

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet

Agenda Item 28

Subject: Hove Park School –Proposal to consolidate onto a single Site at the Nevill Campus and Disposal of the Valley Campus

Date of meeting: 16 July 2026

Report of: Cabinet Member for Finance and City Regeneration

Lead Officer: Corporate Director for Families, Children and Wellbeing

Contact Officer: Richard Barker

Email: Richard.Barker@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Key Decision: Yes

Reason(s) Key: Is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions (wards).

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to consolidate Hove Park School onto a single site at the Nevill Campus from September 2028, and to release the Valley Campus for disposal. The report follows the conclusion of the public consultation and the statutory representation period and sets out the consultation responses received, the proposed approach to disposal of the Valley Campus, and the financial, legal and equalities implications of the proposal.
- 1.2 Hove Park School is a community secondary school maintained by Brighton & Hove City Council, currently operating across two sites approximately one mile apart: the Nevill Campus (Nevill Road) and the Valley Campus (Valley Drive). The proposal forms part of the Council's wider School Sustainability Strategy, which seeks to make best use of the city's school estate, address surplus capacity, and place schools on a financially and educationally sustainable footing.
- 1.3 The proposal has been developed in partnership with the school's Governing Board and Headteacher, with the educational case set out in the school's own consultation submission and supported by Council officers throughout the statutory school organisation process. A decision to proceed would be determined on the basis that the school's financial position can demonstrably improve in future years.
- 1.4 The proposal aligns with and contributes to the Council Plan 2023–2027 (refreshed 2025), which sets out the Council's vision for a better Brighton &

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Hove for all. In particular, it supports the Council Plan's Outcome 2 — *A fair and inclusive city* — which includes a commitment to deliver accessible, affordable and high-quality homes for all residents of Brighton & Hove, addressing the acute shortage of housing in the city.

- 1.5 Disposing of the Valley Campus will generate a capital receipt to support the Council's financial sustainability and investment in priority services. This is consistent with the Council Plan's recognition that the Council must make best use of its assets to help address the £95 million budget gap for 2026–2030. The proposal also supports Outcome 1 — *A city to be proud of* — by consolidating the school estate on a more educationally and financially sustainable basis, while enabling the Valley Campus to contribute to the Council's wider placemaking ambitions for the city

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet agrees to approve the consolidation of Hove Park School onto a single site at the Nevill Campus with effect from September 2028, subject to the completion of the necessary capital works.
- 2.2 Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director Property and Finance, to:
 - commission the Phase 1 and Phase 2 capital works at the Nevill Campus within the funding envelope
- 2.3 Cabinet notes that the Section 77 application in respect of the Phase 2 Internal remodelling and 3G artificial pitch will be submitted to the Secretary of State, and that final approval of Phase 2 will be confirmed on receipt of consent.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 Hove Park School is an 11-18 community secondary school. The school has operated across the Valley and Nevill sites for many years. Operating on two sites at approximately one mile distance carries an additional cost to the school's budget.
- 3.2 Pupil numbers at Hove Park have declined in line with the wider fall in secondary-age pupils across the city, and the school has been operating with a licensed deficit. The school's Governing Board, working with the Local Authority, has concluded that consolidation onto a single site is the most sustainable long-term option for the school, both educationally and financially.
- 3.3 A first phase of public consultation took place in Spring 2025 and received 169 responses. Feedback from this consultation made clear that respondents wanted to see detailed plans before any decision was taken.
- 3.4 A second public consultation ran from 13 April to 25 May 2026, accompanied by site plans, 3D visualisations, costings and a description of the educational model on a single site. Three public meetings were held

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(one in person at the Valley Campus on 23 April, one in person at the Nevill Campus on 27 April, and one online on 6 May 2026) alongside the Your Voice online portal. The outcomes of that consultation are summarised at Section 4 of this report.

- 3.5 Following consideration of the responses to the consultation, the Corporate Director, Families, Children & Wellbeing, in consultation with the Lead Member agreed to publish a Statutory Notice to progress the proposal. This was followed by a four week representation period between 8 June 2026 and 6 July 2026. Notices were displayed at school entrances and gates, on both school websites, Council website, Your Voice portal and in local media. Copies of the full proposal were sent to the Governing Boards of both schools, the Anglican and Catholic dioceses, local ward members, the Member of Parliament for Brighton Pavillion and the Department for Education (DfE). Copies of the complete proposal have been made available to anyone who requested a copy during the publication period.
- 3.6 A total of 109 responses were received via the Your Voice portal, representing a completion rate of 96.5% of those that reviewed it. Two email submissions were also received. Respondents on the Your Voice Portal were asked directly whether they supported the school's proposal to move from two sites to one at the Nevill Campus. Of those, 108 answered this question. The breakdown of responses to that question is set out below:

Response	Numbers	%
No – do not support	68	63%
Yes – support	31	29%
Not sure	9	8%

- 3.7 The themes raised were broadly consistent with those raised in the first round of consultation, with several new and more detailed concerns emerging as a direct result of the more developed plans now being available. The most frequently raised matters are below:

Location and impact of the proposed 3G artificial pitch: particular concerns are around the proximity of the indicative position to residential properties along Old Shoreham Road and Nevill Road. Concerns focused on noise, floodlighting, light spillage into neighbouring homes, safeguarding and a loss of green space. A number of respondents expressed support in principle for a 3G pitch but objected to the position shown on the indicative plans, with several preferring the alternative position towards the south-east of the site, adjacent to the allotments. Out-of-hours and community use of the pitch were raised and the effect of this on neighbouring properties.

Traffic, road safety and parking around the Nevill Campus: parking around Nevill Avenue and the Old Shoreham Road entrance were highlighted, with respondents raising concerns about congestion at drop-off and pick-up, pedestrian and cycle safety, overspill parking on residential streets and the cumulative effect of nearby housing developments.

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SEND provision and pastoral support: respondents valued the current model for the way it supports the transition of younger pupils from primary school and questioned whether the benefits of consolidation outweighed the loss of this feature.

The future of the Valley Campus: there were repeated comments around what would happen to the site and a strong preference among many respondents to consider retaining land for public benefit, including continued use of the cricket pitches.

- 3.8 Supporters of the proposal cited the long-term financial sustainability of the school, the educational and operational benefits of staff and resources being on a single site and the reduction in transitions and movement for pupils between the two campuses.

Statutory Notice Representations

- 3.9 In accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2013, a statutory notice was published on 8 June 2026, opening a four week representation period which closed on 6 July 2026.
- 3.10 17 formal representations were received during the representation period. A summary of the representations is provided at Appendix 5.
- 3.11 The matters raised in representations did not introduce new material issues beyond those raised during the second statutory consultation. The Council's view is that the representations have been considered in full and addressed in the body of this report, and no new evidence has emerged which would alter the proposal as published.

Disposal of the Valley Campus

- 3.12 To inform the future disposal strategy for the whole site, we have instructed architects to develop a detailed massing study. This considers the envelope, density, and potential unit mix on the site, aligning to planning parameters/policy. Following the completion of this stage, we will be instructing detailed valuation advice to inform the preferred option.
- 3.13 Cabinet notes that any future disposal is subject to Secretary of State approval under a Section 77 application. Subject to Cabinet decision, we anticipate progressing to an outline planning application prior to any future disposal. This will establish the principle of development, reducing uncertainty and unlocking the full development opportunity of the site.
- 3.14 Any disposal receipt is anticipated to be realised in 2028/2029, aligning with the consolidation of the school onto the Nevill Campus in September 2028. No commitment is being made through this report as to the eventual planning use of the Valley Campus. Decisions on planning matters will be taken through the appropriate planning processes, in due course.

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Capital Works and Funding

3.16 The capital works at the Nevill Campus are planned in two phases. Phase 1 (expected to reach practical completion in July/August 2028) comprises essential building works including:

- a classroom extension
- dining room extension
- toilet accommodation
- relocation of SEN provision to the Modern Foreign Language block, and
- associated drainage and utility diversions.

3.17 The estimated construction cost for Phase 1 is £3.9m, with professional services of £350,000, giving a Phase 1 total of £4,250,000.

3.18 Phase 2 (expected to reach practical completion in Summer 2029) comprises:

- internal remodelling of the Nevill Campus and
- construction of a 3G artificial pitch, including required utility supply.

3.19 The estimated construction cost for Phase 2 is £3.2m, with professional services of £150,000, giving a Phase 2 total of £3,350,000. The combined estimated capital cost across both phases is approximately £7.6m.

3.20 Three capital funding streams are available to fund the constructions works required:

Basic Need	£5,554,314
Higher Needs Capital	£3,128,641
Section 106	£2,050,484
Total	£10,733,439

3.21 Any capital receipt arising from the disposal of the Valley Campus will be treated as a corporate capital receipt, available to the Council for deployment in accordance with its capital investment priorities. The disposal of the Valley Campus is not contingent on the completion of the capital works at the Nevill Campus; the two workstreams will be progressed in parallel, with the timing of disposal subject to planning and market conditions. It is the Council's proposal that a proportion of the receipt will be used to reimburse the High Needs Capital budget, further application of the receipt will be subject to the Council's normal capital allocation processes.

3.22 During the consultation period, the Governing Board of Hove Park School has been preparing its budget plan for 2026/27 and future years. The council has now seen a robust, peer-scrutinised, multi-year budget plan which demonstrates that the move to one site will place Hove Park School in a more robust and improved financial position, while remaining mindful of the level of EHCPs/SEN pupils and ensuring there is no impact on the SEN

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offer. This provides the assurance needed to proceed with the initiation of capital works.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 Consideration has been given to continue with the two site model operating across both the Nevill and Valley campuses. This option has been considered carefully but is not recommended. The school's licensed deficit position is in large part a consequence of the additional costs associated with two-site operation, the logistical burden of organising two sites approximately one mile apart. Continuing on two sites would not address the underlying financial pressures and would leave the school without a clear path to long-term sustainability.
- 4.2 A second alternative considered was closure of one campus without capital investment to adapt the remaining site. This would require the school to operate from the Nevill Campus in its current form, which does not have sufficient classroom or dining capacity to accommodate the full school roll. This option is not viable without the works and would result in unacceptable conditions for pupils and staff.
- 4.3 The possibility of a merger or federation with another school was also considered as part of the Council's broader School Sustainability work. Consolidation onto a single site, with the school retaining its identity and leadership can offer a more proportionate and educationally preferable solution given the school's circumstances, and that a merger or federation would not in itself resolve the two-site cost pressures.
- 4.4 The proposal to consolidate onto the Nevill Campus rather than the Valley Campus reflects the relative size, condition and development potential of the two sites. The Nevill Campus is the larger of the two and is better suited to accommodate the full school roll following the works.
- 4.5 The option of closing Hove Park School has been carefully considered and has been rejected. As at May 2026, the school had 930 pupils on roll, and closure would present significant practical and educational challenges. There are approximately 1,127 surplus places across the remaining secondary schools, which would leave just 197 places free for new families moving into the city or for parents seeking a new school place from outside the city, should Hove Park School pupils need to be redistributed elsewhere. Places in other schools would also need to align with the specific year groups requiring allocation, further limiting practical options.
- 4.6 Closure would be particularly difficult for children and young people with SEN, who make up a significant proportion of the school population. Redistributing these pupils across other schools — potentially outside their local area — risks disrupting established support arrangements and could mean many are placed a considerable distance from home. This would also undermine pupils' sense of belonging and continuity, both of which are especially important for children with SEN. For these reasons, closure has not been pursued as a viable option.

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- 4.7 There is a combined PAN of 510 across Hove Park School and Blatchington Mill Schools. The secondary pupil forecasts indicate that between approximately 311 and 438 pupils from within the combined catchment area are expected to seek secondary places each year between 2026 and 2032 (Appendix 6). These figures represent a consistent surplus of places relative to the combined PAN of 510 and do not, by themselves, demonstrate sufficient demand to sustain two schools at their current admission numbers.
- 4.8 However, for the reasons set out in the report, closure is not considered to be the appropriate response in this case. The school continues to serve a significant number of pupils, including those already enrolled, and closure would cause considerable disruption to current and prospective families, many of whom would face significantly longer journeys to alternative schools. While closure would reduce surplus capacity across the city and remove the on-going financial burden of the school's licensed deficit from the Council, these considerations do not outweigh the impact on pupils and families, and the Council does not consider closure to be a proportionate or acceptable course of action.
- 4.9 More broadly, the level of surplus places across the city's secondary schools is a matter the Council keeps under ongoing review as part of its statutory duty to manage school place planning. Where surplus capacity persists across a number of schools, the Council may, in consultation with the Schools Adjudicator, consider whether a reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN) at one or more other secondary schools would be a more appropriate mechanism for managing surplus places across the city, rather than the closure of an individual school. Any such change would be subject to the appropriate statutory process and consultation.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 The Council has undertaken two rounds of public consultation on the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2013 and the Department for Education's statutory guidance on school organisation.
- 5.2 A first round of consultation ran from 22 April 2025 to 3 June 2025 and received 169 responses. Feedback from this consultation made clear that respondents wanted to see detailed plans, costings and visualisations before any decision was taken. In response to this feedback, the Council and school commissioned further architectural and design work to develop the proposals to a level of detail that would allow respondents to make an informed view.
- 5.3 A second round of public consultation ran from 13 April to 25 May 2026, accompanied by site plans, 3D visualisations, costings and a description of the educational model on a single site. Three public meetings were held: in person at the Valley Campus on 23 April, at the Nevill Campus on 27 April, and online on 6 May 2026 alongside the Your Voice online portal. The

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consultation was publicised through the school's website, the Council's website and Your Voice portal, and direct communication to parents and carers. A total of 109 responses were received via the Your Voice portal, with a completion rate of 96.5%, and two further submissions were received by email.

- 5.4 Ward councillors were briefed ahead of both rounds of consultation and have been kept informed of progress throughout the statutory process. The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Youth Services and Cabinet Member for Finance and City Regeneration has been consulted at key stages of the proposal's development.
- 5.5 The statutory notice was published on 8 June 2026, opening a four-week representation period which closed on 6 July 2026. Notices were displayed at school entrances and gates, on both school websites, the Council website, the Your Voice portal and in the local media. Copies of the full proposal were sent to the Governing Boards of both schools, the Anglican and Catholic dioceses, local ward members, the Member of Parliament for Brighton Pavilion and the Department for Education. 9 formal representations were received during the representation period, a summary of which is provided at Appendix 5
- 5.6 The Council has had regard to the Community Engagement Framework in designing and delivering its engagement approach. The two-stage consultation process, with the second round specifically responding to feedback from the first, reflects the Council's commitment to meaningful engagement rather than consultation as a formality.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The report sets out the projected capital costs of the proposal, set across two phases. These costs, including professional services, are estimated at £7.6m and will be funded from a combination of basic and high needs education capital funding and section 106 resources.
- 6.2 In terms of the disposal of the Valley campus there are three scenarios, giving a range of indicative opinions of value falling between £5.4m and £10.56m. However, any such future disposal is subject to Secretary of State approval under a Section 77 application. It should be noted that, if permission is granted, the council intends that a proportion of the receipt will be used to reimburse the high needs capital budget.
- 6.3 As set out in the report, the proposal to consolidate to one site is intended to provide the most sustainable long-term option for the school, both educationally and financially. The latest budget plan does indicate an in-year surplus in from the 2029/30 financial year onwards.

Name of finance officer consulted: Steve Williams Date consulted:
23/06/2026

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7. Legal implications

- 7.1 The proposal to consolidate Hove Park School onto a single site at the Nevill Campus is a prescribed alteration to a maintained school and must be determined in accordance with the requirements of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, and relevant Department for Education statutory guidance. The Council must be satisfied that the required statutory process has been followed and that all consultation responses and representations have been taken into account before reaching a decision.
- 7.2 In making its decision, Cabinet must have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty) and should consider the Equalities Impact Assessment accompanying this report.
- 7.3 The proposed disposal of the Valley Campus will be subject to separate statutory approvals. Any disposal of school playing field land will require the consent of the Secretary of State under section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- 7.4 Any future disposal of the Valley Campus must also comply with the Council's statutory obligations relating to the disposal of local authority land, including the duty to obtain best consideration where applicable.

Name of lawyer consulted: Sandra O'brien Date consulted: 26/06/26

8. Equalities implications

- 8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the proposal and is attached at Appendix 2. The EIA considers the impact of the consolidation and disposal on each of the protected characteristics under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as well as on socio-economic disadvantage.

9. Sustainability implications

- 9.1 The capital works at the Nevill Campus will be specified to meet the Council's standards on energy efficiency, building services and materials, with a view to reducing the school's operational carbon footprint on a single site compared with the current two-site operation.
- 9.2 Consolidation onto a single site removes the daily movement of staff and resources between the two campuses and is expected to reduce overall site-related energy, water use and waste.
- 9.3 Any future use of the Valley Campus following disposal will be subject to the planning system, including consideration of sustainability matters as part of the relevant planning processes.

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Other Implications

10. Procurement implications

- 10.1 Procurement of the capital works at the Nevill Campus and the marketing of the Valley Campus for disposal will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended), and the duty under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of disposal.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1 Consolidation onto a single site at the Nevill Campus offers Hove Park School a sustainable long-term future. It strengthens the educational offer, supports financial recovery from the licensed deficit, and enables the Council to make best use of its school estate.
- 11.2 The proposal has been the subject of two rounds of public consultation and a statutory representation period. The matters raised have been considered carefully. Weighing the consultation responses alongside the educational, financial and estate considerations, the view is that merging onto one site offers the most sustainable long-term future for the school.
- 11.3 Having now received sufficiently detailed financial planning from the Governing Board, the Council is satisfied that the proposed capital works and the move to one site will support Hove Park School in remaining a viable school and in making significant reductions to its historical deficit, on account of the efficiencies that will be realised. This financial assurance, together with the rejection of closure as a viable option for the reasons set out above, supports proceeding with the delivery of the proposed capital works.

Supporting Documentation

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Site Plans and 3D Images
Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix 3 Statutory Notice
Appendix 4 Full Proposal Information
Appendix 5 Summary of Formal Representations made during Statutory Notice
Appendix 6 Secondary School Pupil Forecast