

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 13th July 2010

Item No.8 - School places verbal update

Primary Update

Reception 2010 applications

3817 applications were received by the closing date of 26th February 2010. This compares to 3583 last year. First round offers were made on 23rd April 2010. Since the closing date a further 264 applications have been received making a total at 9th July of 4081 applications. These applications are from Brent resident and non resident children. Many children not resident in Brent apply for and secure Brent school places, for example, faith schools and Brent schools closely bordering neighbouring boroughs.

At 9th July 2010 there were 250 unplaced (Brent resident) reception children and 65 vacancies in schools – a net shortage of 185 places. To provide a comparison at 11th September 2009 there were 135 unplaced children and 79 vacancies in schools. There is inevitably some movement prior to the start of term, as some children who have been offered places in April do not take up the place or let the council know. However, applications continue to come in all through the year, and it is vital to have some spare capacity in September for those new applications. 47 children are holding places for September 2010 but their parents have not confirmed that they will take them up. These will be followed up to either confirm the allocation or withdraw the place and offer it to another child.

Brent primary schools have provided an additional 105 places for September 2010

Brentfield Primary school – bulge class 30

Braintcroft Primary school – bulge class with a view to permanent expansion 30

Wykeham primary School – bulge class 30

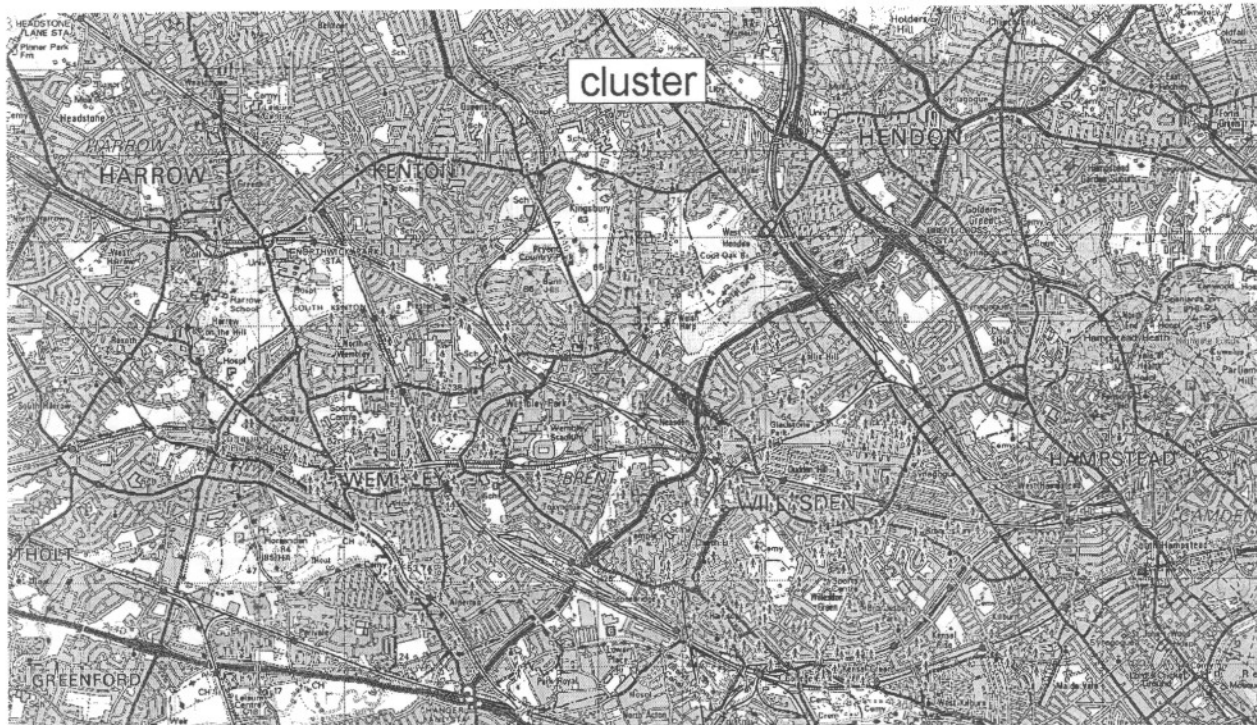
St Robert Southwell – 15 places to bring admission number to 60

As a result there are 3502 reception places in Brent schools for September 2010.

All schools have been approached and asked again to consider expanding and/or to provide a bulge class. Feasibility studies have been carried out by Watts Group on nine primary schools to explore if possible to provide additional places on sites. Three of the schools listed above were identified through this process; it was not feasible to continue with the other six schools for a variety of reasons. Capital City Academy has indicated a willingness to offer all through provision and is prepared to offer 60 reception places from January 2011 subject to identifying an acceptable location on the existing site and obtaining planning permission. Discussions are underway with Preston Manor to offer 60 places in temporary accommodation on their site, again with a view to discuss all through provision at Preston Manor for the future. Discussions are underway with nursery schools and other providers to offer additional reception places for September 2010.

Newfield Primary School provided a bulge class last year (2009) and would be willing to consider permanent expansion. There are constraints around the land available for this, but the Headteacher and Governors continue to be very interested in taking this forward.

The attached cluster map shows the location of the current unplaced children, and that these are dispersed across the borough – with noticeable groupings on the borders with Camden, Harrow and Ealing.



Primary aged children out of school

The pressure on current year (2009/10) reception places continues with 77 reception aged children without a place on 9th July 2010. Applications received after the closing date have been most difficult to find a place to offer as once schools are full at the start of the year there is little movement. Some children have been offered places but families have rejected these as the offer is not of their choice and would involve a long or complicated journey.

	20 th October 09	4 th December 09	10 th February 10	19 th March 10	9 th July 2010
Year 1	37	23	32	30	32
Year 2	19	10	10	15	15
Year 3	20	12	7	15	16
Year 4	12	4	7	4	6
Year 5	23	7	6	9	16
Year 6	4	1	6	0	12
	115	57	68	73	174

The Department for Education requires the Council to co ordinate applications for all schools from September 2010. This means that from September all applications for all schools in Brent will have to be made to the Local Authority. This will allow the LA to offer places at VA and foundation schools as well as community schools. The pressure on school places is becoming greater for all primary year groups, not just Reception and Year One. Of the 35 community schools only two, Kensal Rise and Mora have significant numbers of vacancies however; these are in the upper year groups only from year 3 onwards. A number of families newly arriving in Brent are seeking school places for several children across the primary age range – it is not always possible to offer all the children in a family a place in the same school due to a shortage of vacancies.

Secondary update

11+ Transfer for September 2010

The new places available at the Ark Academy have had an impact on the vacancy situation within other schools, and will provide more choice for parents as more schools have vacancies at this stage of the process than in previous years. There will be sufficient capacity in year 7 for September 2010 for all Brent pupils. As of 9th July 2010 there are 77 unplaced pupils (39 boys and 38 girls) but 273 vacancies in Brent schools. All 11+ transfer children have been offered a place.

Casual in year secondary admissions

While the position for 11+ transfers has been greatly eased by the new places at Ark academy, the new places will not impact on other year groups until the school has taken children in all year groups which will take another four years. The number of children seeking in year admission to secondary schools continues to increase as shown by the numbers below. The applications are made up of new arrivals from overseas and children moving into Brent from other London boroughs, and from other parts of the UK. New arrivals have been monitored since January 2006.

Full year figures for secondary aged new arrivals

2006 - 734

2007 - 807

2008 - 777

2009 – 849

2010 – 353 (January – June 2010)

All Brent secondary schools other than Cardinal Hinsley and Crest Boy's Academy are currently full in all year groups. Cardinal Hinsley has vacancies in all year groups and welcomes children of all faiths however; the majority of new arrivals do not want to attend a Catholic faith school or a boy's only school. Crest Boys Academy has vacancies in year 7 and 8.

Secondary aged children out of school

	20 th October 2009	4 th December 2009	12 th February 2010	19 th March 2010	9 th July 2010
Year 7	4	9	21	11	21
Year 8	13	15	17	9	26
Year 9	8	20	31	11	23
Year 10	18	23	29	9	26
Year 11	2	21	20	7	Academic year has finished for Year 11 pupils
Total	45	88	118	47	96

The most recent assessment centre was held between 5 – 7th July and all but 18 of the secondary aged children out of school are awaiting confirmation of an admission date.

Work has been done to ensure the transfer of pupils from the EAL projects to schools and to college courses as appropriate for September 2010.