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Dear Parents and Carers of Meadow Wood and Breakspeare Schools,

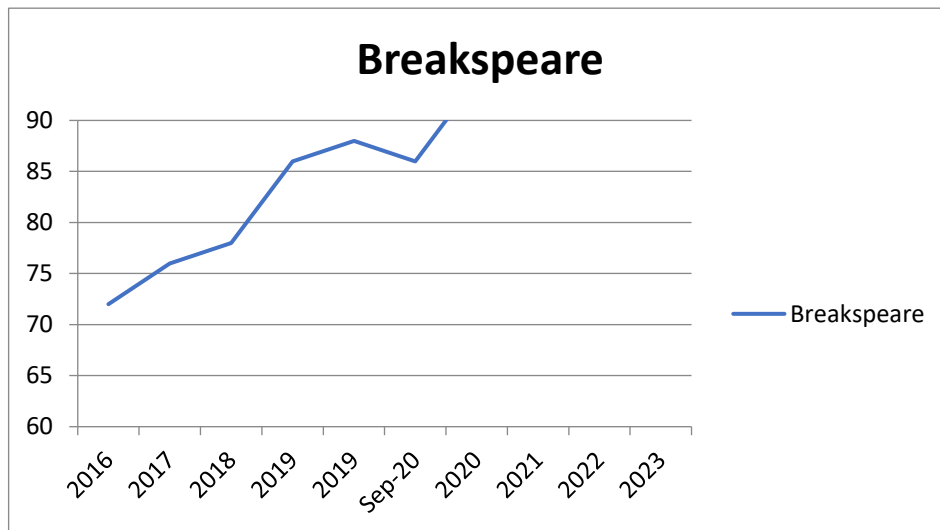
As promised in my Christmas letter, I am now sending you further information about the Local Authority's plans to manage the future demands of SLD and PNI school places in Three Rivers, Watford and Hertsmere.

This is a complicated matter as both Breakspeare and Meadow Wood Schools' predicted student numbers over the next few years are extremely high and both school buildings have their own particular challenges and improvement needs.

I am providing you with information of the student numbers over the last few years; our school building improvements that have been carried out; and improvement plans for both Breakspeare and Meadow Wood Schools:

Breakspeare School caters for students with severe and profound learning difficulties who are between 3 and 19 years of age. In 2013 there were 60 students at school; at the moment we have 85 students on the school roll. This is a 29% increase in student numbers over 6 years.

The following table shows the prediction of students' numbers at Breakspeare School. This is calculated based on Census information and some other factors such as predicted population growth in the area.



According to this prediction in 2023 and onwards the minimum student spaces needed at Breakspeare would be 109.

Breakspeare School was built in 1948 as an infant school in Abbots Langley. Breakspeare School moved to the premises in the early 80's from Garston. The building is not designed as a special needs school. Therefore we have carefully designed and implemented an improvement and maintenance plan to provide our students with an appropriate and safe learning environment.

We are fortunate that during the last 5 years we have been able to improve many areas both indoors and outdoors. Using school funds we have redesigned the school front transport area, the staff car park, an eco-

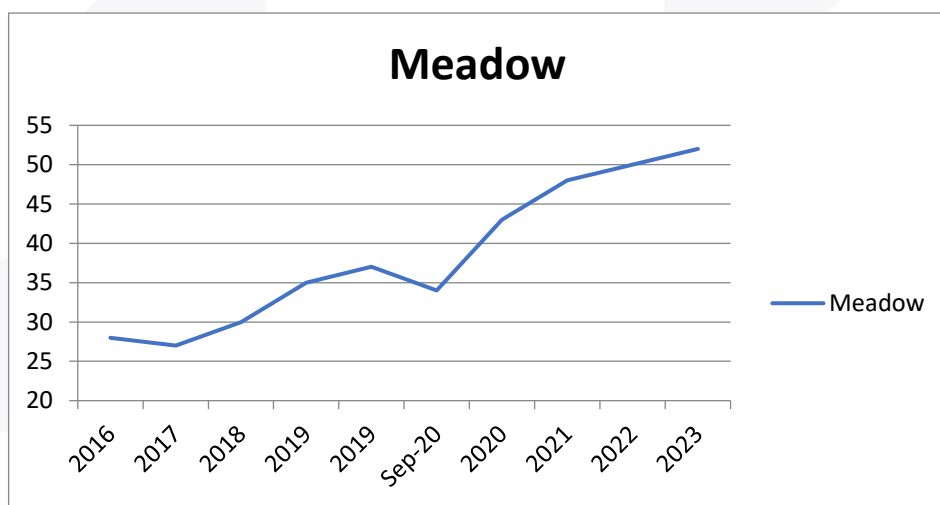
garden, forest mud kitchen, outdoor musical track and C 1 and C3 outdoor play areas. We have also redecorated and refurbished C1, C2, C3 and C4 areas, the therapist work space and some toilet areas and updated the appropriate environmental aids for our students with a visual impairment. With additional funds from 'Sports England' and other charitable donations we have been able to redesign the lower playground, swing and roundabout area and the soft play area. The LA provided some additional capital funds to improve some toilet areas, storage, PMLD classrooms (C2 and C7) and to replace an inadequate mobile unit with a larger demountable one (currently used by C8). These improvements were carried out in 2018. The total cost of all these improvements including our annual maintenance budget is over 1 million pounds.

We replaced an inappropriate one-class room mobile with a two classroom mobile unit in 2015, (leased on a five year contract from Portakabin) this increased Breakspeare School's student numbers by 8. In 2018 the LA increased Breakspeare student numbers from 78 to 86 by building a one classroom demountable unit that is co-located on Meadow Wood School's site. As the Portakabin lease is now coming to its end the LA is building us a demountable unit for three classrooms during the summer of 2020. This means that Breakspeare School's student numbers will be 94 in September 2020. There is NO capacity to increase student numbers by building new classrooms on the Breakspeare School site in the future.

Meadow Wood School was built 1984 as a purpose built special needs school for students with physical disabilities. The school caters for primary age students with a physical and neurological impairment.

In 2016 there were 25 students; at the moment we have 34 students on roll. This is a 26% increase in student numbers in 3 years. Meadow Wood School's maximum student number is currently 36.

The table shows the prediction of the students' numbers at Meadow Wood School. This is calculated based on Census information and some other factors such as predicted population growth in the area.



It is very difficult to predict numbers for a small primary PNI school; therefore the prediction above should be read as an indicative reference of the increasing need of spaces only.

Since 2017 (the beginning of the Sunflower Federation) we have focused on increasing functionality of the classrooms by providing all classrooms with ceiling hoists. We have also improved outdoor play areas by installing a large flat tarmac area for the outdoor use of wheelchairs and trikes and by installing additional fencing for students' safety. We have also purchased indoor mobile PE equipment to enhance the students' physical development. The next urgent initiatives in the school's asset management plan are to redesign the reception area and the students' personal care areas for increased functionality. We are also working towards engaging with the wider community for fundraising for an integrated soft play and MSI area.

Summary

- Herts County Council has recognised the increased demand for SLD and PNI provision in Three Rivers, Watford and Hertsmere.
- Currently the local authority has focused on implementing quick, short term solutions to increase the number of placements for SLD students across Hertfordshire. (For example increasing Breakspeare places by 8 for September 2020).
- The Local Authority is investigating options how to manage the demand for special school places in the future; this may mean building a new special needs school/schools in different areas of Hertfordshire.
- The Local Authority has recognised that some special needs schools such as Breakspeare have significant maintenance costs due to the age and fabrication of the building.
- The Sunflower Federation has taken an uncompromised view that any increase in the student numbers in either of the schools provides improvements in teaching and learning for the existing school communities.

I hope you find this information useful. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Regards,
Merja

