



Free school bid form

For local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision free schools

Published: July 2018

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The bid form explained

This free school bid form is for local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision (AP) free schools.

Local authorities (either as a lead or sole bidder) can submit a bid for one special and one AP school in total in their area. Given the limited number of new schools we will create in this wave, it is highly unlikely that we will approve more than one school in any one local authority area. In the most exceptional of circumstances where you plan to make the case for two new schools in your area, you will need to complete a separate bid form for each school, although you should cross-reference where appropriate.

The overview section on the second tab asks for information about the number of bids you are submitting (i.e. one or two), the priority of each bid (if you are submitting two), what (if any) other bids you are supporting, and your expected future need for new special and AP schools (and when they are needed). If you are submitting two bids, you only need to complete the overview page on one form.

If your bid is successful, the opportunity will be advertised nationally, and if a strong proposal comes forward, the new school will be delivered and funded as part of the department's central free schools programme.

Before completing your bid, please ensure that you have read the '[guidance and criteria for local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision free schools](#)' carefully, as this sets out the criteria by which your bid will be judged. Please provide all the information required.

The form should be completed by a local authority representative (or representatives, if it is a joint bid) with the approval of the Director(s) of Children's Services (DCS).

This bid form consists of 14 tabs in total (including this one). Please ensure you read all tabs carefully. You must complete the following tabs in full: overview, confirmation, A1, A2, B, C1, C2, C3, C4 and D. You will also need to complete tab 'A2 continued' if applicable and either tab 'Table C1i' or tab 'Table C1ii' depending on whether your bid is for a special or an AP free school.

Completed bid forms, specifications, and any supporting documentation (e.g. site plans, letters from commissioners) **should be submitted by midday on 15 October 2018. Submit your bid by email to:** APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk. Please title your email as follows: **Special/AP free school bid – [insert name of local authority (or lead local authority if joint bid)]**. Your email should not exceed 9 megabytes in size; anything larger will not be delivered. **If the bid is larger than 9 megabytes**, please split the documents and send two (or more) emails clearly indicating that the emails are connected (e.g. email 1 of 3).

Free school bid forms should:

- maintain the pre-set printing format;
- not include any comments; and
- not include photographs, images or logos.

This opportunity **does not replace the [presumption](#) process and does not replace a local authority's sufficiency duties.**

Annex A of the [guidance](#) sets out how the information you provide will be used.

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Free school bid form [X of Y]

1. This section must be completed.
2. If you are submitting more than one bid, you only need to complete this section once (on the form of your preferred bid).
3. Please refer to the 'guidance and criteria for local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision free schools' for information about what to include in this section.
4. Please complete the form as provided, do not create any new fields. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.

Overview

While local authorities (either as a lead or sole bidder) can submit a bid for one special and one AP school in total in their area, it is highly unlikely that we will approve more than one school in any one local authority area in this wave. However, we would like you to inform us of expected future need for new schools.

Overview table	
Name of your local authority	Bexley
List the bid(s) you are submitting this wave, as either the lead or the sole local authority (including type of school e.g. special or AP) – please list these in priority order so that the first is your preferred bid	Special day provision for young people with complex needs (please see case studies attached) 2. [Bid 2 – type of school OR Not applicable – submitting 1 bid]
List the bid(s), if any, that another local authority is leading on and that you are supporting (including the name of the lead local authority)	na
Optional: brief description of your expected future need for new special and AP schools, and when they are needed	Future need is to ensure children and young people with a profile of SEMH and ASD have their needs met within borough. The need is immediate because we currently send 267 pupils out-of-borough every day and believe that this school would meet the needs at least half of these children and young people. Children placed out of borough often present with a profile of average to high cognitive ability eg are able to follow a national curriculum but they are overwhelmed with a large environment of a mainstream secondary school. This impacts on their behaviour and educational achievement and these youngsters are likely to be at higher risk of permanent exclusion as their needs misunderstood.

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1. This section must be completed.
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4. Please complete the form as provided, do not create any new fields. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.

Confirmation

This confirmation must be signed by the relevant Director(s) of Children's Services at the local authority(ies) putting forward this bid.

I am the Director of Children's services at **London Borough of Bexley** and I have seen this expression of interest and support it.

I confirm that the information provided in this bid form is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I/we further confirm that the local authority(ies) and, if applicable, other commissioners (e.g. local schools commissioning AP places) named in section A of this bid have developed this proposal in partnership and, if the bid is successful, will commit to commissioning the number of places at the school as specified in this bid, and to paying the relevant top-up funding (indicative funding specified in this bid, to be confirmed by the local authority(ies) if the bid is successful).

I/we also confirm that I am/we are aware of the financial consequences of the commissioning on our high needs budget(s).

In addition, I/we intend to commission places beyond the first two years, as per the proposed school growth profile (pupil/capacity build up).

NB: an electronic signature is acceptable. If multiple local authorities are submitting this bid, complete a signature box for each local authority.

Signed:

[Redacted signature]

Position:

Director of Children's Services at London Borough of Bexley

Print name:

Jacky Tiotto

Date:

15/10/2018

Signed:

Position: Director of Children's Services at **[INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY NAME]**

Print name:

Date:

Signed:

Position: Director of Children's Services at **[INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY NAME]**

Print name:

Date:

Signed:

Position: Director of Children's Services at **[INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY NAME]**

Print name:

Date:

Signed:

Position: Director of Children's Services at **[INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY NAME]**

Print name:

Date:

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Free school bid form [X of Y]

1. This section must be completed.
2. If you are submitting more than one bid, you must complete this section for each bid.
3. Please refer to the 'guidance and criteria for local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision free schools' for information about what to include in this section.
4. Please complete the form as provided, do not create any new fields. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.

Section A1 – local authority(ies) putting forward this bid

Please complete table A1. If this is a joint bid, information must be provided for each local authority involved and the lead local authority must be stated. **Please note that including a local authority on this list means they have committed to commissioning places.**

If you are the sole local authority submitting a bid (i.e. it is not a joint bid), then you must provide the reason why in box A1.

Table A1 - local authority(ies) putting forward this bid		
Name of local authority	Name of person leading	Contact details
Lead local authority: [select name of lead local authority in cell C30 below. This would be the local authority in which the school would be located]	Kevin Taylor	Telephone: [REDACTED] Mobile: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED] Address: Civic Offices, 2-4 Watling Street, Bexleyheath, DA6
Bexley		
[If applicable, select name of second local authority in cell C36 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:
[If applicable, select name of third local authority in cell C42 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:
[If applicable, select name of fourth local authority in cell C48 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:
[If applicable, select name of fifth local authority in cell C54 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:

Box A1 - if you are submitting a solo bid, please explain why

We have talked with all neighbouring boroughs, both across South East London and Kent about their current needs analysis and requirements to establish whether there is any merit in putting in a joint bid and provision proposal. Whilst all have expressed a desire to commission places from us, each local authority is considering a seperate individual bid catering for a different profile of need. eg Greenwich and Lewisham both considering a bid for an ASD specific school. Lewisham and Greenwich have both confirmed they would commission places from Bexley, as this provision would be substantially closer than schools to which they transport pupils currently, saving both money and reducing the stress of long commutes to school. (Average journey time for pupils travelling from south east London to Cressey College and West Heath is 90 minutes each way. In addition the cost of a day place at these independent special schools without travel costs is on average [REDACTED] per pupil, per annum. The travel cost could be up to [REDACTED] per pupil, per academic year.)

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1. This section must be completed.
2. If you are submitting more than one bid, you must complete this section for each bid.
3. Please refer to the 'guidance and criteria for local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision free schools' for information about what to include in this section.
4. Please complete the form as provided, do not create any new fields. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.

Section A2 – evidence that the new school will be fully commissioned

You must complete table A2 on this tab, showing how many places you would use at the school for the first two years of the school's operation. If there are multiple commissioners, you also need to complete the larger table on tab 'Table A2 continued'.

In addition, if you are submitting a bid for a new AP free school, you must also:

- Attach commitments in writing from any commissioners other than local authorities (e.g. local schools) indicating their firm intention to commission a specific number of places in the first two years, including the top-up funding they will pay for the children occupying the places;
- Attach evidence that the commissioners have made an informed decision, for example, confirmation that commissioners have seen your bid, and are aware of the characteristics of the new school and the outcomes you want to achieve; and,
- Provide information in box A2 about the commissioning and funding model used in your area(s). To note, we will ask for further details about how you have engaged with the commissioners, and their level of involvement, later in section C3.

Box A2 - for AP schools only, please use this space to describe the commissioning and funding model(s)

Table A2 - evidence that the new school will be fully commissioned (to be completed for both special and AP schools)							
Commissioner	Year of operation	Number of EY places	Number of KS1 places	Number of KS2 places	Number of KS3 places	Number of KS4 places	Number of 16-19 places
Bexley	First year of opening	na	na	na	26	10	0
	Second year of opening	na	na	na	36	20	8



1. This table must be completed if there are multiple commissioners.
2. If you are submitting more than one bid, you must complete this section for each bid.
3. Please complete the form as provided, do not create any new fields. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.

Table A2 continued

You must complete table A2 on the previous tab, showing how many places you would use at the school for the first two years of the school's operation. If there are multiple commissioners, you also need to complete the table on this tab.

Table A2 continued - evidence that the new school will be fully commissioned (to be completed for both special and AP schools)							
Commissioner	Year of operation	Number of EY places	Number of KS1 places	Number of KS2 places	Number of KS3 places	Number of KS4 places	Number of 16-19 places
Lewisham	First year of opening				2	3	0
	Second year of opening				3	5	1
Greenwich	First year of opening				2	2	0
	Second year of opening				3	5	1
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						



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Section B – what type of school is wanted

There are no assessment criteria for section B. Please provide key information about the school you would like to commission in table Bi. Additionally, please set out the expected pupil build up (how the school would fill year-on-year once it opens) in table Bii.

Table Bi - what type of school is wanted	
Type of school	Special free school
Category of provision/needs (if more than one type, with different top-up rates, please explain)	SEMH and high-functioning ASD (dual diagnosis)
Age range	11 to 19
Per-pupil revenue funding you would expect to pay (if a range of rates, please explain)	█ per place (base funding) plus █ per pupil (top-up funding)
Gender (co-educational/boys/girls)	Co-educational
Total number of proposed full time equivalent places (once school is at full capacity - including 16-19 places, but not including nursery places)	90
Type of places offered (e.g. full time, short term, part time)	full time
Number of nursery places, if applicable	na
Number of 16-19 places, if applicable	15
Describe any planned outreach, training and/or reintegration support (including details of funding that will be made available to support the school with this)	We are expecting the staff to offer outreach packages to local mainstream schools and upskill mainstream staff. We are not ruling out the reintegration of pupils into mainstream at different key stages fully supported by this specialist provision and in line with annual review specifications.

Table Bii - pupil build up							
	Year of opening	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Nursery							
Reception							
Key stage 1 (Y1-2)							
Key stage 2 (Y3-6)							
Key stage 3 (Y7-9)	32	48	48	48	48	48	48
Key stage 4 (Y10-11)	8	24	32	32	32	32	32
16-19: commissioner referred	0	0	10	10	10	10	10
Totals	40	72	90	90	90	90	90

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Section C1 – the current context in your area

We are looking for bids in areas where a new school will most support local authorities to manage current and/or anticipated pressures on special school places or on the overall high needs budget, so that the needs of children can be better met. We will not be inclined to approve bids that have the side effect of decreasing the inclusion in mainstream schools of children with SEN, or who are at risk of permanent or fixed term exclusions, or of creating excess spare capacity in existing special or AP school. Bids will score more highly if they can demonstrate that a new school will be filled by students who would otherwise be going to more expensive or poor performing provision.

Please use box C1 to provide information about existing provision in your area, future expected growth and use of your high needs budget. You should also use this box to provide commentary around the information sources listed in Annex B of the [guidance](#) that we will use to support our assessment of this section.

In addition, please use table C1i (for special schools) or C1ii (for AP schools) - found on the next tabs - to describe the recent, current and projected trends of provision that caters for the children that you would expect to attend the new school. If this is a joint bid, fill in the table once for all local authorities together.

Box C1 - the current context in your area

(we expect your response to this section to be no more than around 500 words, excluding your entries on table C1i/C1ii)

We have a shared vision with children, parents and other stakeholders that Bexley children should be educated locally wherever practicable in order to keep children in the community. Following the SEND local area inspection in Oct 2016, the borough has implemented a phased, systematic approach through our SEND Strategy and improvement plan, Provision Review, Preparing for Adulthood Strategy and review of high needs funding. Provision for children with SEND is currently organised within 6 special schools and 21 specialist provisions (12 secondary) within mainstream settings for children who are able to access the national curriculum. The 12 secondary provisions cover the following areas of primary need: autism, speech language and communication, visual impairment and physical disability with two of the provisions being academically selective. This provides 86 commissioned places at 90% utilisation. Local provision does not satisfy the needs of all our children, as 267 are currently educated out of borough at a cost of [REDACTED] and we forecast that this is an under-representation of need because we are seeing an increase in parents electing to home educate.

Bexley provision of specialist places has increased over recent years, reflecting the growing need; including a small capacity for complex needs within a secondary boys' faith school, and the Cleeve Meadow Free School, opening in September 2019 will cater for children with MLD. There remains an identified gap in local provision for children with complex needs (SEMH and high functioning ASD) which is resulting in children being placed out of borough in costly independent special provision. Analysis has identified the characteristics of these pupils as those who do not fit standard labels of a primary need of either SEMH or ASD, but they require a very specific low arousal and highly therapeutic approach.

As of January 2018 (school census) 17.9% of children with an EHCP had SEMH as their primary need, which is average for our statistical neighbours and grew from 16.8% in the previous year. January 2018 school census recorded 13.1% of children with an EHCP had ASD as their primary need, with a slight rise of 0.5 percentage points. A simple statistical analysis indicates an underlying trend growth rate in EHCPs of 32% to 2023, with SEMH and ASD diagnoses increasing. The viability of this bid is based on current needs and a local gap in provision, rather than projected growth.

In 2017-18 Bexley's high needs budget was overspent by [REDACTED]. For 2018-19 expenditure is expected to exceed the High Needs funding block by [REDACTED], requiring additional contributions from Schools Block ([REDACTED]) and use of one-off historic surpluses ([REDACTED]). The EFSA have informed Bexley that it will receive an increase next year of around [REDACTED] in the high needs block, which equates to 1.6% growth. This will not cover forecasted costs related to growth in demand and inflation. The cost of placing an individual child in an out of borough placement is modelled at [REDACTED], with transport costs adding a potential further [REDACTED] for pupils travelling to independent special schools. The average travel assistance cost per pupil travelling within borough is [REDACTED] and our later forecasts have modelled in borough travel costs at [REDACTED]. Therefore, the ability to support parental choice to be educated close to home is also a significant priority to support economic efficiencies.

Please note on the table C1i the projected figures if the bid is successful have only been updated where we anticipate the project would alter costs.

Word count: 568

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1. This table must be completed if you are submitting a bid for a special free school.
2. If you are submitting more than one bid, you must complete this section for each bid.
3. Please refer to tab 'C1 - current context' as well as the 'guidance and criteria for local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision free schools' for information about what to include in this section.
4. Please complete the form as provided, do not create any new fields. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.

Table C1i - trends in your specialist provision for all children with EHC plans																	
Type of provision	Number of providers used	Please indicate the number of pupils with an EHC plan living in your local authority who are placed within these settings, and the total cost (including base, top-up and transportation if applicable) of all placements at each setting															
		2014				2018				Projected figures without the new school you want				Projected figures if your bid for a new school is successful			
		(pupils)	(cost)	(pupils)	(cost)	(pupils)	(cost)	2022 (pupils)	2022 (cost)	2026 (pupils)	2026 (cost)	2022 (pupils)	2022 (cost)	2026 (pupils)	2026 (cost)		
Resourced provision and units inside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Resourced provision and units outside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								
Special schools (either maintained or academies) inside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								
Special schools (either maintained or academies) outside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								
Independent / non-maintained special schools inside local authority	■	■		■	■												
Independent / non-maintained special schools outside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Mainstream schools inside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								
Mainstream schools outside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								
General FE colleges (if relevant) inside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								
General FE colleges (if relevant) outside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								
Specialist FE providers (if relevant) inside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								
Specialist FE providers (if relevant) outside local authority	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■								

1. *This table must be completed if you are submitting a bid for an AP free school.*
2. *If you are submitting more than one bid, you must complete this section for each bid.*
3. *Please refer to tab 'C1 - current context' as well as the 'guidance and criteria for local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision free schools' for information about what to include in this section.*
4. *Please complete the form as provided, do not create any new fields. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.*

Table C1ii - trends in alternative provision																	
Type of provision	Number of providers used	Please indicate the no. of pupils living in your local authority who are placed within these settings, and the total cost (including base, top-up and transportation if applicable) of all placements at each setting								Projected figures without the new school you want				Projected figures if your bid for a new school is successful			
		2014 (pupils)	2014 (cost)	2018 (pupils)	2018 (cost)	2022 (pupils)	2022 (cost)	2026 (pupils)	2026 (cost)	2022 (pupils)	2022 (cost)	2026 (pupils)	2026 (cost)				
		Maintained PRUs inside local authority															
Maintained PRUs outside local authority																	
Maintained AP free schools or academies inside local authority																	
Maintained AP free schools or academies outside local authority																	
Independent AP settings (registered) inside local authority																	
Independent AP settings (registered) outside local authority																	
Independent AP settings (unregistered) inside local authority																	
Independent AP settings (unregistered) outside local authority																	
AP units located in or attached to mainstream schools inside local authority																	
AP units located in or attached to mainstream schools outside local authority																	
Places designated for AP commissioned from special schools inside local authority																	
Places designated for AP commissioned from special schools outside local authority																	
Places designated for AP in further education settings inside local authority																	
Places designated for AP in further education settings outside local authority																	
Other AP inside local authority – please specify																	
Other AP outside local authority – please specify																	



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4. Please complete the form as provided, do not create any new fields. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.

Section C2 – your strategy for high needs provision

You must use this section to tell us about your strategy for high needs provision. The purpose of this section is to help us understand your plan for children with SEND or those requiring alternative provision and make a judgement about whether the school you are proposing fits within your strategy.

Box C2 - your strategy for high needs provision

(we expect your response to this section to be no more than around 1000 words)

Following the SEND Local Area inspection in October 2016, the LA produced a strategy document for the period 2016-21, a related action plan and put in place a SEND Implementation Board to drive forwards improvements against the inspection priorities of:

1. Timeliness of identification of need and meeting these needs.
 2. Delivery of mediation and completion of conversions to EHCP plans
 3. Transition arrangements for young people, notably to secondary school and in preparation for adulthood.
- Two years on, the local area, represented by a range of stakeholders in the SEND Implementation Board commissioned a review of the strategy, and a revised plan is in the process of consultation and ratification with the following key themes:
- Educational achievement differentials for children with SEND; which would be supported by a hub and spoke model of delivery that upskills the local workforce
 - Addressing gaps in specialist provision
 - Addressing parental lack of choice of settings locally

In addition, local governance structures have developed further with our Strategic Education Partnership, which has two local priorities relating to SEND:

- Refining the processes further to meet the needs of children with SEND locally, this includes focusing on all levels of SEND needs to improve educational achievement
- Develop and implement a three year provision plan for pupils with SEND

With specific reference to high needs SEND, the local area priorities (KPIs) can be articulated as detailed below and how the free school will support achievement of these objectives:

1. All Children with SEND are educated in a good or better environment.
There has been a decline in the proportion of pupils attending a good or better secondary school, with P8 scores for pupils with SEND significantly lower than their non-SEND peers. We expect the free school to support this KPI by providing an appropriate curriculum and setting for secondary pupils. As part of our Strategic Education Partnership we are building local mechanisms for school to school support. As a specialist hub, this free school would be required to offer leadership capacity to upskill the mainstream workforce.

2. All children are able to participate fully in in family, school and community life
267 Bexley children are educated out of borough at present. To date, actions to stabilise these figures has included the expansion of some of our provision as part of our resource provision review. This free school would accelerate the process, enabling these children to have access to ordinary lives.

3. Equality of access to services with increased choice and control for children and families
We forecast that approximately half of the 267 children could have their needs met in the type of provision proposed, however complying with parental choice will mean that not all those children will be repatriated. The type of provision proposed is not currently replicated locally, or outside of the independent sector.

4. To ensure that Bexley delivers the SEND reform in the Children and Families Act 2014
The free school would ensure that assessed needs are suitably met as soon as an EHC plan is issued and avoid delays in securing provision out of borough including costly and emotive tribunals. Through our SEND Strategy, we have already made improvements to our transition arrangements. Robust information sharing and planning for children with complex needs will be better supported by full integration in our local transition arrangements and the geographical proximity of this free school will enable professionals to facilitate a smooth transition.

The expression of interest for this free school has arisen as a common theme through our local governance mechanisms:

- Schools Forum.

The overspend in High Needs Funding has been a source of concern for governors and school leaders, who whilst have been supportive of unplanned expenditure to meet individual needs seek a sustainable resolution and to reduce excessive, unnecessary transport costs.

- Parent and pupil voice. This parent forum, Bexley Voice, has representation on the SEND implementation board, where local issues are discussed. An annual survey has taken place since the 2016 inspection and families tell us that they want to go to a local school that has an appropriately trained workforce with co-located services and unburden them from the reality of long-distance travel to schools. Given this level of perceived support, it is not appropriate to raise expectations at this stage, however, a formal consultation process as part of the local offer would be integral to the development of the free school bid.

- Strategic Education Partnership, connecting to the SEND implementation board

A key early theme for the places planning subgroup has been ensuring that the local provision is fit for purpose and robust going forward. In order to deliver on the key priority of develop and implement a three year provision plan, this group will oversee the effectiveness of steps taken to repatriate children with SEND into the borough.

There is no similar local ESFA funded provisions in Bexley or our neighbouring boroughs and therefore modelling indicated that there will not be any negative impact on other provision. This proposal arises from an excess demand that is currently being supported by places out of borough, at significant financial and operational cost.

In Bexley, we have a strong growth agenda as part of the Thames Gateway initiative and a naturally growing population due to our geographical position and improving transport links. We are planning to deliver 30,000 new homes. Cleeve Meadows free school and other adjustments to school place planning reflects the growth in demand, and our need to plan proportionately to address various SEND needs.

Word count:

900

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Section C3 – why you want a new school and how it fits with your strategy and the local landscape

We want to open new schools where they are the right solution for the area. We are looking for bids where a new school will help local authorities meet children's needs, fit into the local authority's strategic plan for high needs provision and complement the local education offer.

Please use box C3 to explain the rationale for a new school.

In addition, please use table C3 to provide evidence of engagement with others and attach any supporting evidence of this (e.g. letters) when you submit your bid.

Box C3 - why you want a new school and how it fits with your overall strategy (we expect your response to this section to be no more than around 500 words)

A small, specialist secondary school that is able to provide an appropriate local learning environment to meet the complex characteristics of children with SEMH and ASD needs who require a low arousal and highly therapeutic environment.

Benefits have been articulated in other sections, but to exemplify further:

The preferred location is fairly central and slightly to the North of a small borough and there are well placed road links to support the transport of children into the school, which will be appropriate for children who are repatriated. We are confident that this will be a popular addition with the local community and will not destabilise existing schools.

In addition, the area is expected to grow, with 6,000 new homes due to be built in Belvedere in the next 5 years and 1600 new homes in Thamesmead through the Housing Zone in the next 3 years. We have already planned for mainstream need to meet the growth, however, the newness of these developments will place the school at the heart of the community from the start and there will inevitably be a growth in children with SEND needs in line with population growth.

As part of the development process, we have discussed this with local neighbouring boroughs and there has been initial interest in commissioning places, as detailed in section A2. There is no similar local authority provision in any of our neighbouring boroughs and we are seeking to build to meet existing demand.

In addition to the educational advantages described, one key driver for change is the financial efficiencies that can be achieved: We currently have 109 young people placed in out of borough independent special placements, of which 70 have a diagnosis of ASD (High functioning) and 20 have a primary need of SEMH. The combined cost of educating and transporting these children to current independent provision is in the region of [REDACTED]. We anticipate that in-borough provision will cost in the region of [REDACTED], so costs would half.

Table C3 - engagement with others

Who	How you have engaged (e.g. surveys, meetings)	Summary of engagement (e.g. summary of survey findings and/or conversations)
Your neighbouring local authorities – please specify	Lewisham, Greenwich, Bromley	Phone conversations
Commissioning bodies in your area – please specify		
Local mainstream schools – please specify		
School representative bodies e.g. schools forum – please specify		
Representatives of parents and carers and young people e.g. parent/carer forum – please specify		
Any other partners e.g. community groups, FE colleges – please specify		

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Section C4 – the expected outcomes

To be approvable, bids must demonstrate that the new school will:

- Help to achieve better outcomes for children and young people (compared with existing options); and,
- Support inclusion, including re-integration where appropriate and providing expertise to mainstream schools.

Please use box C4 to describe the impact you expect the school to have, as well as the potential risks and how you would mitigate those.

Box C4 - expected outcomes

(we expect your response to this section to be no more than around 500 words)

The expected outcomes for children attending the school are:

1. Local provision for local children is likely to lead to their greater emotional wellbeing and resilience, supporting better educational outcomes and therefore their life chances.
2. Reduced pressure for families who are currently dealing with long school commutes, enabling more ordinary lives.
3. Better preparation for adulthood because children will be supported to become independent in their own locality.
4. Better post-16 transition to local colleges as the Year 12 curriculum model provides a bespoke support package for those who may need longer for transition.

The expected outcome for all children in Bexley:

1. Fairer distribution of limited public funds
2. Improved specialist skilled workforce as a result of the hub and spoke school to school support, which will also benefit children in the free school to reintegrate appropriately.

We have identified these risks and plan to mitigate as follows:

- The free school may attract existing specialist talent from the local mainstream provision. The workforce and SEND sub-groups of the strategic education partnership have already implemented actions to support the development of SEND specialist expertise and to promote recruitment to the Bexley area.
- Parental enthusiasm for the new school may result in more requests for EHC needs assessment in order to request a place for this particular school. The SEND Implementation Board has conducted a great deal of work on robust and fair decision making relating to statutory assessments. The Local Offer website clearly articulates the process and thresholds for decision making and offers of support for pupils on SEN Support. Provision for, and achievement of children on SEN Support is a key focus of the Strategic Education Partnership.
- Increased demand from mainstream schools as they request unnecessary and premature change of placement. The hub and spoke model will support children to remain within these placements and as part of our SEND strategy, we have employed an additional strategic resource working with mainstream SENCOs as well as the statutory SEN team.

Word count:

325



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Section D – the proposed location and site

Finding a suitable site is an essential part of opening a free school. As part of preparing your bid you should investigate potential sites for the school and tell us about them in your bid. In this wave we will undertake a desktop assessment of site and consider the value for money, timescale and delivery risks in securing a site for the proposed school in the proposed area.

We will give preference to those projects where our site assessments shows that we are likely to secure a value for money site in a timely manner with an acceptable level of risk, in particular, those bids that include an available site on a peppercorn basis. Making a site available on a peppercorn lease gives the greatest chance of the school opening successfully, and on time.

Please complete table D to tell us about where the school would be located and the preferred site.

Please also provide the name and contact details for the main local authority lead for sites. The ESFA may contact this person to ask questions about the site. **If you know any of these site details before submitting your bid, please let DfE know (by emailing FSC.EOI@education.gov.uk) so we can start conversations with you.**

.....
Please tick the box below to confirm that the relevant Lead Member for Corporate Property has seen this bid and is content with the information provided about site (if provided).

I confirm that the Lead Member of Corporate Property at **London Borough of Bexley** has seen this expression of interest and supports it.

Please tick to confirm

Table D - the proposed location and site

<p>Please describe the location in which you propose to set up your school being as specific as possible. This could include the name of the area in which you would like to put the school, the part of a city, town or suburb. Please also consider how flexible you are - how far from your preferred location are you willing to go? Please include an annotated map as an additional file and send it to APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk, if possible. If applicable, please also describe the potential impact of any specialism that you plan for your school to have on the site requirement.</p>	<p>Belvedere</p>
<p>Please tell us the postcode of a central location in your preferred area. You need to provide this even if you have already identified a preferred site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1.</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>Your calculated building space using the ESFA formula (see section D in the guidance) and any comments on this.</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>If you have identified a preferred site, please complete the rest of the table:</p>	
<p>Full address and postcode of preferred site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1.</p>	<p></p>
<p>In which local authority is your preferred site?</p>	<p>Bexley</p>
<p>Please tell us how you found the site.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Please confirm the tenure.</p>	<p></p>
<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>Please include information on purchase or lease price if known.</p>	<p>Non Applicable</p>
<p>Who owns the site?</p>	<p></p>
<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>Is the site available/on the market? (Please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk if available)</p>	<p></p>
<p>Name and contact details of owner and/or the agent or local authority representative</p>	<p>Non Applicable</p>
<p>If the site is local authority owned, which local authority owns it?</p>	<p></p>

<p>If the site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that, if successful, the site may be used by the free school. Please include terms (e.g. 125 year peppercorn lease). Please also provide details of any other local authority contribution towards the capital costs of the project (e.g. developer contributions).</p>	
<p>What kind of site is it?</p>	
<p>What is the current use?</p>	
<p>Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable?</p>	
<p>If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk</p>	
<p>Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk</p>	
<p>If the named site is part of a housing development or the school is attracting Section 106 contributions, please give as much detail as possible, including: the development and developer, timing and programme of build, number of housing units, status of planning application and any links to planning applications/decision notices, extent of funding coming from the developer plus confirmation of the local authority's position in relation to your free school using this site.</p>	<p>Non Applicable</p>

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