



Cabinet
12 February 2018

**Report from the Strategic Director
of Resources**

1A Douglas Avenue, Wembley HA0 4DT

Wards Affected:	Wembley Central
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Part Exempt - Appendix 2 of this report is not for publication as it contains the following category of exempt information in paragraph 3 Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 namely: <i>“information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority) holding the information”</i>
No. of Appendices:	2
Background Papers:	None
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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval to lease the Former Nursery at 1A Douglas Avenue to a Charity known as Unlocking Potential.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To grant a 10 year lease to a Charity known as Unlocking Potential on the terms set out in the report and the confidential appendix 2.

3. Detail

- 3.1 The property is a 1970s purpose built single storey brick nursery school. The internal accommodation extends to net internal area of 394 square metres. It is separated into 3 classrooms, a kitchen, female and male WCs, a reception area and various store cupboards. The building is in reasonable condition. The School benefits from four parking spaces accessible along a narrow roadway. It is also accessible via a pedestrian access from The Close which leads to Lyon Park Avenue. It is a backland location bounded by mostly low rise residential properties on the North, East and South boundaries and by the Ealing Road Methodist Church on the West boundary. It is located near to Ealing Road

which is well served by local bus services. It is a short bus journey away from Wembley Central and Alperton tube station.

- 3.2 The property has been used for a variety of functions over the years, the latest being as an Annex for the Lyon Park School. The school recently completed an extension on their site and subsequently handed the property back in mid-2017
- 3.3 The property was offered on the market with proposals required by November 2017. Twelve applications for the property were received through the Brent Council's website. The following are the proposed letting terms:
 - Lease for up to 10 years
 - 5 year rent review
 - The lease will be on a full repairing and insuring terms with the Council covering the insurance under its block policy and recovering the premium from the prospective tenant.
 - The prospective tenant will be required to maintain the property in good order.
 - The prospective tenant will not be permitted to sub-let the property.
 - The lease will be entered into on the Council's standard terms.
 - The lease will contain such terms as the Borough Solicitor considers appropriate.
 - The lease is to provide security of tenure to renew under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954
- 3.4 The applications were mainly for D1 uses. The applications received were from a broad range of applicants, including pre-school nurseries, existing schools and religious establishments.
- 3.5 The proposal that best aligned to the educational use and need of the Council was from Unlocking Potential. Unlocking Potential wish to use the building for the delivery of education to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) pupils. Representatives from the Children and Young People department have analysed the proposal and have advised the following:
- 3.6 The borough's SEND strategy in relation to school place planning is to realise their potential in an appropriate inclusive setting whether in a mainstream school, an additionally resourced provision or in a special school. It is also important that they should be placed in provision that is local to their communities
- 3.7 The numbers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs is continuing to grow in Brent. In January 2017 (SEN2 Return) there were 1960 Brent resident children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan (or statement of Special Educational Need). This represents 3% of the school population and this is higher than the national average of 2.8%.
- 3.8 As of January 2017 48% of children with SEND were attending a mainstream school and 52% attended a specialist school or ARP setting. In the last 12 months a change has occurred in that the majority of children with SEND now attend a non-mainstream school.
- 3.9 The demand for specialist provision has increased over the last 3 years and continues to increase. There are 4 special schools in Brent that have expanded significantly to meet demand particularly for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) but also for children with very complex needs. There are 5 mainstream schools with additionally resourced provision. Despite an increase of 104 places there is still a demand for specialist provision and Brent is reliant on sourcing specialist places in out of borough schools. These are usually in either maintained special schools or independent special schools

which are costly and not only have additional travel costs but also means that children are educated away from their local communities

3.10 There are plans to develop more provision locally – a new Special Free School sponsored by the Brent Special School Academy Trust (BSSAT) for ASD children in 2018 offering 100 places. 2 new ARPs have been opened in 2 primary schools for children with ASD. If the current level of demand for specialist places continues there will be a need for 1027 specialist places by 2020 creating a gap of 276 places. To meet this demand and reduce reliance on out of borough placements, additional local SEN places will be needed.

3.11 The analysis of the categories of Special Educational needs in the school population suggests that at SEN support the highest primary needs are:

- Speech Language and communication needs 32%
- Moderate Learning Difficulties 24%
- Social Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties 18%

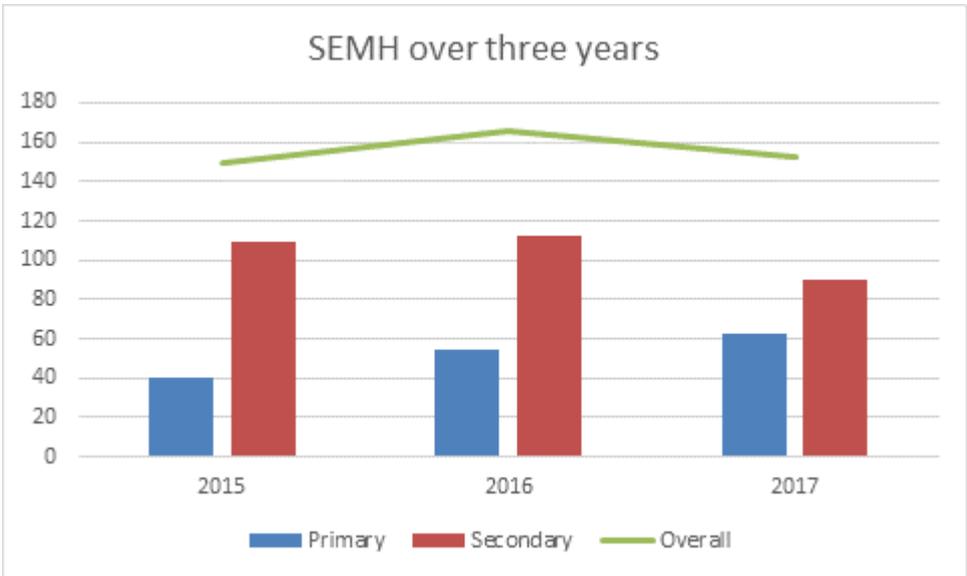
3.12 Many of the children with SLCN are later diagnosed as having Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Whilst ASD is a growing need in the borough there has been significant development in provision to meet these needs. Most children with MLD have their needs met in mainstream schools with some whose needs are more complex attending special schools

3.13 However within the Borough there is a distinct lack of specialist provision for children with Social Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties. These difficulties may mean that children and young people experience challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. There may be underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression or they may have other disorders such as attention deficit disorder or attachment disorders

3.14 The numbers of children experiencing these difficulties which can be long term and enduring are rising particularly at primary age. The number of exclusions from schools is rising for primary age pupils. Below is the table and corresponding chart produced on data from the SEN2 returns for 2017, 2016 and 2015

	Primary	Secondary	Overall
2015	40	109	149
2016	54	112	166
2017	63	90	153

3.15



3.16

- 3.17 Most children with SEMH who have an Education Health and Care Plan have their education provision in an out of Borough school. There are currently 21 primary children attending schools out of the Borough. These placements cost on average £60,000 plus associated travel costs. A residential school for children with these needs can cost up to £200,000. 8 children are attending the Family School in Islington daily which is an academic and therapeutic provision that also involves the parents also attending with their child. It is an excellent provision but involves long journeys and the ability to reintegrate children back into a local school is more difficult
- 3.18 To address these needs and the rising demand there is a need to develop provision locally not only to try to prevent needs escalating and exclusions from school but to create more specialist expertise within the Borough. Some provision has already been developed; in 2017, 6 places were created at Brent River College for a primary class for children with SEMH and who have an Education Health and Care Plan. In addition to this there are plans to create another class to offer preventative programmes for school to commission short term placements there. However this is not enough to meet needs.
- 3.19 Officers have been in discussion with a potential provider - Unlocking Potential - to develop a special school for Primary age children with SEMH. The provider proposes to work in close partnership with the Family school to develop similar provision locally in Brent and to offer therapeutic provision. They aim to provide 3 classes and up to 15 children in the first instance
- 3.20 This development is welcomed and would meet a critical need for SEMH provision in the Borough meaning fewer children will need to be educated out of Borough. This proposal has the full support of CYP and aligns with Brent's place planning strategy for SEND.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 A rental income will accrue to the property service budget set out in the confidential appendix.
- 4.2 As set out in the report there will be savings arising out of not having to send children out of borough for SEN placements, the value of which has yet to be determined.

5. Legal Implications

Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places legal duties on Local Authorities (LAs) to identify and assess the special educational needs (SEN) of children and young people for whom they are responsible. LAs become responsible for a child/young person in their area when they become aware that the child/young person has or may have SEN. They must then ensure that those children and young people receive a level of support which will help them "achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes" – Section 19 (d). The proposal of this paper is made in accordance with the LA's "local offer" to children with SEN.

6. Equality Implications

- 6.1 The proposed use would provide educational facilities to students from a diverse population. The building is also well suited for disabled access being at a single ground floor level.

7. Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

7.1 None.

8. Human Resources/Property Implications

8.1 There are no implications for Brent staff or accommodation.

Report sign off:

ALTHEA LODERICK

Strategic Director of Resources