

London Borough of Brent
School Place Planning Strategy
2024 – 2028

*Working in partnership with schools in Brent to ensure
the sustainability and sufficiency of school places*



Brent

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School Place Planning Strategy 2024 – 2028

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1. Introduction

Brent Council is focused on equipping Brent children and young people for the future. The Borough Plan 2023 – 2027 sets out the Council's priority to support young people to achieve the best start in life and receive the support they need when they need it. Working with schools and partners we will make sure access to education is fair and equal, and our children and young people receive a quality education which develops their skills and enables them to realise their aspirations.

Brent Council holds the statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places for Brent children (Education Act 1996, Section 14). This strategy sets out how Brent will deliver sufficient school places in the context of these statutory duties, ensuring school place planning delivers the best quality of education provision and achievement of the best outcomes for Brent children.

The Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024-28 sets out the Council's priorities and the principles that underpin the Council's approach to school organisation. The focus is to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet demand for all pupils who require a place, while also maintaining the sustainability of provision where schools may be experiencing falling demand. For the purposes of school place planning, the borough is split into six primary and three secondary school planning areas. This strategy provides the likely demand in each planning area, alongside details about the measures available or necessary to support areas experiencing falling demand or under pressure for more places.

The strategy was first published in October 2023 and will receive an annual refresh update each autumn term until the end of 2027. This is to ensure any new factors that impact on pupil forecasts are taken into account and refine the Council's understanding of future need. A new five-year strategy will be published in autumn 2028.

1.1 The Brent Context

Brent is one of the most culturally diverse areas in England. The dynamic mix of communities continues to enrich and inform the social, economic and cultural make-up of the borough. The largest defined ethnic groups of statutory school in Brent age are: Asian Indian (18%), White British (9.2%), White Eastern European (7.3%), Black Somali (6.4%), Black Caribbean (5.9%), Asian Pakistani (3.9%) and Afghan (3%). Undefined ethnic groups include Other – Any Other (5.8%), Asian – Other Asian (4.3%) and White – White Other (3.3%) (Source: January 2023 School Census).

In addition to new arrivals, socio-economic pressures placed on many of Brent's families combined with a housing stock which relies heavily on privately rented accommodation, contribute to relatively high levels of pupil turnover in many of our schools. The proportion of Brent pupils in primary and secondary schools who are classed as disadvantaged is 21%, below the national figure of 25% and the total London average of 29% (based on pupil premium allocations).

1.2 School Effectiveness

Over the last six years, Brent's self-improving system has become firmly embedded in the borough, with a shared responsibility for school effectiveness and improvement between the Local Authority and schools.

As a result, the quality of education provision in the borough is high. At the end of the 2022-23 academic year, Ofsted had judged the overall effectiveness of 98.8% of Brent schools as good or outstanding. This put Brent 11.8% percentage points above the national average of 87% and 5.8% percentage points above the London average of 93%. All maintained nurseries, pupil referral units and secondary schools including all-through schools have been judged good or outstanding. Three of the borough's four special schools are judged as outstanding.

In 2023, Brent's Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board approved a revised 'Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness in Brent 2023-2027'. The Framework sets the following priorities which will be supported by the delivery of this Place Planning Strategy:

- Sustaining Ofsted 'good' and 'outstanding' judgements for all schools
- Raising the attainment of vulnerable children and priority groups to address disproportionate educational outcomes
- Supporting pupil wellbeing and mental health to support educational achievement
- Ensuring that school governance meets national quality expectations, and that governing boards are equipped to challenge school leaders to address the underperformance of groups in their schools
- Building leadership capacity across the borough including headteacher succession planning

2. Background Summary

The Education Act 1996 requires that local authorities shall secure sufficient school places to provide primary and secondary education in their area. In exercising this duty, local authorities should have a view to securing diversity in the provision of schools and increasing opportunities for parental choice.

Brent Council has overarching responsibilities for school admissions in the borough, co-ordinating admissions at Reception, Year 3 (transition from infant to junior school) and at secondary transfer in Year 7. This is as well as processing in-year admissions and ensuring a school place is offered for any child not already on roll at a suitable school.

In addition to securing school places for pupils aged five to 16, Brent Council has related statutory responsibilities in relation to:

- **Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)** where the Council has to make suitable provision to meet their needs
- **Early years provision**, where the Council has responsibility for childcare sufficiency and for provision for disadvantaged two-year-olds and all three and four year olds

- **Post-16 education and training** where the Council leads the local 16 to 19 partnership and takes overall responsibility for the sufficiency and suitability of provision, so all young people can stay in education or training until at least their 18th birthday.

Brent Council works with schools and multi-academy trusts to deliver its statutory duties, as well as local trusts and Dioceses and the Department for Education Regional Director where this involves academies and free schools.

Planning for places for children in Brent falls under these five separate strands.

- Childcare and early years provision
- Mainstream primary school provision
- Mainstream secondary school provision
- Post-16 provision
- SEND places and Alternative Provision

2.1 Childcare and Early Years Provision

Alongside the statutory duty to provide school places, Brent Council has a duty to secure sufficient childcare and early education. Existing entitlements for parents and carers include 15 hours of free early education for eligible two-year-olds and all 3 and 4-year-olds, and 30 hours for 3 and 4-year-olds from working families.

In March 2023 the government announced an expansion of these entitlements to include 15 hours free early education for children aged 9 months upwards from September 2024, with all children aged 9 months upwards from working families able to access 30 hours of free early education by September 2025. This is a significant change for the sector. Providers are waiting for confirmed funding rates for these entitlements before deciding on their delivery model.

Since September 2017, the Council has administered the free entitlement for schools and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers. This enables a full overview of early years provision, monitoring the take up both at ward level and across the borough. Detailed sufficiency monitoring takes place each autumn and will be repeated again in autumn 2023 once funding rates and new statutory guidance is known. This will provide a comprehensive picture of demand and availability of places for the new entitlements and identify where demand may outstrip supply. This will inform future sufficiency activity to target issues and gaps in provision.

2.2 Demand for Primary Places

Following consistent growth in the need for primary school places in Brent from 2006-2015, demand for primary school places across the Borough peaked in 2017 and has been declining since then. The latest Greater London Authority (GLA) projections indicate demand will continue to fall until at least 2029 where it will reach a level last seen in 2013. Longer term forecasts suggest that demand will rise again after this point, but for the purposes of this

strategy primary projections are provided up to 2029. This is because projections are less reliable after this time due to uncertainty over future birth rates.

The fall in demand is a result of a number of factors including lower birth rates across the whole of London, the impacts of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to some migration away from the area, and more recently the cost of living crisis where families are finding they are unable to afford to move into the borough or remain living in the area.

Projections take into account growth in demand as a result of new housing developments in the borough and those just outside the borough border. Brent's housing target as set by the London Plan requires the delivery of 23,250 new homes by 2028/29. This is equivalent to one new home being built for every five that currently exist.

While projections indicate overall falling primary demand across the borough with a high number of spare places as a result (around 20%), distribution of demand is not equal across the 6 primary school planning areas. Some areas of the borough may still see demand exceeding availability of places, whilst others have low demand at the same time. The local authority will continue to support individual schools and groups of schools in managing the impacts of reduced pupil numbers.

2.3 Demand for Secondary Places

Demand for places in Year 7 has been increasing steadily since 2013. This is in response to increased numbers that have been coming through the primary phase and following through into the secondary phase. The local authority has responded to this growth in demand by overseeing expansions in some secondary schools, and the North Brent School has also added new capacity to the secondary estate. It is expected this growth will now reverse at least in the short term as the secondary intake starts to reflect the falling numbers experienced in the primary phase.

Secondary demand is also affected by parental choice. Due to Brent's proximity to other boroughs parents have a choice to either send their children to secondary schools in Brent or further away, supported by the availability of free school transport for secondary aged children.

In 2023 907 out-of-borough offers were made to Brent residents, whereas 654 offers at Brent schools were made to out-of-borough residents (net -253). While Brent remains a net-exporter of secondary pupils, this is the smallest percentage of offers made to out-of-borough schools (25.8%) and the smallest net difference recorded over the past ten years, indicating more parents are choosing schools in Brent, recognising the increasing quality of local provision.

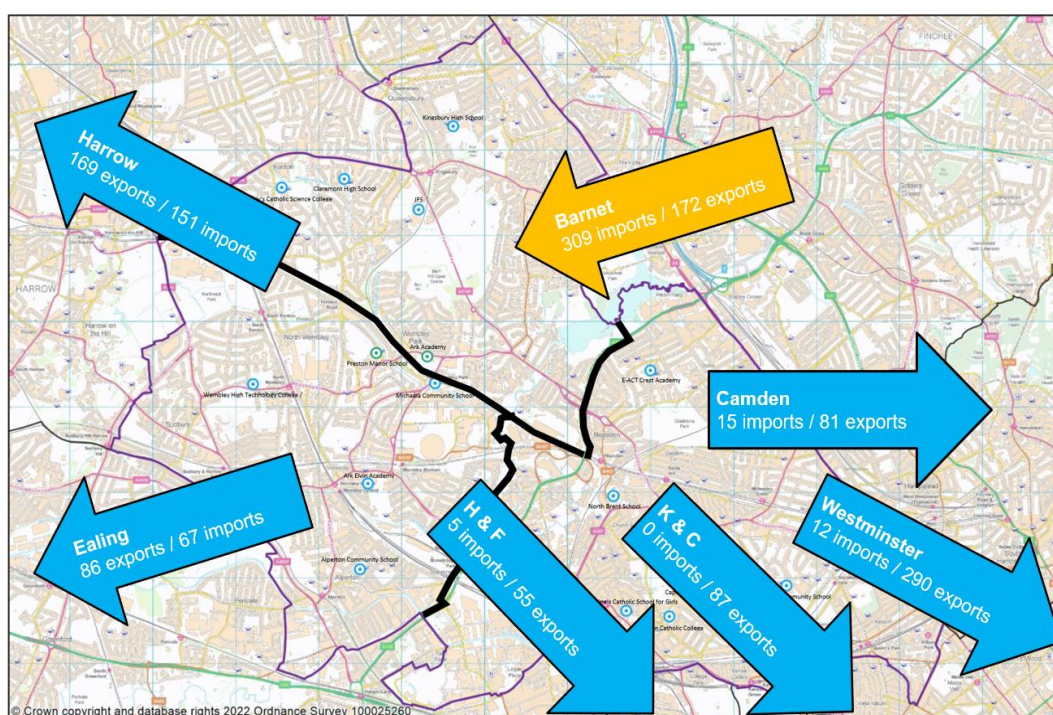
Table 1 shows the number of Year 7 children living in each secondary planning area by the local authority of the school they were offered on national offer day in 2023.

Table 1: Secondary offers by secondary planning area for Brent residents (Sept 2023)

LA of offered school 2023	Brent resident planning area			
	PA North	PA West	PA South	Total
Brent	653	1001	962	2616
Brent %	80.4%	90.0%	60.2%	74.3%
Barnet	82	14	76	172
Camden	3		78	81
Ealing		37	49	86
Hammersmith and Fulham		6	49	55
Harrow	64	29	9	102
Hertfordshire	4	4	3	11
Hillingdon	1	3	3	7
Hounslow			4	4
Kensington and Chelsea	1	2	84	87
Kent		1		1
Slough		5	1	6
Surrey		1		1
Sutton		3	1	4
Westminster	4	6	280	290
Non-Brent Total	159	111	637	907
Non-Brent %	19.6%	10.0%	39.8%	25.7%
Grand Total	812	1112	1599	3523

Figure 1 shows Year 7 allocation cross-border flows with directly neighbouring authorities (based on national offer day data 2023).

Figure 1: Secondary imports and exports for Year 7 for the 2023/24 academic year



Brent engages with neighbouring boroughs to understand their planning assumptions about cross-border movement, which will impact on demand for places in Brent. Where neighbouring boroughs face increased demand for secondary school places, Brent parents will find it increasingly difficult to access places in out-of-borough secondary schools.

Overall, in the borough, there is sufficient built capacity to meet demand in Year 7 over the coming years. However, future projections show a consistent in-year growth which adds pressure to the local authority's ability to make offers at other points of entry to schools. As with primary demand, demand for secondary school places will be higher in some parts of the borough than others, as reflected in the analysis of demand for each of the three secondary school place planning areas in Brent.

2.4 SEND places and Alternative Provision

Despite lower pupil forecasts for mainstream places, demand for places that meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is increasing. This is due to a significant rise in the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being issued, which set out the support for children and young people with SEND between the ages of 0 – 25 years of age.

The annual SEN 2 analysis evidences an annual growth rate in the number of maintained EHCP Plans of 10% since 2019 (compared to 9% for England and 12% for statistical neighbours), with a 10.7% increase between 2021 and 2022. The number of initial requests for assessment in Brent in 2022 was 5.9% higher than the year before.

Between 2021 and 2022 the number of EHC Plans increased across all age groups, with the highest increase in the 20-25 age group (40% compared to 3% nationally) and the 16-19 age group (18%). In Brent the age groups with the largest number of EHCPs are the 5-10 age group (37% of cohort) and the 11-15 age group (32%). This means that additional local special places in both primary and secondary are needed to respond to increasing demand, as EHCP numbers increase, as well as more local post-16 provision.

Addressing the sufficiency of local places for Brent children with SEND of both primary and secondary age, and for the 16-25 age group is a Council priority, not only to meet demand but to reduce dependency on out-of-borough independent special schools that are not close to families support networks. Brent Council has committed investment of over £44m to develop additional specialist places across mainstream and specialist provision, including a new secondary special school, and a Post-16 Skills Resource Centre for young people with SEND. The expectation is these places will be made available from 2025. Despite the planned capital investment, increasing demand means that further local specialist places are needed. This could include additional Additionally Resourced Provision (ARPs) and special school satellite provision.

2.5 Post-16 Provision

The Education and Skills Act 2008 requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. The Council does not have a duty to manage places in this phase, but nevertheless works in partnership with schools and local colleges to ensure young people aged 16-18 (and up to the age of 25 for those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan) have access to a range of opportunities to continue their education or training at a wide range of post-16 providers or through apprenticeships.

3. The Strategic Approach to Place Planning

Between 2005 and 2017, demand for school places in Brent rose dramatically. This led to a widespread expansion programme which saw the creation of nearly 8000 additional permanent primary school places. In January 2006, there were 20,882 children attending a Brent primary school, which rose to a peak of 26,823 in January 2017. Since then, the number on roll has fallen to 25,282 in January 2023 and is forecast to continue falling over the next five years to around 24,300 by 2027/28. As a projection, these forecasts are subject to change, but are based on existing and historical attendance and migration patterns in the borough.

The rise in demand for primary school places has followed through into the secondary phase, where a number of school expansions have taken place to ensure a sufficient provision of places. The new North Brent School opened in 2020 and will be opening to its full capacity as a six-form entry school from September 2024 on its permanent new site on Neasden Lane, Neasden.

Demand for school places is cyclical and therefore it is expected that after a period of sustained growth there will be a period of falling demand. London is experiencing a declining birth rate and this, in combination with migration 'shocks' brought about by Brexit, the Pandemic and now the cost-of-living crisis, is contributing to the current trend of falling demand in the city which is being experienced by the borough of Brent.

The focus of the 2019 – 2023 School Place Planning Strategy was to ensure there was sufficient demand to meet supply in the borough. When it was published in November 2018, it referred to the development of two new primary schools, one of which was proposed in response to housing developments in Wembley Park to be delivered when demand indicated it would be required. Neither of these schools were progressed as during the lifespan of the previous strategy, (which was refreshed annually), updated forecasts indicated insufficient demand. In response to lower pupil projections, the local authority has implemented both informal and formal measures to reduce or remove capacity in Brent Primary Schools.

The focus of the School Place Planning Strategy 2024 – 2028 is to ensure the sustainability of school places as and when populations fall, and the sufficiency of places when there is growth, working in partnership with Brent schools. Longer term general population forecasts suggest the population of Brent is projected to rise by between 17% and 28% between 2021 and 2028, and the child population aged under 16 is projected to rise by around 10% between 2021 and

2041. This projected growth comes after 2027, with the child population falling slightly in the short term (2021-2026). Projected changes in the child age group are more uncertain as they are very sensitive to assumptions about future migration and birth patterns.

Brent aims to have a minimum of 5% spare places to manage in-year migration and to ensure the authority can respond to any sudden increase in demand. This avoids the need to open temporary provision or bulge classes, which is neither educationally desirable nor cost effective. Based on current forecasts, there will be around 20% spare primary places at borough level over the next few years, which could rise as high as 30% by 2027/28 if no action is taken.

3.1. Place Planning Projections

Regularly updated place planning projections underpin the school place planning process. The projections Brent and most other London authorities use to inform place planning are provided by the Greater London Authority (GLA) which are informed both by centrally held demographic data, such as census, fertility rate and birth rate data provided by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), together with locally held information on migration patterns and planned housing growth (ward level housing development data provided by the Borough). The projection methodology and model:

- calculate the number of children resident in each ward who are expected to attend each school by each national curriculum year from Reception to Year 11. The number of children projected for each new intake is calculated as an average of the proportion of children in those wards that attended the school in the previous 3 years multiplied by the ward level age population data. This helps to smooth out any unusual variations that are unlikely to reoccur each year. For other year groups the model calculates the current proportion of children in the ward attending the school and applies this to the ward level population data. School level projections are then aggregated to planning area projections and Borough totals.
- take account of the percentage of children who historically move into the following academic year in an area. This is particularly important in Brent where there is a high level of pupil mobility and migration to schools in other boroughs.

The GLA projections are a good indicator of place need, but they remain a statistical model which should be seen as a valuable tool rather than a definitive position. There are a number of factors which can lead to the projections being revised up or down:

- Underlying data, such as birth rates and migration patterns and the impact of local regeneration projects can change significantly in a short period of time.
- Secondary projections are more secure as they largely take account of children already in the system. However, the percentage of children who historically move into the following academic year is a particularly important factor in Brent which is currently a net exporter of secondary pupils. This may change if pressures on secondary places in

neighbouring boroughs lead to an increase in demand beyond those in the current projections.

- The Local Authority monitors both current and emerging local and national factors, such as Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic that can impact on school place demand by changing migration patterns. It is difficult to predict the impact of these factors on demand for school places and in particular demand from families of Eastern European origin. Demand at schools that serve these communities are closely monitored.

3.2 Ensuring sufficiency of places during periods of growth in demand

Where an area is projected to experience a sustained growth in demand, generally it is more cost effective to provide permanent places if they are needed for the longer term. However, there are times where site and time constraints mean this is not possible and there are also occasions where the bulge in numbers only applies to one cohort of students. In these circumstances, it is better to provide a temporary bulge class.

Expansion in the secondary phase is more complex than primary, partly because specialist facilities (e.g. sport, science or technology) may need to be provided alongside standard classrooms. Students also need to access these facilities during the building process which makes expansion more challenging and can impact on cost.

Where additional school places are needed, the Council seeks to provide places that provide high quality provision. This could be through expanding existing schools or through new schools. There are benefits to both approaches:

- Expanding existing schools that are judged to be good or better by Ofsted gives the Council greater confidence that additional provision will be good and it will be popular. It also helps to maintain stability in the existing school system. School expansion projects need to be well managed to avoid impacting on standards and on any particular groups of children and young people who are under-achieving. Expansions of existing provisions are funded by the Council from Basic Need grant funding or the Special Provision Capital Fund for Additionally Resourced Provision and SEND units for pupils with EHCPs.
- New schools offer a chance to provide new learning environments and to attract high quality providers. Current legislation requires new schools to be free schools/academies and the DfE Regional Director, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, decides if a school should open. In a borough such as Brent there are considerable challenges in finding suitable sites for new schools. New schools are either funded by the Department of Education or by the Council when the new school presumption process is followed.

3.3 Supporting schools and planning areas with falling demand.

When demand for school places falls significantly and the number of spare places increases, this can cause difficulties for individual schools in particular in managing staffing requirements and school budgets. Where this occurs, the Council analyses a range of local data, including but not limited to recent intakes, parental preferences, availability of places within the local area, the communities served by schools, school standards and building condition and recent/required investment, before recommending strategies that would support the sustainability of school provision in a given area. A School Place Planning Working Group, comprising officers and headteachers was established in the 2022/23 academic year and leads on reviews place planning within individual planning areas. The group in 2022/23 has been focused on planning areas where there is falling demand.

A range of options may be employed to support schools or groups of schools with falling demand as set out below. Any decision to reduce capacity has to be carefully considered in the context of the medium and long-term need for school places for all children, including those with SEND. The current cost of developing a new, medium sized primary school in London ranges from £10 - £20 million and is dependent on the site and existing facilities. Brent Council has already invested significant money into developing new and expanded primary and secondary school provision across the borough in response to the most recent episode of rising demand, which needs to be protected for when demand increases in the future.

3.3.1 Reductions to Published Admission Numbers (PAN)

A reduction to a school's Published Admission Number (PAN) reduces their official intake, normally by one or more forms of entry. This can help undersubscribed schools to manage their budgets more efficiently, with the aim that of the revised PAN being in line with demand. PAN reductions are subject to formal consultation and therefore can take up to two years to implement. They cannot be employed for every undersubscribed school in an area as the local authority needs to maintain some spare capacity for in-year admissions.

3.3.2 Informal capping arrangements

Informal caps can support schools by limiting their intake in a particular year group where demand is below PAN. However, implementing informal caps is not a long-term sustainable solution nor does it allow for good school organisation planning. Informal caps could be a possible solution in an arrangement where two schools work together to manage admissions. For example, where there is agreement to limit admissions in one school to actively facilitate fuller classes in the other. The advantage of informal capping arrangements is that they can be implemented quickly in response to a current situation and can easily be removed if there is an increase in demand in an area. For example, a three-form entry school that has only made 55 offers for a new Reception cohort may request to operate as a two-form entry for the cohort. This would mean any subsequent in-year offers would stop once the cohort reaches 60 pupils.

3.3.3 Utilising spare capacity for SEND and Alternative Provision

Spare classrooms that are unlikely to be required in the longer-term can be used for alternative use, such as Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) for children with SEND. Any long-term alternative use of spare capacity must be agreed by the local authority, to ensure the places are not likely to be required and managed alongside a PAN reduction.

3.3.4 Hard Federation

A Hard Federation is where two schools formally join in partnership under one governing board and one leadership team. This arrangement can provide the opportunity for schools to share best practice and resources and can assist the budgets of small schools. A hard federation does not necessarily address the issue of reduced demand but could be used in conjunction with other strategies to manage the impacts of falling demand on school budgets.

3.3.5 Removing capacity from the Primary Estate

Brent works collaboratively with schools in identifying solutions for a local area where a school reorganisation is considered to be the best way to ensure the sustainability of local provision. Legislation provides the Council with the authority to close community schools or to require them to amalgamate (and to instruct community schools to expand). It does not have the same authority over academies, Foundation or Voluntary Aided schools, as this sits with the DfE's Regional Director. The local authority undertakes informal consultation with stakeholders on proposals to cease provision to ensure their views are considered before any decision to proceed to formal consultation is taken in line with the relevant statutory guidance.

4. School Place Planning Strategy Priorities and Principles

Brent's priorities over the next 5 years are:

- To continue to monitor and support those planning areas experiencing growth and high demand to ensure the sufficiency of local places is maintained.
- To support sustainability of individual schools and planning areas experiencing falling demand.
- To ensure any measures taken that remove capacity from Brent schools do not negatively impact on the need to ensure sufficient places in the future.

4.1. Brent's operating principles for school organisation

The following operating principles underpin Brent's approach to school place planning:

- 1: The local authority works in partnership with all schools to meet the sufficiency and sustainability of school places in Brent, putting in place effective strategies to manage changing demand.*
- 2: The needs of all children and young people, including those with SEND and vulnerable groups, underpin all school place planning activity.*
- 3: The delivery of sufficient school places enables the achievement of the aims and objectives of the Brent Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness 2023-2027 and inclusive schools.*
- 4: School leaders are supported to manage the challenges of school reorganisations where there are expansions or reductions to capacity.*
- 5: Inclusive provision will be considered in all school organisation proposals and the local authority will work with neighbouring authorities on the planning of special school places.*
- 6: All school buildings will be of good quality and safe. Any changes to school buildings should meet government guidance on space standards but innovative design solutions will also be considered.*
- 7: Any expansions of school places, including in academies and voluntary aided schools, will only be supported where there is local Brent demand.*
- 8: The local authority works to develop local capacity to sponsor new schools, working with academies in all phases.*
- 9: How the community can benefit from school facilities will be considered in all school organisation proposals.*
- 10: Local communities will be consulted as part of the planning process to minimise/mitigate the impact of school organisation proposals*
- 11: After assessing educational suitability, any reorganisation proposals will be judged in terms of value for money, ability to deliver and strategic fit with wider investment programmes.*

5. School Place Planning Strategy Measures of Success

The impact of this strategy will be measured by the following outcomes:

- All Brent schools are good or outstanding (98.8% at the end of the 2022/23).
- Children are able to access education close to home (under two miles for children under 8 and 3 miles for children up to Year 6; within 75 minutes travel time for secondary aged children).
- Brent net exportation of secondary school pupils reduces over the duration of this strategy to 25%, with a stretch target below 25% (baseline 25.8% for the 2023 Year 7).
- Increasing local SEND places in the borough leads to a reduction in the use of out-of-borough placements and placements in independent non-maintained special schools.
- The take up rate of free childcare entitlements in the borough increases over the course of the strategy to 70% for 2-year-olds and 85 for 3 and 4-year-olds (baseline 65.4% for two-year-olds and 79.3% for 3 and 4-year-olds as of January 2023).

6. Childcare and Early Years Provision

6.1 Early Years Provision

Under the Childcare Act 2006 local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare for the needs of most working parents/carers in their area. Brent has a mixed economy of 0-5 childcare provision in the borough that includes private, voluntary, independent (PVI) and maintained settings.

The Brent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) 2021-2023 showed an overall increase in the number of PVI providers in the borough and a reduction in places in maintained and childminder provision. As of June 2023, there were 299 providers including private, voluntary and independent nurseries (PVI), childminders, nursery classes in schools and maintained nursery schools in Brent. 245 of these providers are registered to deliver free entitlement early education places. Two-year places are largely delivered by the PVI sector and childminders.

There has been an overall decrease in the number of childminder providers in the borough since 2015 with some moving out of the borough and others resigning as registered childminders. This decrease in provision is reflective of a nation-wide trend. Closures have also been seen amongst group providers in the last 12 months, some quoting rental increases and reduction in demand. Nonetheless there have been other providers who have moved premises to expand and new providers entering the market, indicating an ongoing demand for places.

Figure 2: 0-5 childcare providers in Brent

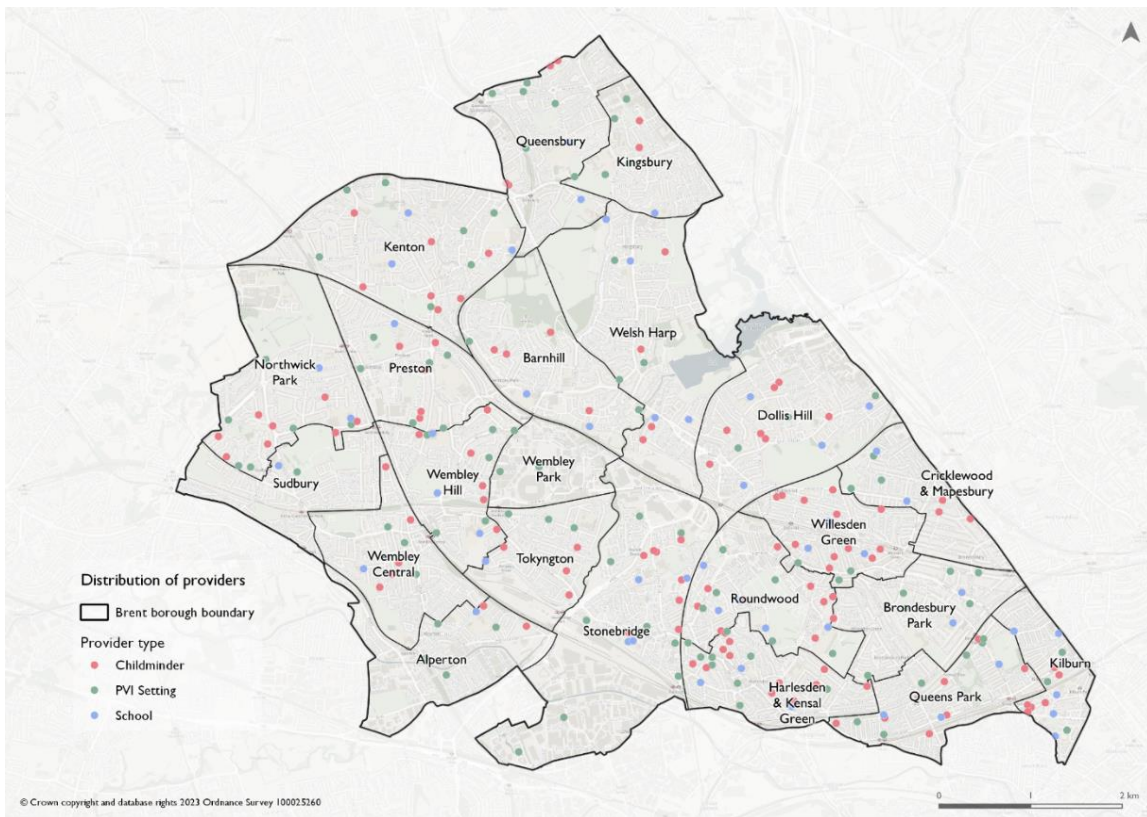
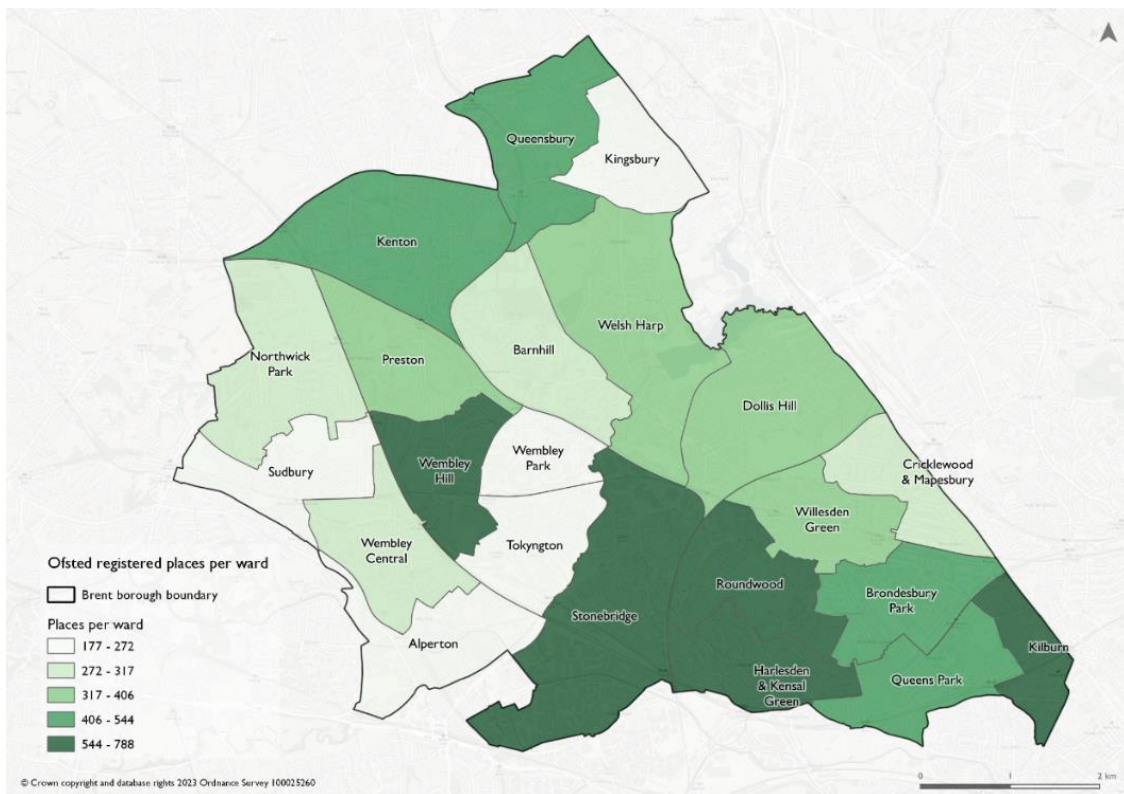


Figure 3: Distribution of childcare places in Brent



6.2 Take up of Early Years Entitlements

Take-up of the free entitlements to childcare for 2, 3- and 4-year-olds has improved in Brent as a result of a focus on increasing take-up through ongoing marketing and promotion, raising awareness of entitlements with partners and parents, and the benefits of taking up entitlements for the children and also for parents, to be freed up to take up training or employment. Figures on take-up are provided to local authorities by the Department for Education (DfE) on an annual basis in the summer of each year based on January census returns. The last release of these figures (June 2023) indicated take-up in Brent as of January 2023 was 79.3% for 3- and 4-year-olds, an increase of 2.3% on the previous year. The percentage take-up of the two-year entitlement rose to highest levels to date at 65.4%, an increase of 8.4% on the previous year, but also the first time the Brent take-up of the two-year entitlement has exceeded the London average (65.2%).

6.3 Expansion of Early Years Entitlements

In March 2023, the government announced a significant expansion of early years childcare entitlements to take effect between April 2024 and September 2025. The proposals include an offer of 30 hours of funded childcare for every child of a working parent between nine months and five years to be in place by September 2025. This is a significant change for the sector and providers await details of the funding rate for these new entitlements for 2024/25 and related statutory guidance to decide their delivery model. In the meanwhile, the DfE shared a supply and demand analysis in June 2023 and in July 2023 and details of the promised uplift to funding rates for 2023/24.

Brent Early Years providers were surveyed in 2023 about the proposed expansion to assess early intentions regarding expanded delivery and to understand what they saw as perceived challenges and barriers. This highlighted significant concerns within the sector about the impact the expansion will have on their settings, particularly in the absence of confirmed funding rates. Despite the lack of detailed funding arrangements and concerns noted, 46% of providers surveyed said they would offer under-twos places and 63% said they would offer two-year-old places for working families.

Detailed sufficiency monitoring takes place each autumn and will be repeated again in autumn 2023 once funding rates and statutory guidance is known. This will provide detailed mapping of demand and availability of places for the new entitlements and identify where demand may outstrip supply and gaps in provision in the borough.

Between late 2023 and September 2025 there will be a co-ordinated programme developed to support providers with implementation of the expanded entitlements. This could include but not be limited to, assistance to increase the numbers of children, expand premises, change hours of operation and / or take on age groups they are not currently caring for.

A significant promotional campaign will take place across the borough to ensure parents and carers are aware of the new entitlements, eligibility criteria and process for accessing the entitlements. This activity will be part of the on-going drive to increase the take up rate of free childcare entitlements in the borough.

The impact of the introduction of these additional entitlements will be monitored, especially the possible impact on the availability of places for the current two-year entitlement (15 hours) for disadvantaged children. This may occur if providers choose to offer more places for two-year-olds from working families who can get a maximum of 30 free hours. There are also concerns about the sufficiency of places for children with SEND as some parents are already struggling to find places for their children with SEND, and there is a concern that this situation could be exacerbated.

7. Primary School Place Planning

A borough-wide fall in demand for places is projected over the next three years as shown in Graph 1. Longer term projections, although less reliable for primary forecasts, indicate demand will rise after 2027/2028. The rate of increased demand in these longer-term projections is greater than previous projections, as there is a more accurate understanding of the rate of population of 0 – 4-year-olds as a result of the 2021 national census.

Graph 1: Primary numbers on roll and projections as of January each year up to 2028

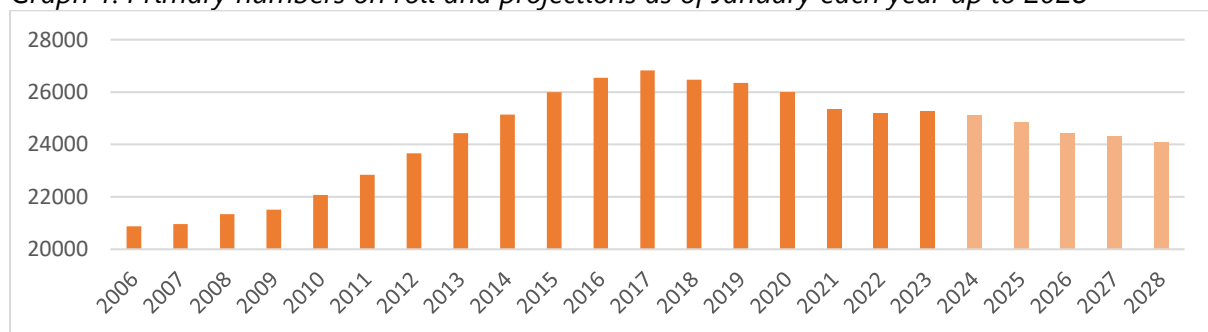


Table 2 shows that borough-wide there is sufficient capacity to meet anticipated demand across all primary year groups up to 2027/28 and to manage in-year pupil mobility.

Table 2: Primary forecasts 2023 (Green means more than 5% capacity)

Whole borough	Dataset	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2023/2024	Capacity	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,247	4,222
	Projection	3458	3527	3639	3634	3594	3592	3682
	Surplus	759	690	578	583	623	655	540
	Surplus Percentage	22%	20%	16%	16%	17%	18%	15%
2024/2025	Capacity	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217
	Projection	3465	3423	3493	3615	3650	3594	3623
	Surplus	752	794	724	602	567	623	594
	Surplus Percentage	22%	23%	21%	17%	16%	17%	16%
2025/2026	Capacity	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217
	Projection	3271	3428	3394	3464	3627	3644	3611
	Surplus	946	789	823	753	590	573	606
	Surplus Percentage	29%	23%	24%	22%	16%	16%	17%
2026/2027	Capacity	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217
	Projection	3464	3261	3403	3380	3491	3634	3668
	Surplus	753	956	814	837	726	583	549
	Surplus Percentage	22%	29%	24%	25%	21%	16%	15%
2027/2028	Capacity	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217	4,217
	Projection	3450	3438	3243	3381	3407	3499	3658
	Surplus	767	779	974	836	810	718	559
	Surplus Percentage	22%	23%	30%	25%	24%	21%	15%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity and red = shortfall

Table 3 shows forecast Reception intakes against capacity. This suggests over the next five years that Reception cohorts will remain stable (with intermittent fluctuations) at a lower demand level than has been seen in recent years. This is consistent with the falling birth rates levelling off as seen in Table 4.

The indicated level of spare capacity across the system will place budgetary strain on some schools. Section 3 of this strategy outlines the options available to schools and the borough to promote the sustainability of schools under budgetary pressures due to falling demand.

Table 3: Reception forecasts against capacity

Year	Reception projected intake	Reception capacity	Spare places	% spare places	Spare places as forms of entry
2023/24	3458	4247	789	18.6	26
2024/25	3465	4247	782	18.4	26
2025/26	3271	4247	976	23.0	32
2026/27	3464	4247	783	18.4	26
2027/28	3450	4247	797	18.8	26

Table 4: Births in Brent (by academic year)

Academic Year	Number of births in Brent (Source ONS mid-year estimates)	Reception entry (September following 4 th birthday)
2016/17	5116	2022/23
2017/18	4878	2023/24
2018/19	4814	2024/25
2019/20	4794	2025/26
2020/21	4448	2026/27
2021/22	4520	2027/28
2022/23	4468	2028/29

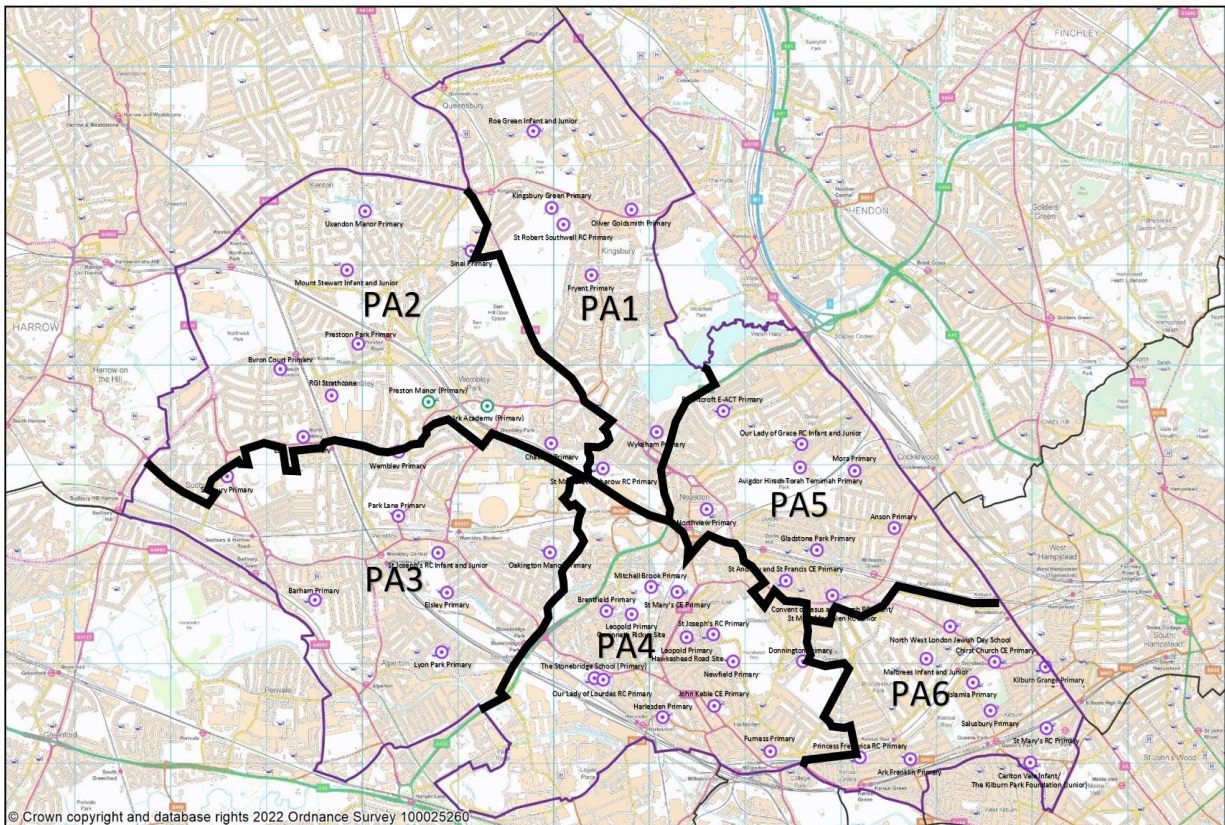
The number of on-time applications for Reception in 2023 rose for the first time in seven years, which was counter to the trend of reduced applications across London. This has been attributed in part to more visible advertising for Reception applications and the development of Admission open events held across the Borough's Family Wellbeing Centres. On time applications are important for all normal points of entry as they provide the greatest opportunity for parents to receive an offer for a preference school and schools are better placed to manage forms of entry, classroom and staff numbers.

7.1 Primary Planning Areas

The local authority uses planning areas to identify local trends in demand which help to inform place planning decisions to ensure children can attend a school within a reasonable distance. (In the primary phase a "reasonable offer" is a school offer that is made within 2 miles of home for children under 8 years old, and 3 miles for older children). The borough is divided into six primary planning areas to help ensure places are provided near to where children live. However, in reality children can travel across planning areas to attend school, particularly when they live close to the borders.

All planning areas are aligned with the 2022 ward boundaries. This provides a clearer picture of demand as GLA projections are also based on these wards.

Figure 4: Brent Primary Planning Areas



Key to tables:

For each of the primary and secondary projection tables in each of the planning area, the shading relates to the percentage of surplus places available.

More than 5% capacity (Red text = 15%+ spare capacity)	5% spare capacity	Less than 5% spare capacity	Shortfall of places
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Primary Planning Area 1

Wards	Kingsbury, Queensbury and Welsh Harp
Schools	Fryent Primary School, Kingsbury Green Primary School, Oliver Goldsmith Primary School, Roe Green Infant School, Roe Green Junior School, St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School, St Robert Southwell RC Primary School, Wykeham Primary School

Demand: The January 2023 projections indicate that demand in Planning Area 1 will fall slightly before recovering to current levels over the next 5 years. It is projected that some year groups will see the spare places fall below the 5% margin the LA aims to maintain, resulting in a small deficit in some year groups. It is anticipated places in neighbouring planning areas will accommodate these pressures. Some mainstream capacity in the planning area is being used to provide SEN Alternative Resource Provision (ARP) places.

Planned action: Primary Planning Area 1 has been subject to a recent review by the School Place Planning Steering Group in Brent to identify strategies to ensure sufficient supply of places in some year groups, while identifying strategies to manage excessive surplus capacity in others. No area wide action is considered necessary and individual schools will continue to be supported as need arises. The Planning Area will remain under review to determine if any longer-term changes are required as part of the annual refresh of this strategy.

Table 5: Planning Area 1 2023 projections and capacity

PA 1	Dataset	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2023/2024	Capacity	510	510	510	510	510	510	510
	Projection	480	499	513	510	473	474	482
	Surplus	30	11	-3	0	37	36	28
	Surplus Percentage	6%	2%	-1%	0%	7%	7%	5%
2024/2025	Capacity	510	510	510	510	510	510	510
	Projection	484	479	493	504	515	476	463
	Surplus	26	31	17	6	-5	34	47
	Surplus Percentage	5%	6%	3%	1%	-1%	7%	9%
2025/2026	Capacity	510	510	510	510	510	510	510
	Projection	460	480	474	483	507	517	464
	Surplus	50	30	36	27	3	-7	46
	Surplus Percentage	10%	6%	7%	5%	1%	-1%	9%
2026/2027	Capacity	510	510	510	510	510	510	510
	Projection	493	462	478	466	488	511	508
	Surplus	17	48	32	44	22	-1	2
	Surplus Percentage	3%	9%	6%	9%	4%	0%	0%
2027/2028	Capacity	510	510	510	510	510	510	510
	Projection	494	493	462	469	474	491	503
	Surplus	16	17	48	41	36	19	7
	Surplus Percentage	3%	3%	9%	8%	7%	4%	1%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

Primary Planning Area 2

Wards	Barnhill, Kenton, Northwick Park and Preston
Schools	Ark Academy, Byron Court Primary School, Chalkhill Primary School, East Lane Primary School, Mount Stewart Infant School, Mount Stewart Junior School, Preston Manor Lower School, Preston Park Primary School, Sinai Jewish Primary School, Uxendon Manor Primary School.

Demand: The January 2023 projections indicate that demand in the planning area will remain relatively stable over the next five years. Projected surplus places are above the 5% margin across all year groups and parents in this planning area have increased choice of provision. Planning Area 2 includes the Northwick Park growth area and this may generate additional demand at some point in the future.

Planned action: There is no current requirement to make any changes to the provision in this planning area and in the short term, surplus places could be managed with the use of informal capping arrangements agreed with individual schools. The Planning Area will remain under review to determine if any longer-term changes are required as part of the annual refresh of this strategy.

Table 6: Planning Area 2 2023 projections and capacity

PA 2	Dataset	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2023/2024	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	712	739	740	747	702	734	696
	Surplus	158	131	130	123	168	136	174
	Surplus Percentage	18%	15%	15%	14%	19%	16%	20%
2024/2025	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	725	716	735	742	747	699	734
	Surplus	145	154	135	128	123	171	136
	Surplus Percentage	17%	18%	16%	15%	14%	20%	16%
2025/2026	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	678	726	713	730	740	744	696
	Surplus	192	144	157	140	130	126	174
	Surplus Percentage	22%	17%	18%	16%	15%	14%	20%
2026/2027	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	727	689	725	713	734	742	745
	Surplus	143	181	145	157	136	128	125
	Surplus Percentage	16%	21%	17%	18%	16%	15%	14%
2027/2028	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	725	733	688	722	716	735	741
	Surplus	145	137	182	148	154	135	129
	Surplus Percentage	17%	16%	21%	17%	18%	16%	15%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

Primary Planning Area 3

Wards	Alperton, Sudbury, Tokyngton, Wembley Central, Wembley Hill and Wembley Park
Schools	Barham Primary School, Elsley Primary School, Lyon Park Primary School, Oakington Manor Primary School, Park Lane Primary School, St Joseph's RC Infant School, St Joseph's RC Junior School, Sudbury Primary School, Wembley Primary School

Demand: Planning Area 3 includes two major growth areas in Wembley Central and Alperton and the latest projections are similar to previous years, indicating a rising demand. They suggest that over the next 5 years, most year groups will be at or below the 5% surplus margin, with some year groups operating with no surplus capacity, particularly in Key Stage Two.

Planned action: Longer term forecasts indicate there may be a continued increase in demand in this planning area, which would be consistent with pre-pandemic projections. The planning area will remain under review to ensure children can access local places. Planning Area 3 is adjacent to Planning Area 2 and Planning Area 4 which each have surplus capacity. It is anticipated that this surplus capacity would be used to accommodate excess demand before any need to consider any expanding provision in Planning Area 3.

Table 7: Planning Area 3 2023 projections and capacity

PA 3	Dataset	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2023/2024	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	765	807	796	800	828	818	838
	Surplus	55	13	24	20	-8	2	-18
	Surplus Percentage	7%	2%	3%	2%	-1%	0%	-2%
2024/2025	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	787	784	802	804	808	831	830
	Surplus	33	36	18	16	12	-11	-10
	Surplus Percentage	4%	4%	2%	2%	1%	-1%	-1%
2025/2026	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	755	808	786	811	813	815	844
	Surplus	65	12	34	9	7	5	-24
	Surplus Percentage	8%	1%	4%	1%	1%	1%	-3%
2026/2027	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	815	783	810	797	825	825	827
	Surplus	5	37	10	23	-5	-5	-7
	Surplus Percentage	1%	5%	1%	3%	-1%	-1%	-1%
2027/2028	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	817	832	778	814	808	831	834
	Surplus	3	-12	42	6	12	-11	-14
	Surplus Percentage	0%	-1%	5%	1%	1%	-1%	-2%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

Primary Planning Area 4

Wards	Harlesden & Kensal Green, Roundwood and Stonebridge
Schools	Brentfield Primary School, Donnington Primary School, Furness Primary School, Harlesden Primary School, John Keble CE Primary School, Leopold Primary School, Mitchell Brook Primary School, Newfield Primary School, Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School, St Joseph's RC Primary School, St Mary's CE Primary School, The Stonebridge School.

Demand: Planning Area 4 has very high levels of surplus places and the latest projections indicate that there will be a further reduction in demand. In the longer term, the area will serve some of the new housing being built as part of the Old Oak and Park Royal redevelopment scheme.

Planned action: Brent Council has started the process to address the excess capacity in the area as it is having a detrimental impact on some schools who are struggling with attendance and budget management. A series of reorganisation options are being considered including site closures, school closures and PAN reductions. It is anticipated that consultation on proposals will commence in autumn 2023.

Table 8: Planning Area 4 2023 projections and capacity

PA 4	Dataset	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2023/2024	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	519	515	577	573	621	580	629
	Surplus	336	340	278	282	234	275	226
	Surplus Percentage	39%	40%	33%	33%	27%	32%	26%
2024/2025	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	498	502	504	582	581	617	603
	Surplus	357	353	351	273	274	238	252
	Surplus Percentage	42%	41%	41%	32%	32%	28%	29%
2025/2026	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	477	482	492	507	590	575	638
	Surplus	378	373	363	348	265	280	217
	Surplus Percentage	44%	44%	42%	41%	31%	33%	25%
2026/2027	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	485	462	472	494	514	585	592
	Surplus	370	393	383	361	341	270	263
	Surplus Percentage	43%	46%	45%	42%	40%	32%	31%
2027/2028	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	479	473	455	479	504	513	607
	Surplus	376	382	400	376	351	342	248
	Surplus Percentage	44%	45%	47%	44%	41%	40%	29%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

Primary Planning Area 5

Wards	Cricklewood & Mapesbury, Dollis Hill and Willesden Green
PA5 Schools	Anson Primary School, Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary School, Braintcroft E-ACT Primary Academy, Convent of Jesus and Mary Infant School, Gladstone Park Primary School, Mora Primary School, Northview Primary School, Our Lady of Grace Infant and Nursery School, Our Lady of Grace RC Junior School, St Andrew & St Francis CE Primary School, St Mary Magdalen's RC Junior School.

Demand: The latest projections show that there will be a small drop in demand over the next five years, but surplus capacity is comfortable for place planning purposes (5%).

Planned action: There are no current or planned actions in Planning Area 5. The planning area will remain under review to determine if any longer-term changes are required as part of the annual refresh of this strategy.

Table 9: Planning Area 5 2023 projections and capacity

PA 5	Dataset	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2023/2024	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	562
	Projection	518	523	531	535	528	516	539
	Surplus	39	34	26	22	29	41	23
	Surplus Percentage	7%	6%	5%	4%	5%	7%	4%
2024/2025	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	557
	Projection	522	511	517	524	534	528	520
	Surplus	35	46	40	33	23	29	37
	Surplus Percentage	6%	8%	7%	6%	4%	5%	7%
2025/2026	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	557
	Projection	485	512	505	510	521	531	526
	Surplus	72	45	52	47	36	26	31
	Surplus Percentage	13%	8%	9%	8%	6%	5%	6%
2026/2027	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	557
	Projection	508	478	504	496	508	520	531
	Surplus	49	79	53	61	49	37	26
	Surplus Percentage	9%	14%	10%	11%	9%	7%	5%
2027/2028	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	557
	Projection	503	501	473	496	496	510	524
	Surplus	54	56	84	61	61	47	33
	Surplus Percentage	10%	10%	15%	11%	11%	8%	6%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

Primary Planning Area 6

Wards	Brondesbury Park, Kilburn and Queens Park
PA6 Schools	Ark Franklin Academy, Carlton Vale Infant School, Christchurch CE Primary School, Islamia Primary School, Kilburn Grange Primary School, Malorees Infant School, Malorees Junior School, North West London Jewish Day School, Princess Frederica CE Primary School, Salusbury Primary School, St Mary's RC Primary School, The Kilburn Park Foundation School

Demand: Projections for Planning Area 6 show a slight decline in demand over the next five years. Future developments may affect demand and supply in this area. Islamia Primary School is likely to relocate to another site in Brent outside of the planning area within the next three years, removing 2FE of capacity from the area. As part of the South Kilburn regeneration programme, Carlton Vale Infant School and The Kilburn Park School Foundation are due to move into a new school building in 2028, which will attract additional demand.

Planned action: Plans are progressing for Carlton Vale Infant School and Kilburn Park Junior School to come together in a Hard Federation as a first step towards becoming a primary school. The relocation of Islamia Primary School will reduce capacity in Planning Area 6 and will impact on demand patterns, with some of the local children who would have attended the school accessing spare places in other schools. As part of the South Kilburn regeneration programme, school place in the Planning Area will remain under review.

Table 10: Planning Area 6 2023 projections and capacity

PA 6	Dataset	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2023/2024	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	462	444	480	468	444	470	499
	Surplus	143	161	125	137	161	135	106
	Surplus Percentage	24%	27%	21%	23%	27%	22%	18%
2024/2025	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	450	431	438	458	465	442	472
	Surplus	155	174	167	147	140	163	133
	Surplus Percentage	26%	29%	28%	24%	23%	27%	22%
2025/2026	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	417	419	426	423	454	463	443
	Surplus	188	186	179	182	151	142	162
	Surplus Percentage	31%	31%	30%	30%	25%	23%	27%
2026/2027	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	437	391	415	412	420	452	465
	Surplus	168	214	190	193	185	153	140
	Surplus Percentage	28%	35%	31%	32%	31%	25%	23%
2027/2028	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	432	407	387	402	409	419	451
	Surplus	173	198	218	203	196	186	154
	Surplus Percentage	29%	33%	36%	34%	32%	31%	25%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

8. Secondary school place planning

A downwards trend is projected for Year 7 demand over the next seven years with the latest forecasts projecting a more marked decline in demand. Demand is projected to be below the level of available capacity and therefore the LA is confident there is sufficient capacity to meet demand for the near future.

Brent has traditionally been a net exporter of secondary pupils, but the borough has seen an increase in parental preference for Brent secondary schools due to the sustained quality of local schools. These factors have been taken into consideration in the projection figures for secondary schools and it is possible that future demand for individual schools could increase further.

Table 11 shows Year 7 forecasts against current capacity and capacity to be provided by the North Brent School (from 2024/25).

Table 11: Year 7 projections and planned capacity

Year	Year 7 projected intake	Year 7 places available	Surplus	Surplus
2023/24	3308	3568	260	7.3%
2024/25	3195	3688	493	13.4%
2025/26	3166	3688	522	14.2%
2026/27	3195	3688	493	13.4%
2027/28	3208	3688	480	13.0%
2028/29	3129	3688	559	15.2%
2029/30	3042	3688	646	17.5%

Table 12 shows borough wide forecasts for all year groups and indicates a comfortable operating margin of at least 5% spare places in all year groups except Year 11 in the current academic year.

Table 12: Secondary projections 2023 and capacity

Whole borough	Dataset	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
2023/2024	Capacity	3,568	3,568	3,568	3,628	3,508
	Projection	3308	3334	3368	3392	3365
	Surplus	260	234	200	236	143
	Surplus Percentage	7%	7%	6%	7%	4%
2024/2025	Capacity	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,808
	Projection	3195	3337	3362	3405	3442
	Surplus	493	351	326	283	366
	Surplus Percentage	13%	10%	9%	8%	10%
2025/2026	Capacity	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688
	Projection	3166	3225	3363	3398	3456
	Surplus	522	463	325	290	232
	Surplus Percentage	14%	13%	9%	8%	6%
2026/2027	Capacity	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688
	Projection	3195	3200	3259	3401	3460
	Surplus	493	488	429	287	228
	Surplus Percentage	13%	13%	12%	8%	6%
2027/2028	Capacity	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688
	Projection	3208	3223	3229	3296	3460
	Surplus	480	465	459	392	228
	Surplus Percentage	13%	13%	12%	11%	6%
2028/2029	Capacity	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688
	Projection	3129	3245	3262	3275	3376
	Surplus	559	443	426	413	312
	Surplus Percentage	15%	12%	12%	11%	8%
2029/2030	Capacity	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688
	Projection	3042	3164	3277	3303	3345
	Surplus	646	524	411	385	343
	Surplus Percentage	18%	14%	11%	10%	9%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

8.1 Actions to respond to changes in demand

The North Brent School, which was approved by DfE in 2016 to provide 180 places per year (6 Form Entry), officially opened in September 2020. Due to building delays, completion of the school's new permanent building site has been delayed, resulting in lower intakes while children were taught on the Wembley High Technology College site. The school expects to relocate in 2024 to its permanent site in Neasden, where it will operate to full capacity.

A number of secondary schools have previously expressed an interest in expanding should additional places be required to meet demand. It is unlikely this will be required during the life of this current strategy for Year 7 but is not something which has been formally ruled out and will be reviewed as part of the annual refresh of this strategy in particular for higher year groups.

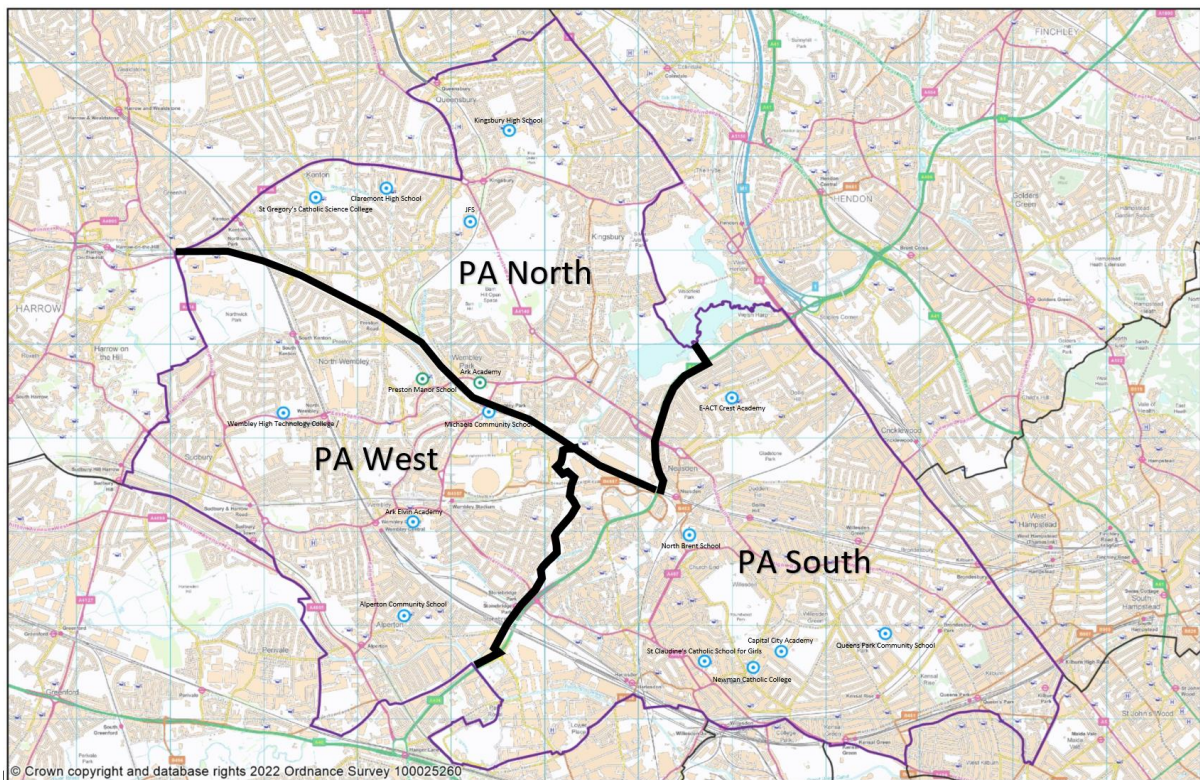
The local authority is currently employing a strategy of working with schools with existing spare built capacity (due to the employment of informal capping arrangements), to open up that capacity where needed in the higher year groups to ensure a sufficiency of places to meet in-year demand.

8.2 Secondary Planning Areas

Brent divides its secondary schools into 3 planning areas that reflect geographical groupings of schools – Secondary Planning Area North, Secondary Planning Area West and Secondary Planning Area South (Figure 4).

Secondary aged children can be expected to travel longer distances to school. A reasonable offer for a secondary place is one within 3 miles of home, which given the size of Brent and the good transport links mean children can travel to any school. However, secondary planning areas allow localised pressures for schools to be taken into account and where additional places would help more children attend a school near to where they live.

Figure 5: Secondary Planning Areas



Secondary Planning Area North

Wards	Barnhill, Kenton, Kingsbury, Queensbury and Welsh Harp
Schools	Ark Academy, Claremont High School, JFS, Kingsbury High School, St Gregory's Catholic Science College

Demand: Schools in Planning Area are traditionally oversubscribed. However, the latest projections indicate there may be a small surplus over the next three years. Planning Area North includes the Burnt Oak Colindale and Northwick Park growth areas.

Planned action: There are no planned actions in this Planning Area North and demand will be kept under review as part of the annual refresh of this strategy. Spare places in Planning Area South will accommodate pressures in demand in this planning area, and the Fair Access Protocol will be implemented if required to manage demand for in-year places that cannot be fulfilled through normal admissions processes, especially in Years 9 – 11.

Table 13: Secondary Planning Area North 2023 projections and capacity

PA 7 - North	Dataset	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
2023/2024	Capacity	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278
	Projection	1244	1261	1260	1292	1290
	Surplus	34	17	18	-14	-12
	Surplus Percentage	3%	1%	1%	-1%	-1%
2024/2025	Capacity	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278
	Projection	1212	1253	1264	1276	1311
	Surplus	66	25	14	2	-33
	Surplus Percentage	5%	2%	1%	0%	-3%
2025/2026	Capacity	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278
	Projection	1175	1218	1254	1276	1291
	Surplus	103	60	24	2	-13
	Surplus Percentage	8%	5%	2%	0%	-1%
2026/2027	Capacity	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278
	Projection	1193	1185	1222	1267	1296
	Surplus	85	93	56	11	-18
	Surplus Percentage	7%	7%	4%	1%	-1%
2027/2028	Capacity	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278
	Projection	1195	1202	1191	1237	1289
	Surplus	83	76	87	41	-11
	Surplus Percentage	6%	6%	7%	3%	-1%
2028/2029	Capacity	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278
	Projection	1175	1204	1208	1207	1262
	Surplus	103	74	70	71	16
	Surplus Percentage	8%	6%	5%	6%	1%
2029/2030	Capacity	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278	1,278
	Projection	1140	1182	1207	1221	1230
	Surplus	138	96	71	57	48
	Surplus Percentage	11%	8%	6%	4%	4%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

Secondary Planning Area West

Wards	Alperton, Northwick Park, Preston, Sudbury, Tokyngton, Wembley Central, Wembley Hill and Wembley Park
Schools	Alperton Community School, Ark Elvin Academy, Michaela Community School, Preston Manor School, Wembley High Technology College

Demand: Secondary Planning Area West includes two major growth areas in Wembley Central and Alperton and demand for Year 7 places is expected to remain at or around capacity. Projections indicate limited spare capacity up to 2024/25 with a shortage of capacity beyond this point. This is compounded by some schools in the area operating a lower PAN than their build capacity will allow.

Planned action: Longer term forecasts indicate there may be fluctuating demand in this Planning Area West, which will remain under review to determine whether any longer-term interventions are required to increase capacity. Spare places in Planning Area South will accommodate pressures in demand in Planning Area West. Fair Access Protocols will be implemented if required to manage demand for in-year places that cannot be fulfilled through normal admissions processes.

Table 14: Secondary Planning Area West 2023 projections and capacity

	Dataset	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
2023/2024	Capacity	1,179	1,176	1,176	1,296	1,176
	Projection	1200	1188	1155	1151	1166
	Surplus	-21	-12	21	145	10
	Surplus Percentage	-2%	-1%	2%	11%	1%
2024/2025	Capacity	1,176	1,179	1,176	1,176	1,296
	Projection	1157	1217	1210	1176	1180
	Surplus	19	-38	-34	0	116
	Surplus Percentage	2%	-3%	-3%	0%	9%
2025/2026	Capacity	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176
	Projection	1174	1179	1241	1237	1207
	Surplus	2	-3	-65	-61	-31
	Surplus Percentage	0%	0%	-6%	-5%	-3%
2026/2027	Capacity	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176
	Projection	1185	1197	1207	1267	1277
	Surplus	-9	-21	-31	-91	-101
	Surplus Percentage	-1%	-2%	-3%	-8%	-9%
2027/2028	Capacity	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176
	Projection	1195	1202	1218	1229	1301
	Surplus	-19	-26	-42	-53	-125
	Surplus Percentage	-2%	-2%	-4%	-5%	-11%
2028/2029	Capacity	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176
	Projection	1166	1218	1232	1245	1275
	Surplus	10	-42	-56	-69	-99
	Surplus Percentage	1%	-4%	-5%	-6%	-8%

2029/2030	Capacity	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176	1,176
	Projection	1138	1189	1243	1257	1285
	Surplus	38	-13	-67	-81	-109
	Surplus Percentage	3%	-1%	-6%	-7%	-9%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

Secondary Planning Area South

Wards	Brondesbury Park, Cricklewood & Mapesbury, Dollis Hill, Harlesden & Kensal Green, Kilburn, Roundwood, Queens Park, Stonebridge and Willesden Green
Schools	Capital City Academy, E-ACT Crest Academy, Newman Catholic College, North Brent School, Queens Park Community School, St Claudine's Catholic School for Girls

Demand: Planning Area South includes the Neasden Station, Staples Corner, Church End and South Kilburn growth areas. Projections for this planning area remain steady for the next 7 years and there is sufficient availability of places to meet demand. The availability of places in this planning area means that children living in the North or West Planning Areas, who may not have been successful in gaining a place at schools closer to home, may be offered schools in the South, particularly if the applications are made in-year.

Planned action: The local authority has been in talks with Senior Leaders at E-ACT Crest Academy and the E-ACT Academy Trust to increase in-year provision at the school to meet demand across the borough as the school has the physical infrastructure to do so. Due to the nature of transport links in Brent, it is possible for pupils to easily travel between planning areas to attend schools further away, but still within recommended journey times, where there is no in-year availability at their local schools. The Planning Area will remain under review to determine if any longer-term changes are required as part of the annual refresh of this strategy.

Table 15: Secondary Planning Area South 2023 projections and capacity

	Dataset	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
2023/2024	Capacity	1,114	1,114	1,114	1,054	1,054
	Projection	864	885	953	948	909
	Surplus	250	229	161	106	145
	Surplus Percentage	22%	21%	14%	10%	14%
2024/2025	Capacity	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234
	Projection	826	867	888	953	952
	Surplus	408	367	346	281	282
	Surplus Percentage	33%	30%	28%	23%	23%
2025/2026	Capacity	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234
	Projection	815	828	868	886	957
	Surplus	419	406	366	348	277
	Surplus Percentage	34%	33%	30%	28%	22%
2026/2027	Capacity	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234
	Projection	816	817	830	867	887
	Surplus	418	417	404	367	347
	Surplus Percentage	34%	34%	33%	30%	28%
2027/2028	Capacity	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234
	Projection	819	819	820	831	870
	Surplus	415	415	414	403	364
	Surplus Percentage	34%	34%	34%	33%	29%
2028/2029	Capacity	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234
	Projection	787	823	822	823	839
	Surplus	447	411	412	411	395
	Surplus Percentage	36%	33%	33%	33%	32%
2029/2030	Capacity	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234	1,234
	Projection	764	793	827	825	830
	Surplus	470	441	407	409	404
	Surplus Percentage	38%	36%	33%	33%	33%

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

9. SEND and Alternative Provision place planning

9.1 Brent SEND Overview

Brent is a borough that has high aspirations for all children and young people with special, educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Services, schools and settings are needs-led and follow the ethos of early identification and early intervention. Brent recognises SEND is not a fixed or permanent characteristic. At a specific time, a child might have additional learning needs that require tailored or additional support to fully participate in everything the school has to offer, or they may require more specialist support in school for the whole of their education. All schools in Brent are inclusive and where possible a child or young person should be educated in their local mainstream school. The majority of pupils' additional needs can be met within one of the following contexts with only those not able to access their education in a mainstream school being met through a special school.

Table 16 – Full range of provision in Brent

A FULL RANGE OF PROVISION			
Fully inclusive mainstream provision (no support)	Mainstream with support	Additionally resourced mainstream provision	Brent special school provision

There is a rich range of high-quality specialist provision in Brent encompassing 3 enhanced pre-school providers, 1 primary special maintained school, 2 special all through academy schools and 2 secondary special school academies, and a number of Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARP) in both primary and secondary mainstream schools, all detailed in Table 17.

An ARP is designed to provide specialist and targeted support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who can function well in a mainstream school, and where the school has appropriate teaching and learning strategies and staff with the skills, knowledge, and expertise in a particular area of SEND. ARPs also provide specialist environments which support the learning needs of each pupil, and many young people with additional learning needs can make better, and more sustained progress when they attend mainstream schools.

Table 17: Special School PAN and Additionally Resourced Provision places 2022/23

School	Type of Provision	Type of School	Special Need	Specialist places 2022-23
*The Manor School	Special	Primary	Communication and Interaction	216
*The Avenue	Special	All-through	Communication and Interaction	100
Phoenix Arch School	Special	Primary	Communication and Interaction	55
+The Village School and Hope Centre	Special	All-through	Communication and Interaction and additional learning difficulty	310
*Wembley Manor (satellite provision in 2023/24)	Special	Secondary	Communication and Interaction and additional learning difficulty	27 (150 by 2025)
+Woodfield School	Special	Secondary	Communication and Interaction	188
Kingsbury Green Primary	ARP	Primary	Hearing Impairment	18
Oakington Manor Primary School	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	23
Fryent Primary School	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	42
Preston Manor High School	ARP	Secondary	Communication and Interaction	12
Preston Manor High School	ARP	Secondary	Communication and Interaction	12
Kingsbury High School	ARP	Secondary	Hearing Impairment	7
Carlton Vale Infant School	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	10
Kilburn Park Junior School	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	14
Newfield Primary School	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	6

*The Manor, Wembley Manor and The Avenue schools form the RISE Academy Trust. Children attending satellite provision of The Manor at Newman Catholic College will transfer to Wembley Manor once open.

+The Village and Woodfield schools form the Compass Learning Partnership Multi-Academy Trust.

9.2 Demand for special provision

Demand for special provision in Brent has been growing and this is forecast to continue. There are currently 3368 children and young people aged 0-25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), which at 4.2% of the school population is similar to national. 10.8% of pupils are identified with additional needs that can be met at SEN support where a need is identified but does not meet threshold for an EHCP (compared to 13% nationally). 54% of children and young people with an EHCP are identified with communication and interaction needs (autistic spectrum disorder and speech, language and communication). The average growth in EHCP numbers has been approximately 10% over the last three years, consistent with the national position.

Between 2021 and 2022 the number of EHC Plans increased across all age groups, with the highest in the 20-25 age group (40% compared to 3% nationally) and the 16-19 age group (18%). In Brent the age groups with the largest number of EHCPs are the 5-10 age group (37% of cohort) and the 11-15 age group (32%), with the 20-25 age group accounting for 9%. This means that additional local special places across all phases are needed to respond to increasing demand, as EHCP numbers increase, as well as provision for the 16-25 age group.

Table 18: Actual and forecast number of EHCPs by age group

Timeline	Total	Under 5s	05 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 19	20 - 25
2017	1960	100	836	681	285	58
2018	2076	114	907	696	306	53
2019	2173	99	926	704	377	67
2020	2426	137	1001	745	376	167
2021	2784	134	1124	839	490	197
2022	2938	128	1172	931	489	218
2023	3251	135	1197	1038	575	306
2024	3576	149	1317	1142	633	337
2025	3934	163	1448	1256	696	370
2026	4327	180	1593	1382	765	407
2027	4760	198	1753	1520	842	448

Source: SEN2 2023; forecast based on 10% increase.

Table 19 shows the prevalence of identified need in children and young people's Education, Health and Care Plans.

Table 19: Number of children and young people with an EHCP by identified need

	2021 Number	%	2022 Number	%	2023 Number	%
Total	2784		2938		3251	
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	895	32.1%	1097	40.6%	1216	37.4%
Hearing Impairment	70	2.5%	68	2.3%	81	2.5%
Moderate Learning Disability	479	17.2%	506	17.2%	578	17.8%
Multi-Sensory Impairment	8	0.3%	7	0.2%	8	0.2%
Other difficulty	19	0.6%	13	0.4%	17	0.5%
Physical Disability	108	3.9%	115	5.3%	122	3.8%
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty	82	2.9%	89	3.2%	89	2.7%
Social Emotional, and Mental Health	275	9.9%	294	12%	332	10.2%
Speech Language and Communication Needs	565	20.3%	447	15.2%	505	15.5%
Severe Learning Difficulties	204	7.4%	219	0.3%	203	6.2%
Specific Learning Difficulty	42	1.5%	48	2.1%	58	1.8%
Visual Impairment	37	1.4%	35	1.2%	42	1.3%

9.3 Where Brent children with special needs and EHC Plans attend school

Direct work with schools and settings to better meet the needs of children with SEND has seen an increase in the number of children remaining within mainstream education. 75.2% of children and young people issued an EHC Plan in 2022 (SEN2 analysis) are in mainstream settings in line the expectation in the Children and Family Act 2014 that all children should be educated in mainstream where possible.

The special schools in the borough cater for a wide range of children and young people with complex SEND but there are not enough local places to meet need. As a result, 1066 Brent pupils with EHC Plans attend out-of-borough special school places, and of these 158 attend

independent placements at a cost of over £7m per annum (2022/23). Notwithstanding the financial case, there is a strong educational and social rationale for the council to place pupils in schools closer to home and within the borough.

Once children are placed out-of-borough, or in an independent non-maintained special school (INMSS) it is very difficult to bring them back to local provision. This has meant a long-term reliance on out-of-borough and independent placements which continues often until children and young people are 19 years of age or older. While some children have such specific needs that cannot be met other than in very specialist provision, there is considerable scope to reduce expensive and distant out-of-borough placements.

9.4 Planned action

In developing additional places for children and young people with EHCPs, Brent engages with parents and carers of children and young people with SEND to ensure services meet their needs and achieve the best outcomes. The LA is currently undertaking a £44m capital expansion programme approved by Cabinet in January 2022 to develop a new special school, new ARPs in mainstream schools and expansions at Brent special schools to provide 427 additional specialist places. Despite this capital investment, increasing demand means that further local specialist places are still needed. This could include further Additionally Resourced Provision (ARPs) and special school satellite provision utilising spare primary accommodation.

Table 20: Planned Special School Expansions due to complete in 2024

School	Places
Wembley Manor Secondary School	150
The Village School Key Stage 3 and 4	20
Woodfield School Key Stage 3 and 4	40

9.5 Alternative provision

The Council has a statutory duty to arrange suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who because of illness or other reasons would not receive suitable education without such provision. In Brent there are two pupil referral units (PRUs) that are maintained by the local authority to provide sufficiency meet statutory duties. These are Brent River College (BRC) for permanently excluded pupils and Ashley College, for pupils who require alternative provision due to medical needs, and both PRUs are currently judged as 'Good' by Ofsted.

For pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 at risk of a permanent exclusion who have complex needs, Brent Council commissions two providers, Brent River College and The Pears Family School for pupils requiring time limited placements. Roundwood School and Community Centre, an alternative provision free school is also another provider who adds to the sufficiency of alternative provision in the borough.

The overall exclusion figures for all Brent pupils for the academic year 2022/2023 remains low with 31 students permanently excluded. This is due to the focus on early identification and prevention strategies working alongside teams in mainstream school settings. However, the number of pupils requiring respite provision for emotional wellbeing needs has grown and there is a need to increase the number of places at Ashley College. This would require a relocation for the provision and will be considered as part of wider school place planning considerations.

9.6 Post-16 Provision

The government drive for improved engagement post-16 in supported employment and more paid employment opportunities has placed an additional focus on local authorities to drive forward an expansion in supported internships and opportunities for young people to prepare for adulthood through employability skills and work experience. As the number of young people with an EHCP continues to grow, the demand in this area will continue.

There is an expectation in the 2014 SEND Code of Practice that a full range of opportunities must be provided to support young people to become visible, active members of society. The Council has recently committed to developing post-16 SEND provision to meet this demand for places for young people with SEND, in particular young people aged 16-25 with complex learning difficulties. A new Post-16 Skills Resource Centre operating on two sites (Welsh Harp and Airco Close) was agreed by Cabinet in May 2023 and is aimed at addressing the current lack of in-borough provision for young people aged 16-25 with complex learning difficulties. To ensure efficiencies in how this is delivered, the Post-16 Skills Resource Centre at Airco Close will operate from the same building that will deliver agreed expansions of places at The Village and Woodfield Schools.

A partnership wide Supported Employment Forum has been established to ensure that the offer developed for young people is meaningful and sustainable. The Council, working with anchor organisations, has expanded the offer of supported internships. There have been over 50 supported interns to date, 12 of whom had placement rotations in the Council and Wembley hotels. The remaining interns were located within the Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust.

10. Conclusion

This strategy has set out the responsibilities the Council holds with regards to school place planning for early years, mainstream and special provision. It marks a departure from previous strategies which have been focused mainly on sufficiency of provision and moves towards a strategy based on the sustainability of provision that can adjust to both increases and decreases in demand for mainstream and specialist places.

The Local Authority will continue to work in partnership with schools to develop and implement actions that are identified as necessary to respond to changes in demand and strategies that ensure that the school estate can support current and future educational use.

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