were made available in accessible formats on request.

5.2 At the outset of the consultation, the Council notified ward Councillors, trade unions, the DfE Regional Director, Ofsted, the Headteachers of all schools

across the city and the staff, parents and Governing Board of Middle Street Primary School. The full outcome of the public consultation was reported to Cabinet on 19 March 2026 and is set out in the Cabinet report at Appendix 4. Following Cabinet's approval to publish a statutory notice, the four week statutory representation period ran from 8 April to 5 May 2026, during which any person or organisation could submit formal representations. Eleven formal representations were received and are addressed in full at Section 3 of this report. The Council is satisfied that the consultation and representation period were appropriate, fair and open, and that the views of all those affected by the proposal have been given full and proper consideration in line with the requirements of the DfE statutory guidance and public law.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 School budgets are determined in accordance with criteria set by the government and school funding regulations dictate that the vast majority (over 90% in 2025/26) 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 their annual budgets.
- 6.2 Middle Street Primary School is currently operating with a licensed deficit, and finished the 2025/26 financial year with a deficit of £332k. With rapidly declining pupil numbers it is likely that this deficit will escalate further in subsequent years.
- 6.3 Where a local authority-maintained school has a deficit at the point at which the school closes this will be a charge to the Council's General Fund. There will also likely be additional costs relating to redundancies and pensions that would result in further costs to the Council's general fund. The Council has made provision for this expenditure as part of its 2026/27 financial modelling.
- 6.4 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 generally are more sustainable. Schools are more likely to be able to balance their budgets if operating with full, or close to full, forms of entry.

Name of finance officer consulted: Steve Williams Date consulted: 30/04/2026

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 imposes a duty on the Council to ensure the provision of sufficient schools for the provision of primary and secondary education in its area.
- 7.2 In order to achieve any reorganisation of school provision the council must comply with School Organisation legislation- the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA), associated regulations, and statutory guidance published by the Department for Education- "Opening and closing maintained schools,

Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, October 2024". Both the legislation and guidance set out the steps which the council must take before making any decision on a proposal to close a school

- 7.3 In accordance with Section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 ("the EIA 2006") (as amended) and the School Organisation (Establishment 44 and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 ("the Regulations"), the Council has completed the required formal consultation, a statutory notice has been published and a four week representation period has taken place. A decision on the proposal to close now needs to be taken.
- 7.4 Under the Council's Constitution, Full Council has reserved decisions on strategic issues relating to school admission arrangements to itself. (Part 3.1.02(a)(ii) of the Constitution). Given the significant nature of this proposal Full Council will act as the decision maker on closure.
- 7.5 The decision maker must have regard to the statutory decision makers guidance contained in the DfE Guidance referred to in paragraph 7.2 above. This sets out the considerations that should be made by the Council when deciding proposals to close a school. In all cases, the decision maker should be satisfied that the proposer has carried out the requirements of the statutory process satisfactorily and should have due regard to all responses received during the representation period. A link to the Guidance is below:

[Opening and closing maintained schools](#)

- 7.6 As the decision maker on the proposal the Council must make the decision within two months of the end of the representation period. When issuing a decision, the decision maker can:
- reject the proposal;
 - approve the proposal without modification;
 - approve the proposal with such modifications as they think desirable; or
 - approve the proposal, with or without modification, subject to certain conditions being met.
- 7.7 In taking decisions the Council must ensure that all required consultations are properly undertaken in accordance with relevant law and guidance. It is important to recognise that a public consultation is not a vote or referendum, but an opportunity to gather a range of insights, views and feedback on proposals before any decisions are made. The Council must make rational, evidence based decisions, take into account all relevant considerations, act for a proper purpose, and be properly reasoned.
- 7.8 The Council is required to have 'due regard' to the duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty) in determining the proposal. In order to comply with the public sector equality duty 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 07.05.2026

8. Equalities implications

- 8.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and is provided at Appendix 1 to this report. The equality implications of the proposal are addressed in the EIA.

9. Sustainability implications

- 9.1 The proposed closure may affect the length of journeys some families make to school. Given the number of available places at schools within 1.5 miles, the Council expects the majority of families to be able to access an alternative school without significantly extending their journey. Transport assistance will be considered for families who apply, once a new school place is known, in line with the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy.
- 9.2 A submission received during the public consultation from Living Streets Brighton and Hove Group raised concerns about the active travel and sustainability implications of consolidating provision away from central Brighton. The Council notes this concern and recognises the importance of supporting active and sustainable travel to school as part of its wider commitments under the Local Transport Plan and the city’s climate change strategy. The Council’s Home to School Transport Policy prioritises walking, cycling, and public transport where journeys are reasonable, and the Schools Admissions Team will work with families to identify alternative schools that minimize the need for car travel wherever possible. The Council also acknowledges that the closure of a centrally located school will, for some families, mean longer journeys, and that this has wider implications for active travel patterns across the city centre. These considerations will be factored into the Council’s ongoing review of school place planning and its broader sustainable travel work, and the Council will continue to engage with Living Street and other interested parties on these matters.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 Full Council is asked to make a final decision on the proposed closure of Middle Street Primary School with effect from 31 August 2026.
- 10.2 Eleven formal representations were received during the statutory representation period. The Council has considered these carefully and has responded to each of the matters raised in Section 3 above. The Council is

satisfied that the evidential basis for this decision is complete, transparent, and robust, and that the process followed has been lawful and fair.

The Council has considered these carefully and has responded to each of the matters raised in Section 3 above. The Council is satisfied that the evidential basis for this decision is complete, transparent, and robust, and that the process followed has been lawful and fair.

- 10.3 The school is not financially viable. The IEB, after seven months of intensive assessment and a thorough consideration of all alternatives, concluded that there is no credible path to recovery. Pupil numbers have continued to fall and there are 442 available places within 1.5 miles and the Council is confident that all displaced pupils can be accommodated.
- 10.4 Full Council is therefore recommended to approve the closure of Middle Street Primary School with effect from 31 August 2026.

Supporting Documentation

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Full Equalities Impact Assessment
- Appendix 2: Formal Representation from the Middle Street Community
- Appendix 3: Summary of Your Voice Representations during statutory notice process
- Appendix 4: Cabinet Report for 19 March 2026 Meeting
- Appendix 5: IEB Minutes – 16 December 2025