Options for the future of Tiverton Primary School - consultation

Have your say by 18 December 2024

In recent years many London boroughs have experienced a significant fall in pupil numbers. The reasons behind this are thought to include lower birth rates, the cap on housing benefits, and families leaving London (as a result of the housing crisis, the cost of living, Brexit, and the pandemic).

In Haringey the number of primary aged children joining our primary schools has been in steady decline since 2014, a trend also observed across many of our neighbouring boroughs. Primary pupil rolls i.e. the number of children attending primary schools in Haringey, has reduced by over 2,000 in just 5 years: 21,300 in 2019 to 19,100 in 2024 (January school census data) and pupil numbers are forecast to continue falling until at least 2028.

Tiverton Primary School is a community school maintained by Haringey Council, located on Pulford Road, N15 6SP. In June 2023, Ofsted rated the school as 'Requiring Improvement'. Since 2019, there has been a gradual decline in pupils on roll at the school. There were a total of 60 pupils across each year group, however this has now reduced to less than 30 students per year.

School Funding

Haringey Council is very concerned that Tiverton Primary school may not be financially viable in the long run. School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll (per-pupil funding) and falling rolls means reduced funding which over time creates increasing financial pressures on schools. Smaller schools such as Tiverton can feel the greatest impact on funding due to the drop in children attending. This therefore impacts the funding available and compromises their ability to continue providing a high quality of education. Less funding means less money for staff, resources, equipment, ability to pay bills, maintenance work, as well as extracurricular activities.

High quality education and Cabinet decision to consult

The council has a duty to provide high quality education for all school aged children in the borough. Unless we act now, in time, the quality of education in a school with falling rolls will be impacted due to diminished access to resources and funding.

On 15 October 2024 Haringey Council's Cabinet agreed to consult on options for the future of Tiverton Primary School.

We have decided to carry out this consultation to consider a range of options for the future of Tiverton Primary school. There are several ways you can respond to the consultation. At the end of this consultation period, a decision whether to proceed to the next stage and issue a statutory notice on firmer proposals will be taken by Haringey Council's Cabinet. If this happens, this is likely to be in February next year.

Why are we consulting?

Falling pupil numbers

Haringey is divided into five Planning Areas (PAs) for the purpose of planning school places. See map of Haringey PAs on page 4 below.

Due to a continued fall in demand for school places in PA3, Tiverton is currently operating as a 1 form entry (1fe) primary school which means one class of 30 pupils per year group. Prior to 2020, the school had a published admission number (PAN) of 60. This was reduced to 30 from September 2020 to align with lower demand.

Total number of pupils on roll (reception to year 6)

Tiverton Primary School							
School Net Capacity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Oct. 2024*
420	**307**	**310**	**327**	**297**	**271**	**245**	**152**

Source: 2019-2024 January school census (PLASC) data

*School admissions data derived from roll return submitted by the school

Over several years the pupil roll at Tiverton Primary School has significantly fallen. The data above shows how pupil rolls have fallen at Tiverton Primary school from 307 in 2019 to 152 as shown from our most recent roll return data submitted by the school.

School financial position

As previously mentioned, school funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and with falling rolls equating to reduced funding, it is extremely difficult for a school such as Tiverton Primary School to remain financially viable as most school funding is pupil-based in line with the School's National Funding Formula.

Unused or vacant school places create an immediate cost pressure for a school through a reduced budget, which in turn can affect the overall sustainability and quality of education standards. When several schools across a planning area have lower pupil rolls it can also negatively impact school funding at these schools.

Due to the reduction in the number of pupils on roll, Tiverton Primary School has seen a reduction in the funding they receive to run the school in recent years. This has resulted in significant financial challenges.

Curriculum challenge

Schools are required to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. With the significant fall and the current projection of no increase to the current numbers on roll this objective will be very difficult for the school to sustain as a greater proportion of the school's budget will be spent on fixed costs such as teaching staff and building costs with little left over for curriculum expenditure and enrichment activities.

Mitigating against future risk

Since 2018-19 the school has received financial support from the local authority, including several school loans in support of its financial pressures and approved licenced deficit school balance. In 2023-24 the school failed to meet the Department for Education's (DfE) Schools Financial Review Statement (SFVS) as reported to the DfE and also received a `Nil Assurance' school audit report.

Whilst the Headteacher and senior leaders continue to robustly address educational standards with support from the council's school improvement partner, Haringey Education Partnership (HEP), a consultation on the options for the future of the school is necessary owing to the significant decline in pupil numbers and concerns around the long-term financial viability of the school.

Options available

Continue with no change

Given the falling school rolls across London and in local schools in Haringey's PA3 this option is likely to be unviable. The school also has a deficit budget and there is a significant risk that this will increase at a greater rate due to further falls in pupil rolls.

In time, a school affected by income loss will almost inevitably see performance and standards fall. It is the duty of the council to ensure that the quality of education for children, and stability for teaching and support staff, take priority.

This is a highly cost-inefficient option and is not sustainable. Taking no action to the issues affecting a school with falling rolls is unlikely to be an acceptable option available to the council.

Federation

A federation is defined in law as two or more maintained schools operating under the governance of a single governing body.

Federated schools operate in collaboration with each other, sharing senior staff and governing bodies, which allows them to maximise good educational practice, while achieving cost savings.

Tiverton Primary School would be required to work with Haringey Council to identify another school that would see the benefits in federation. With low numbers of pupils on roll and uncertainty regarding its future, it would be unlikely that another school would deem it viable to federate with Tiverton Primary School. To date, there has been no appetite expressed by any school to federate with Tiverton Primary.

Amalgamation

An amalgamation is defined as bringing together two (or more) maintained schools as one single school, located on the same site and under the same leadership and governance arrangements.

An amalgamation can only be achieved by closing one or more schools and providing spaces for displaced children in another 'host' school.

This option would involve the host school retaining its original DfE school number as it is not technically considered a new school. However, following the amalgamation process, governors have the option to rename the school to create a new identity for the merged schools. Should Tiverton Primary School amalgamate with another school it would close and reform as part of a new and bigger entity, i.e. a new amalgamated school.

For practical reasons, an amalgamation would need to be with another school within a reasonable travelling distance. Seven Sisters Primary School is a nearby community school maintained by the local authority and located on South Grove N15 within PA3. The last Ofsted inspection of the school (March 2019) rated the school as 'Good'. If an amalgamation was progressed, the council would be committed to working closely with the newly established school to maintain high standards and ensure the successful learning of all pupils at the school.

The data below shows that Tiverton and nearby Seven Sisters Primary School have both seen pupil rolls fall between 2019 and 2024.

Total number of pupils on roll (reception to year 6)

School	School Net Capacity	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Oct 2024*
Seven Sisters Primary	420	323	306	272	257	244	221	203
Tiverton Primary	420	307	310	327	297	271	245	152

Source: 2019-2024 January school census (PLASC) data
*School admissions data derived from roll returns submitted by schools

An amalgamation between Tiverton Primary and Seven Sisters could be a viable option and is fundamentally due to the similar type and characteristics of two community schools located in close proximity to one other, minimising disruption for families and young people, but also due to both schools having a high surplus as well as high unused capacity in their buildings.

As of 15 October 2024, the combined pupil roll of Tiverton and Seven Sisters Primary schools is less than 420. Tiverton Primary school currently has 152 pupils on roll and Seven Sisters has 203 pupils. Amalgamating Tiverton Primary with Seven Sisters Primary at the Seven Sisters site (rather than vice versa) is seen as more optimal due to the larger and more stable pupil roll currently at Seven Sisters school, it's recent capital investment in buildings and its additional SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) provision. More specifically, the Seven Sisters SEND Nurture Hub has been operating successfully for several years and children attending the Hub are provided with a bespoke programme to enable them to understand their social and emotional needs.

Seven Sisters Primary school was historically a 3 form (3fe) entry school (three classes of 30 pupils per year group) in the early 2000's. The fabric and structure of the building remains very robust. The space and current bespoke programmes offered to children with SEND means it is more compatible to meet the needs of displaced pupils.

Closure

The local authority has a statutory duty to ensure the efficient use of resources. Maintaining a school with a declining roll could not be considered efficient given that there are surplus places in other local schools.

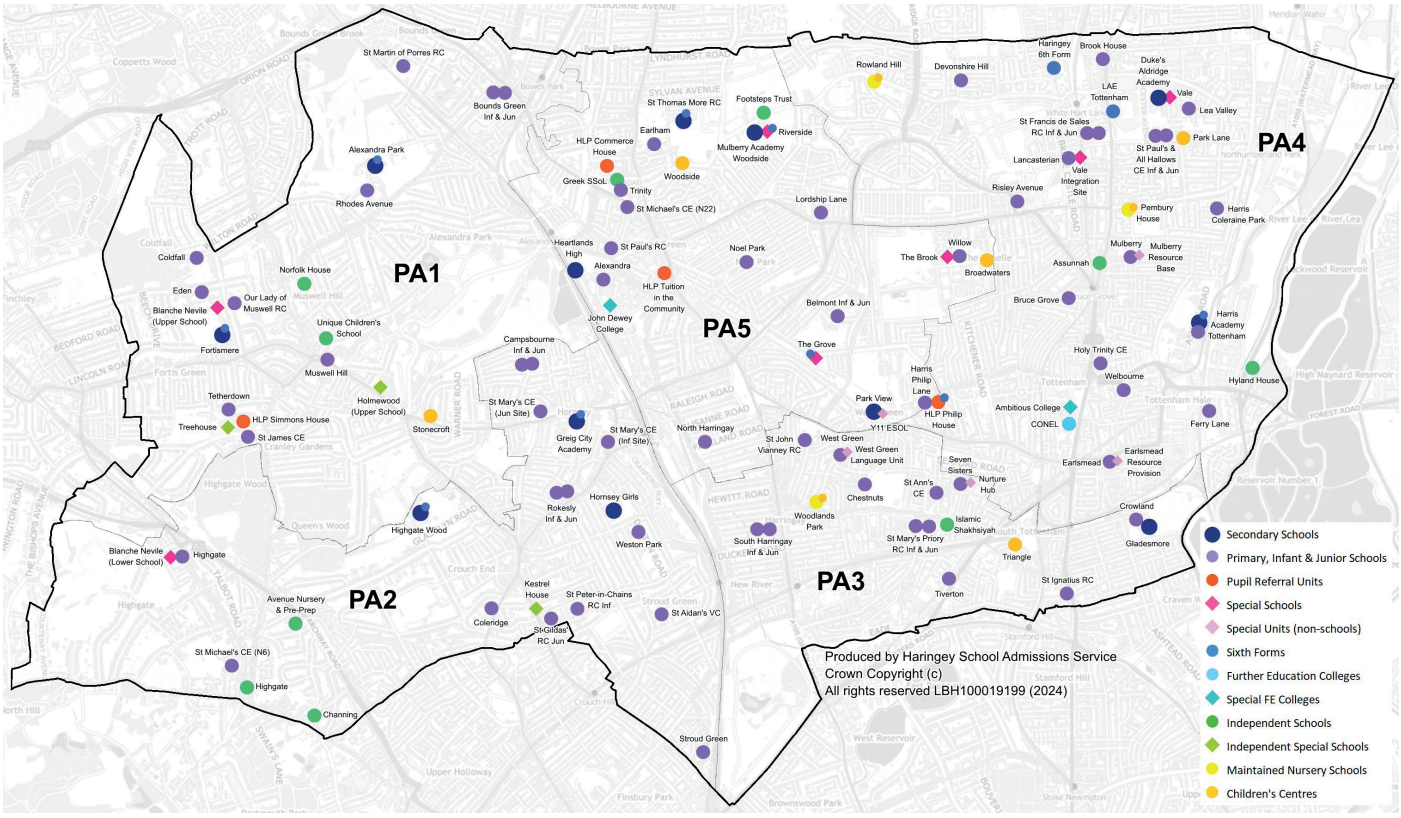
A full and immediate closure of Tiverton is a viable option but would require all pupils on roll to join the roll of another school. There are sufficient primary school places in the local area that can provide a suitable alternative for displaced pupils.

If the final decision is to close the school, the admissions team at Haringey Council will work closely to support families to make a planned transition to a new school for the start of the new academic year in September 2025. There are enough places at other schools within walking distance for all pupils currently on roll at Tiverton Primary to join. The council will work closely with affected families to ensure all children are offered support to find a suitable alternative school place. Families may also seek to secure a place at an alternative school via the in-year admissions process at any time.

Children with SEND, with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), will receive additional support to ensure a smooth transition.

Those interested can share their views by taking part in the consultation until **18 December 2024** inclusive.

Map of Haringey Planning Areas



Prescribed stages and proposed timeline for the consultation process

Stage one: Pre-publication consultation	4 November – 18 December 2024	This is the start of the process where the local authority provides information about what is being proposed and gathers the views on interested parties to help them develop the proposals.
Stage two: Publication	February 2025	A legal notice is published in the local paper and on the council website which sets out brief details of the proposal and where more information can be found. It also gives details of where objections and comments can be sent and the closing date for these. It marks the start of the 28 days representation period or formal consultation.
Stage three: Representation	February – March 2025	This is the formal consultation stage. During this period, any person or organisation can submit comments on the proposal to the LA, to be taken into account by the decision maker.
Stage four: Decision	May 2025	All of the objections and comments gathered during the representation period are provided to the decision maker (Council's Cabinet of Elected Members) to enable them to make the final decision. A statutory notice outlining the decision will be published.
Stage five: Implementation	Summer Term	The decision made in stage four is implemented and the school closes on the last day of the summer term (Tuesday 22 July 2025).

HAVE YOUR SAY by 18 December 2024

How can I share my views on the proposals?

We are now asking parents, staff, and all interested stakeholders to share their views as part of this consultation on the proposals.

Consultation response

You can let us know what you think by:

Completing our online questionnaire: **haringeyprimaryschools.commonplace.is**

Or filling out the questionnaire below and mailing it to:

The Admissions Service 5th Floor 48 Station Road, Wood Green, London, N22 7TY

Q1) To what extent, do you support the following options for the future of Tiverton Primary school? Please tick one answer for each option:

	Very supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Unsupportive	Very unsupportive
No change	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Federation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Amalgamation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Closure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q2) Please provide reasons for your views below:

Equalities Monitoring Questions

Collecting, analysing, and using equalities information helps us to understand how our policies and activities are affecting various sections of our communities and helps us to identify any inequalities that may need to be addressed. We will be grateful if you could complete and return this form. The information you provide on this form will be held in the strictest confidence and only be used for the purpose stated above.

Age Which age group applies to you?

- ☐ Under 16
- ☐ 17-21
- ☐ 22-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60-74
- ☐ 75+

Sex Please tick the box that best describes your sex

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ I use another term (please specify): _____

Trans

Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were regarded to be at birth.

Do you consider yourself to be trans?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability if she/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Are you disabled?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Please tell us which of the following impairment groups apply to you. You may tick more than one box.

- ☐ Visual Impairment
- ☐ Physical Impairment
- ☐ Deaf / BSL User
- ☐ Hearing Impairment
- ☐ Mental health/mental distress issues
- ☐ Learning difficulties
- ☐ Long term health condition/ hidden impairment
- ☐ Neurodiverse
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Ethnicity Please tick the box that best describes your ethnic group

Asian or Asian British:

- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Any other Asian background: (please specify):

Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African:

- ☐ African
- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ Any other Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African background (please specify):

Other ethnic group:

- ☐ Arab
- ☐ Kurdish
- ☐ Turkish
- ☐ Any other ethnic group (please specify):

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups:

- ☐ White and Asian
- ☐ White and Black African
- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ Any other Mixed or Multiple background (please specify):

White:

- ☐ English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- ☐ Roma
- ☐ Any other White background (please specify):

- ☐ Prefer to self-describe (please specify):
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Sexual Orientation **Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?**

☐ Bi ☐ Gay / Lesbian ☐ Heterosexual / Straight ☐ Prefer not to say

☐ I use another term (please specify):

Religion or belief **How would you describe your religion or belief? Please tick as appropriate**

☐ Atheist ☐ Christian ☐ Jewish ☐ Rastafarian

☐ Buddhist ☐ Hindu ☐ Muslim ☐ Sikh

☐ Prefer not to say ☐ No Religion ☐ Prefer to self-describe:

Pregnancy and maternity **Please tick one box**

Are you pregnant?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Have you had a baby in the last 12 months?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Language **Please tick the boxes that best describe your preferred language**

☐ Albanian ☐ English ☐ Japanese ☐ Russian

☐ Akan ☐ French ☐ Kurdish ☐ Somali

☐ Arabic ☐ German ☐ Lithuanian ☐ Spanish

☐ Bengali ☐ Greek ☐ Persian/Farsi ☐ Filipino

- ☐ Bulgarian
- ☐ BSL User
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Gujarati
- ☐ Hungarian
- ☐ Italian
- ☐ Polish
- ☐ Portuguese
- ☐ Romanian
- ☐ Turkish
- ☐ Urdu
- ☐ Yiddish
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Thank you for completing and returning this form.

FAQs

Why was Tiverton primary school chosen for this consultation?

The situation regarding falling pupil rolls and surplus primary school places is kept under constant review. Our annual **School Place Planning report** is a key document that outlines historic data on school place demand and projected future demand. It, along with a range of other school-level data has helped the council decide which schools are best placed to be consulted on options for the future.

The council is particularly mindful of the overall primary roll position and future pupil roll projections of Tiverton Primary School and the schools' budget position at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. A consultation on the options for the future of the school has been triggered by a lack of demand for places at the school against a backdrop of falling demand in PA3 coupled with concerns about the long-term financial viability of the school.

Are falling pupil rolls a Haringey issue?

No. Most boroughs across London have been experiencing sharp falls in demand for primary school places for several years now. For instance, our neighbouring borough Hackney permanently closed four primary schools in August 2024 in response to this problem and is currently consulting on changes that would affect up to six primary schools on 31 August 2025.

The reasons for the decline are varied but related to lower birth rates; the cap on rent benefits; families leaving the capital as a result of the housing crisis; Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.

What has already been done to cope with falls in the number of pupils?

The council is continually working with schools to mitigate the effects of falling pupil rolls. Measures taken so far include staffing restructures, reducing planned admission numbers, combining year groups and classes in the school, establishing local school partnerships to achieve savings, limiting extra-curricular activities such as school trips, and establishing school budget deficit recovery plans. However, these measures have not, in every case, managed to avoid the need to consider other options.

Have any decisions been made already on the future of Tiverton Primary school?

No. This consultation aims to examine options and receive the views and opinions of affected stakeholders.

What will be done to ensure the wellbeing of all children and families if they need to change schools?

Our primary schools are very experienced in supporting children that transition to secondary schools, as well as those that are transferring from one school to another during the school year. If the final decision of the Cabinet is to proceed with closure or amalgamation, we will support families and children to ensure that transition plans have as little impact as possible on the children's wellbeing, meeting the needs of those most vulnerable.

Will there be more support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?

All schools in Haringey provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for children with SEND. Many of our schools have a high number of pupils with SEND, and one of our priorities in recent years has been to deliver more new SEND places in the borough.

If an amalgamation or closure was progressed, children with SEND, with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), will receive additional support to ensure a smooth transition.

What will happen with the staff of the schools affected?

In the event that Tiverton Primary School amalgamates or closes, the council will do everything it can to help staff find alternative roles. However, as a last resort, some staff will be offered redundancy, which the council hopes would be managed through voluntary redundancies and retirements package.

We will work with the leadership team of Tiverton Primary School to assess the full impact on staff. Staff and all other relevant parties including trade unions would be consulted about any potential changes.

How will you ensure standards of teaching are maintained between now and any potential merger/closure?

Whilst options for the future of the school are being considered, the council remains firmly committed to ensuring that all pupils on roll are receiving an excellent education that supports them in reaching their potential. Senior leaders are robustly addressing educational standards with support from the council's school improvement partner, Haringey Education Partnership (HEP). Staff will continue to access training and development in the same way.

What if demand for school places increases and there is more need for school places in the future?

Our 2024 School Place Planning report shows that we are projected to have surpluses of spaces in Reception of around 400 places between now and the end of the decade should action not be undertaken. There is therefore a lot of spare capacity in the system and even if existing primary schools reduced their entry (as many have done in recent years including Tiverton) they will still retain the physical capacity to revert to their original capacity if required. That said our projections up until 2030 do not indicate any additional demand for primary school places.

Are other primary schools at risk? Can the council guarantee that the schools children would move to wouldn't also close in a few years?

Other primary schools are at risk due to falling pupil rolls across the borough. Reducing the number of school places will help the finances of many schools but there can be no guarantee that additional schools won't also need to close in future if pupil rolls continue to fall.

Will secondary schools need to reduce in future years?

We are currently working closely with all our secondary and all-through schools to ensure their capacity matches well with falls we have already started to see in demand. The good results and popularity of Haringey secondary schools will help to protect them from the greatest impact. We are working with our secondary schools to mitigate the future risks.

Can't the council receive more funding for schools?

No. Funding for school places is nationally set and allocated according to pupil numbers. The council has to ensure sufficiency of school places but also ensure there isn't an over-provision of school places as well.

Are there any housing development plans in the areas impacted that would affect the demand for school places?

All housing developments have been incorporated into our calculations for school rolls in PA3 where Tiverton primary school is located. Our latest 2024 School Place Planning report continues to show that future projections for PA3 remain low.

Will there still be sufficient places for all school aged children if all the schools close?

Yes. There will be enough primary school places both in PA3 and across the whole borough. As of October 2024, there are over 250 surplus reception places in Haringey.

Will families have enough time to choose an alternative place for their children if the council decides to close Tiverton Primary school?

In the case of a school closure, families will be supported to secure a place at an alternative school near to their home. The Haringey School Admissions Service will assist parents with information and guidance and support them to apply for alternative schools.
If a proposal to amalgamate is implemented, families will have a guaranteed place at the continuing school. Parents will not need to apply because their child will automatically transfer at the end of the school year.

Parents also have a right to secure a place at an alternative school at any time via the council's In Year Admissions process. Although, we encourage families to keep their children at their current school through to the end of the school year.

The process will be different for children with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP). For these families, parents will be contacted as soon as possible to begin discussion about the transition to alternative schools, in case the council decides to implement proposals in relation to an amalgamation or closure.

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