



Statutory Proposal

Alteration to Leopold Primary School – Full Proposal

Publication Date: Thursday 29 February 2024

Deadline for representations: Thursday 28 March 2024

School and Local Authority details

The Proposer:

London Borough of Brent, Children and Young People, 3rd Floor Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ.

The School:

Leopold Primary School (Community), Hawkshead Road, London, NW10 9UR

Leopold Primary School is a co-educational community school with a published admission number of 120 places in the Reception year group (four forms of entry). Two forms of entry in this year group are allocated at the main site in Hawkshead Road, London, NW10 9UR and two forms of entry are allocated at the annex site, known as the 'Gwenneth Rickus Site' or the 'Gwenneth Rickus Building' at 242-250 Brentfield Road, Neasden, NW10 8HE.

Since 2013, the Governing Board of Leopold Primary School has managed the educational provision and staffing at the Gwenneth Rickus site as an extension of their existing provision. This arrangement was made permanent in 2015 and Leopold Primary School operates as one school with one leadership team and governing body across two sites.

Leopold Primary School has an age range of 3-11 years (including the nursery provision). This is the age range the establishment is legally allowed to make provision for. There are currently 840 places between both sites for years Reception to Year 6, not including nursery places with 420 at the main site in Hawkshead Road and 420 at the Gwenneth Rickus site.

Pupils attending each site continue attending the site until the end of Year 6, at which point they must apply to attend a secondary school or arrange to continue their education elsewhere. Children do not move between sites for educational purposes and parents view each site as a separate school serving its own community.

There are currently 246 pupils on the Gwenneth Rickus site. The current Key Stage one year groups each have less than 30 pupils on roll. There are 73 vacancies in the Key Stage two year groups.

The school achieves good outcomes for pupils across both sites and was rated by Ofsted as 'Good' in June 2022.

Description of alteration and evidence of demand

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(3) and 21(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) that Brent Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Leopold Primary School, Hawkshead Road, London, NW10 9UR (Department for Education number 3042028).

In response to reduced demand for primary school places across the local area, it is proposed to close the educational provision of Leopold Primary School on the Gwenneth Rickus site.

This will involve:

- a variation of the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) from 120 to 60 for September 2025
- implementing a phased closure of the provision on the Gwenneth Rickus site.

The decision to propose the closure of the Gwenneth Rickus site of Leopold Primary School has been made in response to low demand in Primary Planning Area 4 (which includes the wards of Stonebridge, Roundwood and Harlesden and Kensal Green) and projections that indicate reducing demand for primary places across Brent (as indicated in the London Borough of Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028, approved by Cabinet in October 2023).

This area benefited from substantial expansion of school capacity between 2005 and 2017 in response to increasing demand for school places. However, demand for places in the area has been reducing over the past six years and the area currently has the highest number and percentage of spare places of Brent's six primary place planning areas. There are a total of 5,985 places available in the 12 schools in the area, but the number of pupils on roll has reduced from 5,249 in 2017 to 4,120 in 2023. As a result, there are high levels of spare places in each year group and the forecasts (based on the 2023 census) suggests this will not change over the next five years.

Demand for Leopold Primary School has been falling since 2018 and the Gwenneth Rickus site currently operates as one form of entry in some year groups, including Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. There are also spare places at the Hawkshead Road site in all year groups. In the context of this falling demand, there is no longer a need for Leopold Primary school to be split across two sites.

Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

Leopold Primary School is one of 12 schools in the area known as Primary Place Planning Area 4 which covers the wards of Stonebridge, Roundwood, and Harlesden and Kensal Green and includes the following schools: Brentfield Primary School, Donnington Primary School, Furness Primary School, Harlesden Primary School, John Keble CE Primary School, Leopold Primary School, Mitchell Brook Primary School, Newfield Primary School, Our Lady of Lourdes

RC Primary School, St Joseph's RC Primary School, St Mary's CE Primary School and The Stonebridge School.

The Gwenneth Rickus Leopold site is located less than one mile to seven of the Primary schools listed above. There is sufficient availability of school places in the local area to meet the needs of any children who would otherwise have applied for a place at the provision in the future. Children currently receiving education at Hawkshead Road would not be affected and would continue their education at this school site.

Due to the high availability of places in Brent primary schools in Primary Place Planning Area Four, parents currently have a greater chance of securing a place at a preferred good or outstanding school than they did when the Gwenneth Rickus provision was first opened as a temporary provision in 2013.

The effect on other educational institutions within the area

Other schools in Primary Place Planning Area Four will benefit from having additional children on roll to fill some of their spare places.

Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long-term value for money will be achieved.

The cost of relocating children to alternative schools will be negligible, as a phased closure is proposed that will mean very few children would need to move school. If parents request a school move, this function will be carried out within the existing functions of Brent Council's School Admission and School Organisation team.

The closure of the Gwenneth Rickus site would be likely to impact on the required staffing for Leopold Primary School, as it would lead to a reduction in overall staffing levels. This could therefore result in the possibility for the need to consider redundancies and/or relocation of staff to the Hawkshead Road site. The school, supported by the local authority, would need to follow the Managing Change in Schools policy and procedure including undergoing consultation with affected staff and trade unions to effect the changes in due course.

The cost of maintaining the Gwenneth Rickus site following the closure of the provision will be met by the local authority. Should a decision be made to close the school site then the Council will consider the potential future use for the site in the context of its priorities which could include future educational use.

Implementation plan

Brent Council is proposing to seek agreement, from the Schools Adjudicator to a variation to the admission arrangements for Leopold Primary School so that the Published Admission Number for the school is reduced from 120 to 60 for September 2025.

Brent Council is proposing to implement a phased closure of the provision on the Leopold Primary School Gwenneth Rickus site so no new admissions are made into any Reception

cohort from September 2025 and the site is fully closed at the end of July 2027. This will allow the majority of children to complete their current key stage before the provision is closed.

The children directly affected by this proposal are those currently in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, as well as those children who will be admitted to the Gwenneth Rickus site in Reception in September 2024. This means that only children in Reception and Year 1 and Year 2 in academic year 2024/25 would need to move to the Hawkshead Road site if the Gwenneth Rickus site closed in summer 2027. The current Year 3 would complete their Year 6 in July 2027 and not be directly affected by the closure. From September 2025 any children offered a reception place at Leopold Primary School through co-ordination would only be admitted onto the Hawkshead Road site.

Children attending the site at the end of the 2026/27 academic year will be able to continue their education at the main site on Hawkshead Road. This will include the cohort of children attending the provision with a date of birth between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2020.

Parents will also be able to apply to change their child's school either from September 2027 or at any other time in advance through the normal In-Year admissions process but they are encouraged to keep their child educated at Leopold Primary School. For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan which names the Gwenneth Rickus site provision, an alternative local school could be identified if this was parental preference through consultation with the Brent Special Educational Needs Advice 0-25 Team.

While the phased closure programme is underway, in-Year admission applications may still be made to any year group with an active class and places will still be available for up to 30 children in each class.

Statement explaining the procedure for responses: support, objections and comments.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal any person may make objections, agreements and comments on the proposal in writing. They can do this in the following ways:

Write to Michael Rollin, Admissions and School Organisation Manager, Children and Young People, London Borough of Brent, 3rd Floor, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ or email: leopoldconsultation@brent.gov.uk

Provide your views via the Brent's Have Your Say consultation portal www.brent.gov.uk/neighbourhoods-and-communities/have-your-say,

This proposal is available on this webpage www.brent.gov.uk/leopoldconsultation where you can find facilities to translate it into different languages.

Hard copies of this document will be available in English, Arabic and Somali and can be obtained by writing to Michael Rollin at the address above or emailing leopoldconsultation@brent.gov.uk. They are also available from both of the Leopold School sites.

All applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to these proposals have been complied with.

The last date for representations is **Thursday 28 March 2024**.

Signed: 

Shirley Parks
Director, Safeguarding, Partnerships and Strategy

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