

Notice of KEY Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	Implementation of Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Unit at Harrow Lodge Primary School for pupils with Communication & Interaction (C&I) needs
Decision Maker:	Councillor Oscar Ford – Cabinet Member for Children & Young People
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Oscar Ford – Cabinet Member for Children & Young People
ELT Lead:	Tara Geere, Director of Children Services
Report Author and contact details:	Pooneeta Mahadeo, School Organisation Manager pooneeta.mahadeo@havering.gov.uk Tel: 01708 431092

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Policy context:	Havering's SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy emphasises the local authority's vision to ensure children, young people, and families have access to the same level of high-quality support and education, wherever they live in Havering. That children and young people with SEND can access the help and support they need to thrive and achieve within their local communities, that they can go to local education provision that meets their needs, access services and play an active role in the community close to where they live.
Financial summary:	The cost of Building works required to provide a SEND unit at Harrow Lodge Primary School has been estimated at £2.6m and this will be funded from within the High Needs Capital grant. SEND units in Havering will be normally funded in accordance with a Place Led Funding approach that complies with the Government's SEND Funding Reforms that came into effect in April 2018. For each place in the SEND unit, Harrow Lodge Primary will receive £30,000. This is made up of £10,000 'place funding' and £20,000 (2025/26 rate) 'top-up funding'.
Reason decision is Key	(a) Expenditure of £500,000 or more (b) Significant effect on two or more Wards
Date notice given of intended decision:	11/08/2025

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Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee:	People
Is it an urgent decision?	No
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	No

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well **X**

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. To support the implementation of a SEND unit at Harrow Lodge Primary School from September 2026.

School	SEND unit	No. of Pupils
Harrow Lodge Primary School	Communication and Interaction needs	12 (4-11 Years of age)

2. To approve the commencement of a tendering process for the construction of a SEND Unit at Harrow Lodge Primary School with a total estimated value of £2.6m.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

[Decision - Outline Proposals to address Early Years, Primary, Secondary and SEND rising rolls – Update to Phase 5 expansion Programme | London Borough of Havering](#)

At the above meeting Cabinet agreed to :

2. **Delegate** the power for Phase 5 of the Expansion Programme to the Cabinet Lead Member for Children & Learning Young People:
 - To take further decisions regarding the implementation of these projects and the approval of which schools/early years/childcare settings should be expanded including any amendments to the proposals above, such as a decision not to proceed or to expand a different school/early years/childcare setting, in the light of developing circumstances or the results of consultation (subject to the appropriate statutory processes).

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. The Council's SEND projections show that they expect the number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan to increase over the next five years. The forecasts show an expected increase from 2023/2024 to 2027/2028 of 44% in Children and Young People in the borough with Communication and interaction needs (C & I).
2. The proposed establishment of a SEND unit in the school will help address the demand for a suitable, local specialist provision for primary aged pupils with C& I. There are currently five primary SEND Units totalling 77 places, catering to the need of C& I. Given the increasing numbers of C&I pupils there is a need for additional primary SEND units to support these children within a mainstream school setting whilst receiving support from a specialist unit so that they can receive the best educational offer possible.
3. The Agreed Place Number (APN) for Harrow Lodge Primary School SEND unit is 12. Admissions to the SEND unit will follow a different procedure from that operating for the rest of the school. Admissions into the SEND unit will be through the Havering SEND EHC panel process. This will not affect pupils who are in the mainstream setting at the school. Pupils attending the SEND unit would be in addition to the mainstream Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 60. There would be 12 planned places in the SEND unit increasing the total number of places from 450 pupils to 462.
4. The creation of this local specialist provision should reduce the need to place pupils outside of Havering, thereby reducing the cost of out of borough placements whilst helping the local authority develop more SEND units/ ARPs within the borough.
5. The new facility will enable young people with C&I needs to have their needs met through a flexible approach, tailored and adapted to the needs of each individual pupil. It will be for pupils who will require specialist support to enable them to access a mainstream primary curriculum. The proposal is that the children will split their time between the mainstream school and having bespoke support within the Unit. The SEND Unit will be staffed by a team of support staff with knowledge and experience of working with young people with C&I, led by qualified teaching staff with recognised additional qualifications. The purpose of the unit will be to support these children to achieve their academic potential, attending a mainstream primary school whilst receiving specialist support from the SEND Unit.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Pupils with complex SEND could be also educated within Special Schools. Expansion of existing special schools is not feasible within the required timeframe due to space constraints. A new special school opened in 2023; however, this is not sufficient to meet the high demand for places. The Council is therefore looking to increasing capacity within its existing resources and is focusing on developing new specialist provision within its own mainstream schools.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

The consultation process covered by this report ran from 10 January 2025 to 07 February 2025. The objective was to inform and gather views regarding the proposal from key stakeholders, particularly parents/carers of pupils and staff at Harrow Lodge Primary School, school governing bodies and other schools within the borough. The Consultation report can be found in Appendix A.

In total, 155 responses were received electronically, 135 respondents were in favour of the proposed SEND unit, 20 respondents were against the proposal. This represents 87.1% and 12.9% respectively, for and against the SEND unit.

The issues raised against the proposal were as follows:

1. Traffic
2. Funding
3. Staffing
4. Quality of teaching
5. There being too many SEND units in the borough already
6. Disruption caused by Construction
7. Safeguarding issues

The responses to these issues are as follows:

1. Traffic - The proposed SEND unit is a small-scale addition to Harrow Lodge Primary School, accommodating only 12 pupils and 7 staff members. As outlined in the Transport Statement, pupil transport will be via pre-arranged Local Authority vehicles (minibuses and taxis/private hire), with drop-offs occurring within the school grounds, not on surrounding streets. Staff travel is expected to generate five additional car trips, with mitigation measures in place to reduce car dependency.

The Transport Statement concludes that the net increase in traffic is minimal and will not materially impact the local highway network. Importantly, the School Street Scheme remains in place to manage peak-time traffic and discourage congestion near the school.

The proposal does not shift the problem outward but rather contains and manages it through on-site drop-off, limited vehicle increase, and active travel promotion. These measures aim to prevent wider disruption and support sustainable travel.

2. Funding - We are seeing increasing numbers of children and young people with SEND in the borough, the complexity of presenting need is also increasing. Havering is opening a 300 place special school for 4 to 19 to meet the increasing demand for special school places.
3. Staffing - The staff in this unit will be highly trained and have SEND experience. They will receive training specifically on emotional regulation to help when

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students become dysregulated. There will be a SEND Unit specific behaviour policy to recognise their specific needs.

4. Quality of teaching - The staff in this unit will be highly trained and have SEND experience. They will receive training specifically on emotional regulation to help when students become dysregulated. There will be a SEND Unit specific behaviour policy to recognise their specific needs.

The SEND Unit will be specifically for students who are unable to access a mainstream curriculum owing to their SEND needs. Instead, they will receive specialist teaching and a bespoke curriculum tailored specifically for their needs. This will mirror our mainstream curriculum as far as possible.

They will have access to some mainstream teaching in subjects such as PE, DT and art, but they will be taught in much smaller groups as suitable for their needs.

5. There being too many SEND units in the borough already - Based on the Autumn Term 2024 Census data, 58 (13%) pupils at Harrow Lodge Primary School were recorded as having some kind of SEN requirement. 37 (8%) were SEN Support and 21 (5%) had an EHCP.
6. Disruption caused by Construction - the Noise Impact Assessment confirms that the new SEND block will not introduce significant new noise sources once operational. The report concludes that the development will have a low adverse noise impact on the surrounding area.
7. Safeguarding issues - The staff in this unit will be highly trained, DBS Checked and have SEND experience. They will receive training specifically on emotional regulation to help when students become dysregulated. There will be a SEND Unit specific behaviour policy to recognise their specific needs.

A parents' consultation meeting was held at Harrow Lodge Primary School on Monday 27 January 2025 as part of the consultation process, there were no attendees.

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Pooneeta Mahadeo

Designation: School Organisation Manager

Signature:

Date:

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

1. Local Authorities should have regard to sections 13, 13A and 14 of the Education Act 1996 which require local authorities to ensure efficient primary, secondary and further education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area. The provision sought will be targeted to those identified with needs as assessed under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
2. The Council has the general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual may generally do.
3. Additionally, the Council has the power to procure the contract under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which, permits the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.
4. The Council will undertake the proposed procurement in respect of the Academy's property, with full authorisation from the Academy. The Council will need to enter into an appropriate agreement with the Academy to protect the Council's position.
5. The proposed contract value is below the applicable works contract threshold stipulated in the Procurement Act 2023 of £5,336,937 and accordingly does not fall within the full rigours of the Act.
6. However, the procurement must still comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs) which requires the Council to use Constructionline to invite at least 7 organisations to tender. The tender procedure set out within this report conforms with the CPRs.
7. The Trust – Partnership Learning has submitted an application for the significant change of adding a SEND Unit to the DfE for approval.
8. The consultation report sets out the representations of all stakeholders to the proposal and the Council's response. It is a public law duty to ensure that each of the responses to the consultation is conscientiously considered before a decision is taken. The Local Authority could decide not to support the application based on the objections received or any other reasons, however, the final decision remains with the Secretary of State.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Capital Implications

The estimated costs for delivering a SEND Unit at Harrow Lodge is as follows:

Estimate for the works:	£ 2,200,000
External works and abnormals:	Incl. above
FF&E:	£ 60,000
Project contingency including inflation:	£ 100,000
Professional fees (including surveys, statutory fees etc.):	£ 283,200
Total project cost:	£ 2,643,200
Total project cost (rounded down):	£ 2,600,000

As part of the implementation of this project, and outside of the contract works, we will transfer money to the Academy (£60,000 as above), to “furnish” the building which we provide as a shell and core, and which needs to be made ready for the teaching activities to take place. FF&E includes furniture fittings and equipment, which is an essential part of creating a building fit for purpose.

The Academy will purchase their own FF&E with this allocation.

Funding: High Needs Capital grant

Risks

There may be a risk that tender costs will be significantly higher than estimated. At which point management action will be taken, following a review of available options, which will include options to reduce costs (as appropriate) or seek additional funding, ideally from funds set aside for the Special Education Needs Schools programme. A separate decision will be submitted prior to the award of contract, which will reassess the financial implications of the project.

Revenue Implications for schools

SEND units in Havering are funded in accordance with a Place Led Funding approach that complies with the Government’s SEND Funding Reforms, which came into effect in April 2018.

SEND Unit revenue funding for placements is from the LA's DfE DSG High Needs allocation.

Any funding is made payable based on the responsibility of each of the different strands, e.g. each place that is agreed with the DfE, school and LA, is then funded by the DfE from the LA's DSG High Needs allocation. For the top-up funding for each place, this is funded by the LA from its DSG High Needs allocation.

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For each place in the SEND unit, Harrow Lodge Primary will receive £30,000. This is made up of £10,000 'place funding' and £20,000 (2025/26 rate) 'top-up funding'.

Revenue Implications for the local authority.

The financial impact of the additional places depends on the cost of supporting those additional pupils if they were not at the Unit. Money is saved when a pupil attends this unit that would have been otherwise been spent in an expensive out of borough provision. Although a Unit place may be more costly than mainstream provision with one-to-one support, it offers a more appropriate environment, specialist expertise and tailored provision. This leads to improved outcomes for pupils and can help prevent higher costs in the longer term.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

The human resources implications for the Academy will be managed by the Trust. There is likely to be a need to recruit additional teaching and support staff and the Academy will undertake the recruitment and selection process in accordance with the Trust's policies and procedures.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are; age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An EHIA has been carried out and the proposals in this report have been assessed as having a positive impact on groups with a protected characteristic – Appendix B

HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The EHIA indicates that the impact of this activity will have a positive impact on groups with a protected characteristic.

- No children will be displaced when the SEND unit opens.
- The expansion would create new job opportunities, positively impacting adults of a working age and supporting the local economy.
- Making appropriate local provision available is positive for children with SEND, meeting increasing demand, and for their parents. Ensuring every child has access to a quality education.
- Communities benefit from children and young people having a good education.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

In general

This project focuses on improving the energy efficiency of buildings within the education estate. It aims to deliver a modern facility that is significantly more energy-efficient and environmentally friendly than other buildings in the portfolio.

The following sections outline the environmental and climate change considerations addressed as part of the building design and procurement of the construction contract, which is subject to the present report. This has been divided into design considerations and contractor selection considerations.

Design element

The design was carried out by professional architects, who recognise, as the Royal Institute of British Architects has declared, that the climate emergency is the most pressing professional challenge of this generation, and that it should receive proportionate attention and care.

Designs have been carried out following the latest and most up to date tools and advice arising from; the RIBA, the BRE, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now the Department for Levelling up) and other professional and advisory bodies.

The impact of carbon emissions were considered as part of the design. Designers of this building are fully aware that the built environment is responsible for a large part of the carbon emissions in Great Britain. Current figures estimate that 47% of carbon emissions arise from the built portfolio. This includes space heating and electricity. The design proposed seeks to reduce space heating related carbon emissions by improving the fabric of the building; by reducing dissipation of heating, we minimise the need for fuel to heat spaces. Furthermore, this educational design has paid particular attention to natural lighting and ventilation. This has the effect of minimising energy spent for artificial lighting and mechanical ventilation. Where artificial lighting is required, the design has privileged LED lighting delivering an energy saving of around 75% and is designed to last up to 25 times longer than incandescent lighting. In light of the above, the targets of energy performance of the building fabric and of its services have been increased to 10% over the Building Regulations levels.

With a view to reduce the dependency of the building to fossil fuels and to reduce the ongoing costs of the service users, the designers have considered implementation of thermal and photovoltaic installations. In this scheme design, PV panels have been implemented and it will be functioning alongside an electric heat pump, which means that the majority of the energy consumed by the facility will be sustainably produced on site.

In order to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change on the designed building and on the business continuity of the service being delivered therein, designers have devoted time and attention to reducing direct summer sunshine into the building fabric, which would create a need for electrical/mechanical cooling.

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Additionally, designers have noted that the risk of flash flooding has greatly increased, and is likely to increase further. Design therefore focus on minimising the risk, not only of flood pressure being displaced to neighbouring properties, but also of damage and disruption of service to the building. Where practicable, floor levels have been raised and other flood resilience measures have been implemented, often beyond the statutory requirements.

With a view to improve local, urban and sub-urban biodiversity, the designers have tried to privilege, within the boundaries of the requirements of the service users, soft landscaping and planted areas to hard landscaped areas, such as concrete or tarmacked areas.

Additionally, in order to improve urban biodiversity, habitat for pollinators and water run-off slowing, green and living roof solutions were initially considered as part of the design. In this scheme design, roof pitching restrictions and roof geometry requirements would make the installation of living roofs un-economic. These have not been included in the design.

Procurement element

As part of the tender exercise, tenders have been asked to produce their environmental credentials, and have been evaluated on this basis, along with other technical queries. In particular, tenders have been evaluated in relation to their response to waste management, energy and carbon footprint questions.

Contractors have been asked to confirm what measures, beyond their contractual obligations, they propose to take in order to minimise the production of waste arising from operations, and how the remaining amount of waste will be recycled and disposed of.

Furthermore, contractors will be asked to confirm what measures, beyond their contractual obligations, they propose to take in order to minimise the use of fossil fuel energy in their operations, and to generally decrease the carbon footprint of operations. Additionally contractors will provide details describing their process to calculate their organisation's carbon footprint and what concrete steps they will have already taken in order to reduce this or offset the emissions produced by their business.

Lastly, as part of the Council's commitment to go paper free, the tender exercise, which some years ago would have resulted in huge amounts of paper being produced, has been moved online and it is now a fully digitalised exercise.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

- A. Harrow Lodge SEND unit Consultation Report
- B. Harrow Lodge EHIA

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Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Details of decision maker

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Name: Councillor Oscar Ford

Cabinet Portfolio held: Children & Young People

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date: 7th October 2025

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Committee Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____