

Statutory Notice

Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Hackney Council is proposing to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School with effect from 31st August 2024.

The reason for this proposal is the significant fall in pupil numbers across Hackney, and at Randal Cremer Primary School. There are currently over 600 vacant Reception school places in Hackney primary schools. Fewer children in schools means less government funding for schools to operate, which over time creates significant financial pressure on schools.

The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School. Should the decision to discontinue the school be agreed, all children attending Randal Cremer Primary School will be offered a place in local schools for September 2024.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>, by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

School Sufficiency & Estates Team
Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London, E8 1DY

The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 3 November 2023 at 5pm. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in December 2023, to take the final decision on whether to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>.

If you require a paper copy of this, please contact us via email at:

school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk.

This document has been translated into the following languages: Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish. These are the languages required to ensure access for families with English as an additional language, as identified by the affected schools in scope during the consultation period. Translated versions are available to view at:

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David Court
Interim Assistant Director School Estates Strategy



Publication date: 6 October 2023

Full Statutory Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

1. Contact details (name and address of the proposer):

Hackney Council
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman Street
London
E8 1DY
Tel: 020 8356 3000
Email: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk

1a. Name, address and category of school proposed to be discontinued:

Randal Cremer Primary School (community school).
Ormsby Street, London, E2 8JG
Tel: 020 7739 8162
Email: admin@randalcremer.hackney.sch.uk

2. Implementation

Randal Cremer Primary School will discontinue on 31 August 2024.

3. Reason for discontinuation

Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the immediate future.

School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough. While primary schools' rolls are falling but the number of schools remains unchanged, there is effectively less financial resource across all schools. This is because many costs are driven by the number of classes in a school, whereas funding levels are driven by the number of pupils.

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.

Despite removing 375 reception places across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32.

The fall in numbers together with reduced funding from central government, means that some of our schools are facing major challenges. If we continue to allow schools to remain open with significant levels of surplus places, it will put schools at severe financial risk which could lead to sudden, unplanned school closures or changes. More than two thirds of Hackney's maintained primary schools have budgeted for an in-year over spend at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. This trend is expected to continue as roll numbers continue to fall.

Randal Cremer Primary School has been seriously affected by a fall in pupil numbers and loss of funding. At the end of the financial year 2022/23 they reported a surplus of £310,032,

but the school has forecast a surplus at the close of 2023/24 of £189,537, meaning they project an overspend of £120,495 in the current financial year.

The table in section 4 shows the number of unfilled places in each year group at the May 2023 census.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions - numbers of pupils for whom provision is currently made

Randal Cremer Primary School is a maintained community school for pupils aged 3-11. The school has a published admission number (PAN) of 45 in each year group, having reduced from 60 per year group in September 2022.

Randal Cremer Primary School - Unfilled places (May 2023 census)

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TTL
PAN 2022/23	45	60	60	60	60	60	60	405
Roll (May 23)	30	27	34	43	29	35	44	242
No. of unfilled places	15	33	26	17	31	25	16	163
% of unfilled places	33%	55%	43%	28%	52%	42%	27%	40%

In May 2023, Randal Cremer Primary School had 23 children in its nursery, of which 14 were boys and 9 were girls.

SEND characteristics of children at Randal Cremer Primary School are included in the section below.

5. Displaced pupils

We will offer each child currently attending the school a place in a primary school near to their home, that is Ofsted rated “good” or “outstanding”. Where possible we will place a child at the school preferred by the parents. Families will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The reported number of pupils (at September 2023) at Randal Cremer Primary School is outlined below. It is expected that pupil numbers will change; they may reduce between now and the final Cabinet decision, and during the implementation period following any Cabinet decision to proceed with the proposals.

School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Randal Cremer Primary School	17	16	22	18	24	21	34	152

In October 2022 Hackney primary schools were carrying 4,685 vacancies across all year groups. Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to Randal Cremer Primary School shows there is capacity to accommodate all pupils affected within Hackney settings. Further details and analysis is available in the 25 September Cabinet report.

Mapping of children by postcode at Randal Cremer Primary School demonstrates that they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney. This means that families are very likely to have several alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. two miles for children under eight years of age, three miles for pupils aged 8–16). Maps for each year group showing children requiring alternative school places following the proposed closure and vacancies at Hackney and nearby schools are provided in the 25 September Cabinet report.

There are sufficient alternative places for children attending the nursery class. The table below shows the approximate number of unfilled nursery places at the four nearest schools based on Spring 2023 census data.

School	Children in the nursery class	Unfilled places in the four nearest schools
Randal Cremer Primary School	18	50

No interim arrangements are required for pupils.

6. Impact on the community

The discontinuation of Randal Cremer Primary School would reduce the number of surplus primary school places in the borough.

The Council considers that allowing surplus places to remain above 20% through inaction would directly and negatively impact the financial viability of many Hackney schools, which in turn will have an impact on the quality and breadth of the education offered at those schools.

7. Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

8. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable - Randal Cremer Primary School is not a maintained nursery school. Nursery provision currently exists at Randal Cremer Primary School. Parents who access this provision will be able to access alternative provision locally. Information and advice for parents can be found at:

<https://education.hackney.gov.uk/section/childcare-family-support-and-childrens-centres>

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable.

11. Special Educational Needs Provision

No specialist places are specifically reserved for pupils with special needs at Randal Cremer Primary School.

The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEN support is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEN support	% of pupils with SEN Support
Randal Cremer	17	7.0%	42	17.4%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023

The Council understands that a change of setting for pupils with SEN can often be challenging and require additional support to ensure a successful transition. Officers from the Council are making arrangements for children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register to ensure that they are appropriately placed.

If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children. Families with children who have an EHCP impacted by this proposal will be directly supported by the SEN team to explain the process of how their children will transfer to other schools. Families with children on SEN support will be offered one-to-one support to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including extra priority for places at nearby schools.

The Council is developing a funding proposal to support the transition of pupils with SEND (including SEND Support and EHC Plan children) as a result of the proposals.

The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and particularly at Randal Cremer Primary School. Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools will be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.

As a result of these proposals, outcomes for pupils with SEND may improve as they would move to a more financially viable and therefore long term sustainable school. This means that the school would be able to provide the additional necessary support and resources required to support children with EHCPs and those on the SEN register. Priority 1 of the Education Sufficiency & Estates Strategy is to increase SEN provision in Hackney and a programme of new ARP delivery is ongoing.

12. Travel

All children on roll at Randal Cremer Primary School will be offered places at local schools. Every parent is able to make a preference for an alternative school so longer journeys to school may occur for some families that previously attended Randal Cremer Primary School. There are school places available within the statutory walking distance for primary aged children.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by visiting

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/children-education/primary-schools-statutory-proposals>,
by emailing: school.sufficiency@hackney.gov.uk, or by writing to:

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Bengali

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Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

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Spanish

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Kurdish

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Turkish

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Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائیے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

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