

Development of a new Special Post-16 Institution (Transitional Learning Centre) in the Royal Borough of Greenwich



INFORMATION BRIEF FOR PROSPECTIVE PROVIDERS

New Transitional Learning Centre for young people aged 19 to 25 years with an EHC Plan to achieve greater independence and life skills

Contents

INFORMATION BRIEF FOR PROSPECTIVE PROVIDERS	2
1. Introduction	2
2. Background	2
A. Need for additional places.....	2
B. Meeting this demand.....	2
3. Vision and Outcomes	3
4. Profile of young people.....	3
5. Eligible providers	4
6. Service model.....	4
7. Curriculum development.....	4
8. Admissions and control	5
9. Building design and construction.....	5
10. Property and lease matters	6
11. Finance.....	6
12. Key timescales.....	7
13. Market engagement survey.....	8
14. Contact us	8
APPENDIX I: Existing Building Design Information (Subject to Change)	9
A. Location Site Plan.....	9
B. Artist Impression - External.....	10
C. Floor Plan - Internal	11
D. External and Internal Building Design Images	12

INFORMATION BRIEF FOR PROSPECTIVE PROVIDERS

I. Introduction

The Royal Borough of Greenwich (the 'Council') is **seeking feedback from experienced and skilled education providers** of any state-funded institution that operates or wishes to operate as a Special Post-16 Institution (SPI) to help shape the development of a new Transitional Learning Centre (TLC) that will enable young people aged 19–25 with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan achieve greater independence and life skills. The anticipated opening date of the TLC is September 2027.

The upcoming market engagement phase for [eligible providers](#) precedes the formal competition phase leading to the appointment of a suitable provider to operate the provision. Please see [key timescales](#) for further details on key dates.

This brief outlines some key aspects of the provision to help eligible providers interested in operating this provision to express interest and provide feedback to some key questions that will help make the TLC's final design and specification feasible and fit for purpose.

Following the market engagement phase, we are asking eligible providers that wish to express an interest in participating in the provider competition phase to complete a more detailed survey to provide feedback on the TLC's current viability, design and deliverability.

Eligible providers can also [register here](#) to attend the introductory online webinar.

2. Background

A. Need for additional places

Following the extension of local authority duties under the Children and Families Act 2014, which includes ensuring access to suitable education and training for young adults aged 19–25 with EHC Plans, the Council is experiencing rising demand for specialist Post-19 education provision.

Over the past five years, the number of 19 to 25-year-olds with EHC Plans within the borough has increased by approximately 80%, with a 54% rise in those requiring specialist provision.

This trend has led to a growing reliance on out-of-borough placements leading to over 200 young adults being educated outside the borough as of 2025; with associated costs and demand expected to increase further as more young people with EHC plans continue in education.

B. Meeting this demand

In response to the growing demand for specialist provisions for 19 to 25-year-olds in the borough, the Council has committed to providing a local provision to better support young adults within their communities. This approach aims to save on out-of-borough placement costs and enhance young people's transition into adulthood, including pathways to employment, volunteering, and independent living.

In November 2022, [Cabinet approved](#) £15M to deliver a multi-purpose facility at the former Wide Horizons site at 77 Bexley Road, specifically designed for young adults aged 19 to 25 with EHC Plans. The Cabinet report includes a detailed business case on the proposed [Transitional Learning Centre \(Appendix C\)](#).

3. Vision and Outcomes

The TLC aims to be a flagship provision designed to:

- Support young people with complex SEND needs to develop greater independence and life skills.
- Reduce reliance on costly out-of-borough placements and strengthen local SEND provision.

4. Profile of young people

The following table outlines the typical profiles of young people who are likely to be placed at the TLC, providing prospective providers with a general understanding of the nature and complexities of their needs.

Profile	Description
<p>Profile 1: Young Person with Complex Needs</p>	<p>This young person functions at an early cognitive level (birth to 18 months) and presents with multiple complex needs requiring input from a wide range of professionals. They are not independently mobile and rely on specialist equipment, hoisting, and a postural care routine. Communication is non-verbal, with adults interpreting facial expressions, body language, and vocalisations to understand and respond to needs.</p> <p>Daily medical care is likely needed, including routine and emergency interventions. Additional health concerns may include low immunity, temperature regulation difficulties, and feeding needs such as enteral feeding or texture-modified diets. There may also be sensory difficulties including cortical visual, hearing or multisensory impairments.</p> <p>Learning is facilitated through real-life, concrete experiences and structured using multi-sensory cues and consistent routines. Trusted adult relationships are critical to engagement and well-being. Access to adapted, specialist technology may be required.</p> <p>A solutions-focused team is essential to identify strengths and reduce barriers to a full adult life.</p>
<p>Profile 2: Young Person with Autism and Severe Learning Difficulties</p>	<p>This young person functions at an early cognitive level between 11 to 36 months and is highly active, requiring regular movement and safe, spacious environments. They may have limited awareness of danger, with risks including absconding and mouthing or eating inappropriate objects. Periods of dysregulation can result in behaviours that pose risks to themselves or others.</p> <p>Communication is typically non-verbal or limited, with reliance on visual supports such as symbols and objects to understand routines and express needs. Attention and focus are fleeting, and learning is best supported through visual modelling and structured repetition. Support is needed across all areas of daily life, including toileting and mealtimes, and they may have mental health needs including the involvement of CAMHS and other mental health professionals.</p> <p>This young person benefits from predictability and finds change challenging. A resilient, energetic team is required to provide consistent structure and to support safe, meaningful access to adult life.</p>

5. Eligible providers

Any institution that wishes to operate as a Special Post-16 Institution (SPI) may be considered eligible to participate in the competition phase provided they are:

- Registered on the [Get Information About Schools \(GIAS\)](#) and hold a valid UK Provider Reference Number (UKPRN).
- Eligible for state-funded education from the Department for Education (DfE).
- Ofsted registered with an overall Ofsted inspection judgement of **Good or Outstanding** under the common inspection framework (or similar judgements under the new 2025 inspection framework i.e. **Expected, Strong or Exceptional** standard).
- Able to demonstrate relevant experience in delivering education or support for learners with complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) with a track record or demonstrable capacity to deliver high-quality Post-16 education or training.

During the competition phase, applicants will also be expected to meet certain **due diligence requirements** to ensure that **the successful provider** who is appointed by the Council **also meets the [DfE's due diligence requirements for new special post-16 providers](#)**.

6. Service model

The appointed provider will create a high-quality, inclusive learning environment at the TLC that fosters independence and prepares learners for adult life.

The TLC will offer up to 30 full-time places (30 hours/week), structured across three separate year groups. The provider will operate the centre as a hub for multi-agency collaboration, integrating education, health, social care and voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) partners to deliver a holistic and person-centred approach.

The service model will be designed as a bridge between formal education and adult social care and will deliver a blended learning model that promotes lifelong learning, independence, and community inclusion for young people with severe and complex needs.

Given the specialist nature of the provision and the need for a blended education and social care curriculum, the provider will be delivering the education provision through a partnership model led by their experience of working collaboratively with health and social care partners to ensure a holistic, person-centred offer.

7. Curriculum development

The curriculum programme must support progression towards greater independence, community inclusion, and, where appropriate, pathways into employment or further learning. All placements shall be offered on a full-time basis, defined as 30 hours per week.

The appointed provider will deliver a high-quality and tailored educational programme designed to meet each young adult's needs and facilitate progression towards greater independence and their bespoke outcomes as set out within their EHC Plan, within DfE regulations.

The provider will work in partnership with young adults, parents and carers, as well as local employers and voluntary sector organisations to design, develop, and deliver an educational programme that is responsive to individual needs and aspirations.

The programme must ensure that all provision specified in each learner's EHC Plan is delivered effectively to support the achievement of identified outcomes. The provider will be responsible for managing the education component of each learner's EHC Plan, ensuring that learning pathways are meaningful, inclusive, and aligned with opportunities for community engagement, work-related learning, and progression into adulthood.

The curriculum delivery is being shaped in consultation with parents, carers and young adults who meet the profile of those attending the facility.

Once appointed, the provider will develop the curriculum further during the pre-opening phase engage with young people and other relevant partners and lead the co-production of the curriculum during the pre-opening phase.

8. Admissions and control

The Provider will be expected to:

- Admit all young learners resident in the Royal Borough of Greenwich with an EHC Plan naming the TLC. Places may be made available to out of borough residents only where the Council has not been able to fully utilise the available capacity. The Provider may admit out-of-borough residents where the TLC is named in their EHC Plan through the statutory SEND school consultation process; in which case, the Council reserves the right to recover the cost of such placements from the relevant authorities through the Provider.
- Where the Council is unable to fully utilise the places at the TLC, the Provider can liaise with other local authorities to market the provision and recruit learners for all remaining places, where applicable.
- For every place taken up by another local authority (whether that place is filled or unfilled), pay the Council a placement fee for advisory and resourcing support¹ (typically between £3K-£5K per place per academic year, subject to adjustments in line with inflation/CPI index). In addition, any wraparound care cost incurred by the Council due to such placements, will be recovered from the relevant local authority. These payments are intended to reflect the Council's obligation under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain best consideration for the use of its assets and to ensure efficient use of resources.

9. Building design and construction

The appointed provider will be accommodated in a new TLC facility, currently in its final design stages. The new building has been designed to accommodate up to 30 young people and 45 staff members.

The purpose-built facility will be wheelchair-accessible and equipped with specialist equipment appropriate to meet the diverse and complex needs of the learners. Some learners may also attend with their own individual specialist equipment to support their learning, communication, and/or mobility requirements.

Please see the existing [building design information \(Appendix 1\)](#) which requires some refinement and will be subject to some changes. The latest design information will be presented at the webinar on 1 December

¹ Whereby the Council provides expert advice, training, use of Council systems (where relevant), or support services as part of the placement process.

2025 by the new design team. Eligible providers as experienced operators will be asked to input into some building design questions following the market engagement webinar (See stages IB and IC within [key timescales](#)).

10. Property and lease matters

Subject to democratic approval, the appointed provider is to be granted:

- A full repairing, peppercorn lease for a proposed term of at least 25 years from September 2027. The lease to be coterminous with a grant agreement and will include a break clause linked to continuation of the agreement with the Council. The lease to include provisions that support maintenance and upkeep of the building.
- A grant agreement with the Council that includes provisions that:
 - Encourage resident placements at the centre; this may include provisions whereby additional charges are incurred for non-resident placements.
 - Support flexible use of the building during evenings, weekends and holidays for the local community.

The draft Heads of Terms of the premises is to be shared with eligible providers at the commencement of the provider competition phase.

11. Finance

Table I provides an initial estimate of the funding that will be available to operate the TLC provision, including a pre-opening phase grant based on the assumptions indicated:

Table I: Initial finance calculations and estimates (may be subject to change)

BEXLEY ROAD SPI		
	30 Students	
EXPENDITURE (estimate)	£	
Teaching Staff	292,950	
Learning Support Staff	1,206,250	
Site Support Staff	422,500	
	1,921,700	subtotal A
Utilities	56,250	
Equipment	75,000	
Catering Supplies	45,000	
Transport	93,750	
Maintenance	37,500	
	307,500	subtotal B
	2,229,200	subtotal C= (A+B)
INCOME (estimate)		
Place Funding	300,000	
Top-Up Funding	1,929,300	
	2,229,300	subtotal D
PDG - ONE OFF	168,750	Estimate set up costs
	50,000	Estimate cost of staff (1 term)
	218,750	

The provider will secure all relevant DfE funding for element 1 (core placement funding based on total learner numbers calculated through the post-16 national funding formula) and element 2 (additional high needs funding per learner based on number of places to be funded). Element 3 (top-up funding to meet the costs of support for young people with EHC Plans) will be secured through the individual placement agreements with placing local authorities, including the Council.

Where learners are assessed as eligible for further funding under the Care Act 2014, the provider shall work in partnership with the Council's Department of Health and Adults Services to support them in accessing social care funding (e.g. personal budgets for supported living), and ensure integrated support aligns with each learner's assessed care and support needs.

12. Key timescales

Stages	Date(s)	Action
1. Market Engagement Phase:		
A Information Brief (this document) available for prospective providers.	November 2025	Published on the commonplace website .
B Introductory webinar for eligible providers.	1 December 2025 from 2.30pm	A 1–2-hours session with presentations on various aspects of the TLC provision including an opportunity for Q&As. Eligible providers can register here to attend the webinar .
C Eligible providers feedback & expressions of interest (EOI) survey starts and ends (deadline).	1 December to 8 December 2025 (11.59pm)	Eligible providers are invited to complete the provider feedback & EOI survey here .
D Review of provider feedback during the market engagement phase.	January 2026	Feedback reviewed on viability and adjustments considered to the final specification before the competition phase commences.
2. Provider Competition Phase (ASSESSED):		<i>Dates for the competition phase to be confirmed and announced during January 2026.</i>
A Application opens (six-week period).	February 2026 (date TBC)	Guidance document published with acceptance criteria, specification and application form template.
B Application submission deadline for eligible providers.	April 2026 (date TBC)	Provider applications submitted to school-place-planning@royalgreenwich.gov.uk (time stamped).
C Interview and assessment of provider submissions.	May 2026 (date TBC)	The assessment panel will interview and assess applications using the published acceptance criteria.
3 Provider applicants notified of the outcome from the competition phase.	By June 2026 (date TBC)	Successful and non-successful applicants are notified.

Stages		Date(s)	Action
4.	The Council democratically appoints the successful provider	By July 2026	Democratic approval is sought to appoint the successful provider (SPI) and grant the necessary legal agreements.
5.	Pre-Opening /Mobilisation Phase.	From July 2026 to August 2027	<p>The Council must submit the high needs place change notification to the DfE before December 2026 regarding the new SPI and for the DfE to initiate their due diligence process. Please check the full details of the DfE's due diligence process, requirements, stages and timelines for establishing a new SPI which will likely need to be completed by March 2027 for 2027-28 academic year.</p> <p>The appointed SPI provider is also expected to receive a pre-opening phase grant by the Council to support them with the set-up of the new provision prior to the opening date.</p>
6.	The TLC provision opens.	From September 2027	Admission of first cohort(s) of young people.

13. Market engagement survey

Following the introductory webinar, eligible providers are invited to complete an online questionnaire to:

- Provide detailed feedback on the proposed design and viability of the provision.
- Confirm whether they wish to progress to the competition phase in Early 2026.

Your feedback is essential in helping the Council understand the current viability of the provision and refine the TLC specification for the competition phase. This will ensure the provision is fit for purpose, sustainable, and meets the needs of the young people profiled to attend the TLC.

Please complete your response to the [provider feedback survey](#) by **Friday 8 December 2025**.

14. Contact us

For all enquiries, please contact school_school-place-planning@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.

APPENDIX I: Existing Building Design Information (Subject to Change)

A. Location Site Plan

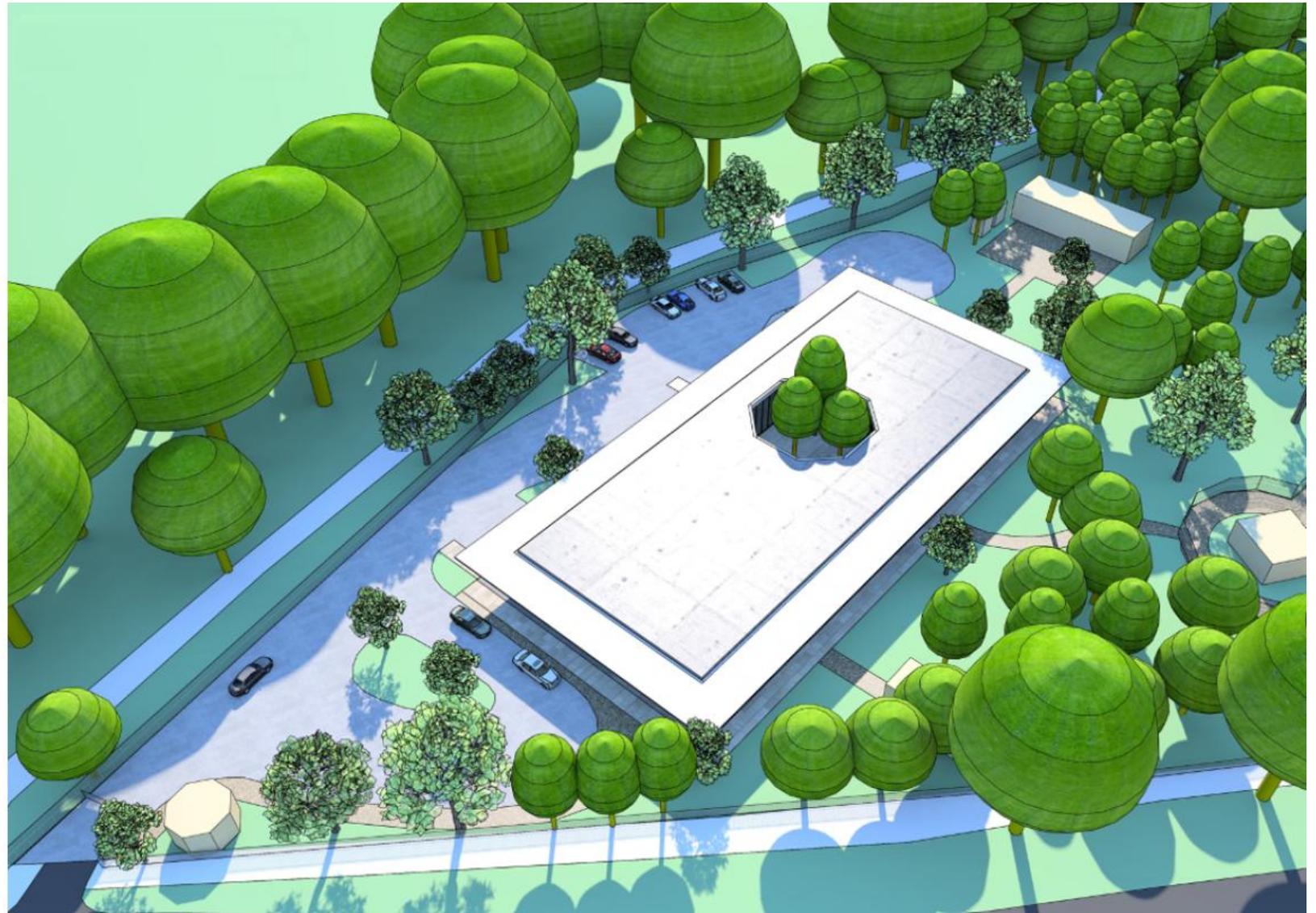


Notes: Transitional Learning Centre at 77 Bexley Road, SE9 premises (red boundary) adjacent to a separate woodland area indicated by the site demarcation.

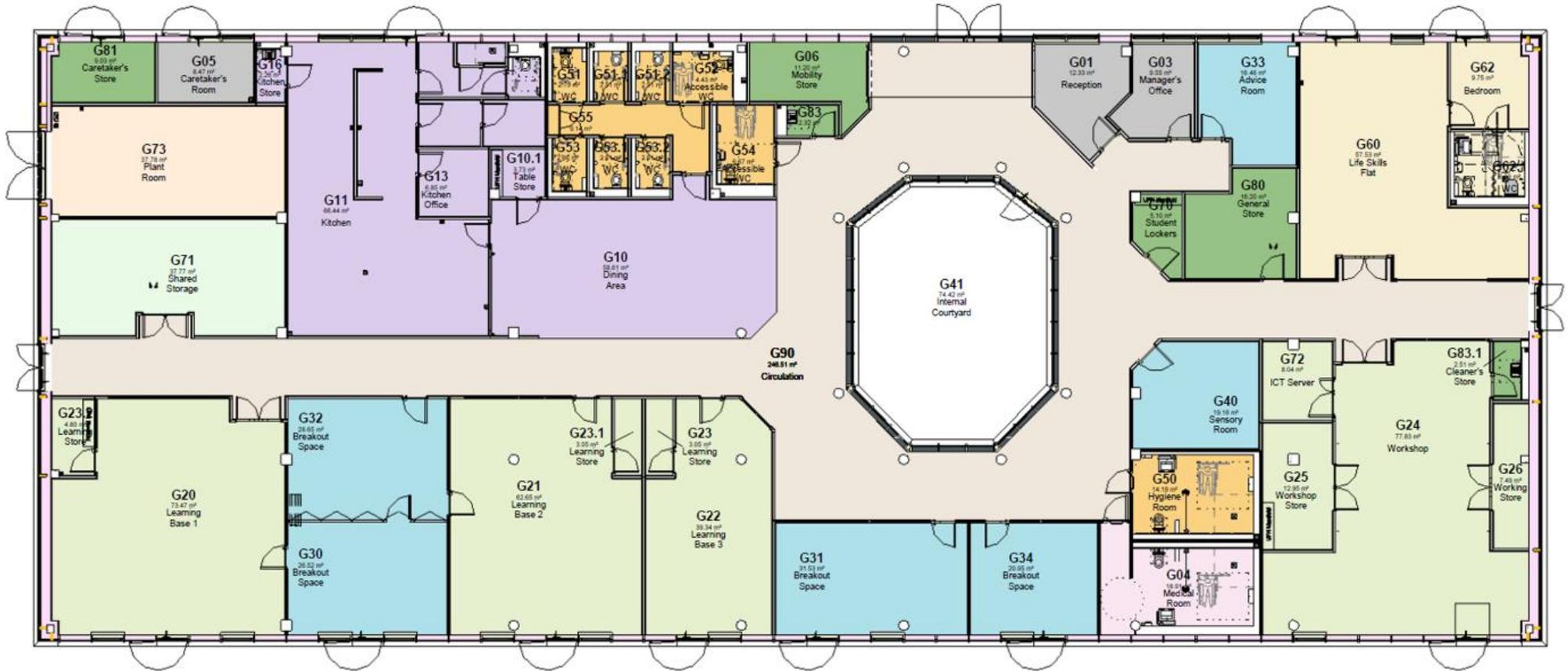
B. Artist Impression - External

**77 Bexley Road
Transitional
Learning Centre**

Artists Impressions



C. Floor Plan - Internal



Floor Plan GIFA 1200 sqm. Approx

Notes: Transitional Learning Centre RIBA Stage 4 Floor Layout - current design development.

D. External and Internal Building Design Images



- **Low Carbon build design**
- **Utilisation of specific modern technologies to provide energy efficiency**
- **Powered partly from on-site renewable energy sources**
- **Advanced Thermal Modelling characteristics**
- **Managing Impact on Ecology and Arboricultural assets**
- **Acoustic Sound Proofing learning environments**

