

**Free Schools - Proposal Form**

The Proposal Form asks you for details on the educational aims and objectives, parental demand and premises of the proposed Free School. It also asks questions about the suitability of the provider(s) involved. All new Free Schools will be opened with the same legal status as Academies, in a binding agreement with the Secretary of State.

Please note, all information provided in this form will be published on the Department for Education website.

**INITIAL DETAILS**

**Name** (Please specify if you are the nominated representative of an organisation that wishes to set up a Free School)

██████████, ██████████

**Name of your organisation**

Harris Federation of South London Schools

**Address** (of organisation or individual)

Harris Federation of South London Schools

██████████

London

██████████

**Email Contact**

██████████

**Telephone Number**

██████████ (for ██████████)

- Federation office

**Are you an existing independent school wanting to convert to a Free School?**

**No**

**If yes, please provide your 6-digit school unique reference number (URN)**

**If no, please confirm the nature of your organisation** (educational group / charity / business / parent group etc)

Harris Federation of South London Schools, a top performing federation of Academies formed as a charitable trust; DfE Accredited Schools Group

**Please confirm whether your organisation is incorporated** i.e. set up as a Company which is registered at Companies House. If so, please provide the Company Registration Number, Company Address and details of the Directors and Secretary. If not, please indicate the approximate date by which it will be incorporated.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes, our organisation is incorporated</b>
 Company Registration Number: Company no. is 06228587 Charity no. is 1120150
 Company Address: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], London [REDACTED]
 Details of Directors and Secretary: Company Secretary: [REDACTED]. Directors: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>No, our organisation is not yet incorporated</b>
 Approximate date by which it will be incorporated:

**In which Local Authority area will the school be based?** If you are near to a LA boundary, please include name of neighbouring LA(s)

Local Authority Bromley

Neighbouring LAs Croydon, Lewisham

**Is your Local Authority aware of your intention to set up a Free School?**

**Yes**

(If Y please give details of your discussions with them so far)

The answer to this should be Yes and No:

This free school proposal arises from local parents in Beckenham who have been campaigning for Harris Federation to sponsor a co-educational secondary school in Beckenham. Bromley L A have proposed to create an Academy to replace the existing Kelsey Park School for Boys but have not been prepared to agree that the academy is sponsored by the Harris Federation. Despite a petition of 750 local parents asking for the new

Academy to be co-educational and sponsored by the Harris Federation, the LA are not prepared to make the academy co-educational nor to agree that the Harris Federation is the sponsor. In these circumstances where parent views cannot influence the future arrangements for Kelsey Park, the parents representatives have asked the Federation to make an application on their behalf to establish a free school which would offer not only the Harris Federation tried and tested methods of successful teaching and learning but also will give parents the choice of a co-educational school in Beckenham. The LA are well aware of parent views but are not aware officially of the proposal to establish a free school. Because of the hostile attitude of the Council to the parents it has not been possible to use LA officers to assist in testing some aspects of the feasibility of this proposal.

**SUITABILITY OF PROVIDER**

The Secretary of State will consider each proposal on its merits, and take into account all matters relevant to that proposal. Generally, he would expect that all proposals will comply with all aspects of the rigorous suitability and vetting tests throughout the application process, including due diligence and CRB checks and will reject any proposers who advocate violence, intolerance, hatred or whose ideology runs counter to the UK's democratic values.

Do any of the following apply to the organisation (or any consortium member), or to (any of) its director(s)/partners/proprietor(s) or individual applicants (select Y/N):	
Is in a state of bankruptcy, insolvency, compulsory winding up, receivership, composition with creditors (including any Individual Voluntary Arrangement), or subject to an Administration Order or any legal proceedings concerning their solvency?	No
Has been convicted of a criminal offence?	No
Is involved in any illegal activities?	No
Has not fulfilled obligations related to payment of taxes?	No
Is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying information?	No
Is not in possession of relevant licences or membership of an appropriate organisation where required by law?	No
Is barred from certain work with children as a result of being:	
[a] included in the list of those barred from Regulated Activity with children, kept by the Independent Safeguarding Authority? Or	No
[b] included in the list kept under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999(4) (list of those considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children)? Or	No
[c] subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (5) (or any other disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction)? Or	No

<p>[d] disqualified from working with children under sections 28, 29 or 29A of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000(6)?</p> <p>For further information on [a], [b], [c] and [d], please contact the CRB <a href="http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk">www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk</a>.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is disqualified from registration under Part 10A of the Children Act 1989(7) for child minding or providing day care?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006(8)?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is a member, or has been a member in the past, of a proscribed organisation?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes” please give details below:</p>	

**EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Briefly outline your reasons for wanting to set up a Free School. Max 200 words.**

Parents in Beckenham have demonstrated by petition that there is a groundswell of support for a Harris Federation secondary Academy in Beckenham. A petition signed by 750 parents has been submitted to Michael Gove's office. The Federation has 9 academies in South London and runs sixth form provision across them. It feels that a Federation of up to 20 secondary schools offers great opportunities for sharing skills, expertise and experience to spread good practice in raising student achievement. An academy here would be well placed to link with Academies in Crystal Palace, South Norwood and South Croydon and share the development of sixth form courses. The Federation's successful tried and tested methods can offer an alternative to existing Bromley Schools for parents. Parents feel strongly that they should have a choice within the local area of a coeducational school and the Federation has a very good track record of running successful mixed schools.

The Free School would be linked with an existing Harris Academy and would be supported with leadership capacity during the early years of the free school from an Executive Principal of one of the Federation's most successful academies.

The Free School will be modelled on the Federation proven successes of ensuring good behaviour, engaging and rigorous teaching and learning, and focused target setting and monitoring of pupil achievement. It will have specialisms of Business Enterprise and Science.

**Please set out the Free School's aims and objectives.** You should also describe:

- the teaching methods that will be used and whether the Free School will follow a particular philosophy (eg Montessori);
- the outline of the Free School's proposed curriculum, including any religious ethos;
- how the Free School will improve pupil learning and ensure strong discipline;

Max 2000 words.

The school will be a six form entry 11 to 18 school with 250 sixth form places. It will be co-educational, non-selective and non-denominational, open to all local children. All applicants will take a NFER test and be put into ability bands and offered places within those ability bands in proportion to national averages. After prioritising children with special educational needs and those in public care, straight line distance will be the main admissions criterion within the ability bands.

The school will be part of the network of Harris Federation schools sharing curriculum, teaching and learning practices, pastoral practices and administrative services. It will have very strong links with Harris Academy South Norwood. The Harris Academy South Norwood Principal will provide leadership across both institutions in a tight federation (within a larger Federation). All Harris Federation schools operate within one academy Trust, Harris Federation of South London Schools, with a local governing body for each school and a single Harris Federation Board of Trustees.

The specialisms of Business and Enterprise and Science will be a focal point of the Free School's work. Both Business and Enterprise & Science will infuse the whole curriculum, and give all students a thorough understanding of both specialisms at the end of their secondary education. In terms of Science the expectation will be that the take up of Science AS and vocational courses at sixth form level will be high and that 50% of students leaving the sixth form to attend higher education will pursue courses related to maths or science. There will be links with university science faculties.

The sixth form will be part of the Harris Federation post-16 provision and through this students will have access at this school or at other Harris Academies to a suite of 25 A level courses plus the International Baccalaureate.

The specialisms will be integral in developing whole-school events, with students learning skills such as problem-solving, risk-taking, and decision-making. This work will be age appropriate to the respective key stage, and will progress as students move from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 and will continue through to Key Stage 5.

Links will be made with local primary schools and opportunities given for Academy students to provide activities and events which help primary pupils to develop personal enterprise skills and an appreciation of the importance of scientific skills in every day life.

Numeracy and mathematical skills will be enhanced by teaching through broad Enterprise contexts whilst Literacy will be enhanced by high level development of oracy through interaction with adults other than teachers along with many opportunities for presentation of project work. The approach to teaching English and mathematics will be highly structured with some ability grouping in use. Extra lessons will be provided for those falling behind expected achievement. The highly motivating Federation rewards system based on Vivo Miles will be introduced.

Approaches to teaching and learning and behaviour management will apply consistent principles and practice used throughout the Federation to ensure that there is an ethos of wanting to learn and to succeed.

The aim will be to develop a curriculum which is engaging for students but develops high levels of skills and knowledge and maximises attainment.

There will be a focus on continuous improvement of teaching and learning through observation and sharing of good practice. The free school will benefit from the same rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching which has driven up standards in Harris Academy South Norwood. Staff will be supported to be data focused using the tried and trusted management information system operated by the Federation – knowing clearly where their students are in terms of achievement and attainment and having stretching targets for them. Students should know what they can achieve now and what they have to do to reach the next level of achievement. Mentors and tutors from the Academy's older students will work with the younger free school students to support them to attain the next levels of success. In the short term students from Harris Academy South Norwood will be used to provide this support while the free school grows.

Teaching will be further enhanced by use of the additional Academy days in the calendar for which staff will receive a Harris bonus. This time will be used for high quality collaborative curriculum design and planning.

The Federation's systems will be made available and support state-of-the-art provision and use of ICT in the Free School, enabling learners and their parents to access materials and information from home as well as from school. There will be a focus on enabling parents to support their children in their learning and specific support for any who did not find learning easy themselves when at school.

The challenge to staff at the free school to improve their performance will be supported by high levels of professional development backed and supported by the Harris Federation and access to resources. There will also be opportunities for subject staff to link to other subject staff in Harris Academy South Norwood and wider across the Federation in collaborative work.

The Free School opens with a huge groundswell of parent support and will aim to retain and further develop close links with the community. The Federation will work with parent representatives during the feasibility and implementation stages of opening the new school in planning the curricular, pastoral and outreach programmes for the Free School. Representatives of parents will have a high proportion of places on the local governing body including among sponsor nominated governors.

The Academy will wish in particular to encourage extra-curricular activities so that all students take part in at least two activities after school each week.

Care support and guidance are an integral part of every Harris Academy's student support and the key strands of the Every Child Matters agenda will be reflected in all aspects of the Free School's work and delivery. Economic Well Being and Being Healthy are delivered well through the two specialisms and high quality approaches to teaching and learning will address the dimension of Enjoying and Achieving. The philosophy of the Harris Federation is founded upon Making a Positive Contribution and this will be reflected throughout the academy's work on ethos that will include a culture of positive attitudes and collective responsibility for safety.



Recruitment of teachers will be enhanced by the attraction of working for the Harris Federation. The Academy will be looking for opportunities to use advanced skills teachers across the Federation's Academies and to recruit excellent teachers in the Free School as vacancies occur. This will be important to introduce outstanding practice to enable staff to model continuous improvement.

The Free School will also have the benefit of support from the Federation Advisers on Maths, Literacy and Science.

**What are your organisation's core areas of work / aims?** Max 500 words.

The Harris Federation specialises in delivering high quality outcomes for children through a consistent focus on behaviour management, high expectations of teachers and staff, a relentless drive to improve teaching and learning, continual monitoring of student progress against expectations and intervention to improve attainment.

It runs 9 secondary Academies but is aiming to expand to 20 or more in the Greater London Area, plus a number of primary schools.

It uses its Federation to share good practice and to provide career development for aspiring leaders.

**What capacity and capability do you have (or have access to) in order to deliver the educational vision set out above?** Please indicate the resources, experience and expertise (educational and legal) that you have or have access to. Max 500 words.

The Harris Federation already operates nine secondary academies and has a track record of success. The Harris Federation central teams led by the Chief Executive support principals in delivering teaching and learning. This support takes three forms:

- Providing effective support services
- Creating a collaborative network that facilitates the sharing of good practice and resources
- providing specialist curricular support in Maths, English and Science

The Chief Executive holds schools accountable through monitoring and performance management.

It has an established practice of using experienced senior staff from its successful schools to plan and develop new academies - whether fresh start or transformations.

The Federation has a Projects Director with extensive experience of opening Academies and overseeing procurement of school buildings both direct and through frameworks. It will buy in specialist expertise where required. It has legal advice available and a network of architects and other construction consultants it can call upon for support.

**Do you have plans to work with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party organisation?** If so, please include their details below and set out the intended nature of that relationship (for example, a contract, co-sponsorship arrangement, informal partnership).

Only the parents support group mentioned above on whose behalf the Federation is developing this proposal.

**Please name the key individuals / trustees involved in setting up the Free School** (if available). Please also indicate whether trustees have been chosen and their roles confirmed. Please provide details of employment of these individuals and any conflicts of interest you believe might arise.

The school will be a Harris Federation School. The Harris Federation Board will be the legal governing body and single employer (see above for more details on directors).

During the set-up phase, the key representatives of the parents who have promoted the proposal, together with the Principal of Harris Academy South Norwood, will be represented on the project steering group and sub-groups, which will be responsible for signing off key documents and decisions.

Harris Federation will then work with parents to agree effective governance arrangements that ensure parents are at the centre of the school's accountability once the school is open. Although the constitution of the governing body will be very similar to other Harris Federation Academies, parents will fill a number of Sponsor nominee governor appointments as well as the elected parent governor places.

**EVIDENCE OF DEMAND**

**What evidence of local parental demand do you have?** For example, a petition or a declaration from interested parents or pupil number projections for the area. Max 200 words.

Parents representatives who wish Harris Federation to sponsor a co-educational academy to replace the existing Kelsey Park School (for Boys) have so far raised support from 750 signatories and this petition has been submitted to Michael Gove's office. They continue to collect support and expect to reach 1000 signatures. Since the LA has so far shown it will not change its view to reflect parents' wishes the leaders of the parents group have asked the Federation to make this proposal on their behalf. This would provide an additional 180 places each year and would result in more places being available in Bromley for parents in Croydon and Lewisham. This extension of provision will help to meet the bulge demand coming through from primary schools in South London which will reach Year 7 from 2014 onwards.

**What is the proposed capacity (number of pupils)?** Max 200 words.

The proposed capacity of the school is 1150 places (900 11-16 and 250 sixth form).

**What is the proposed age range of the Free School?** Please include details of planned pupil numbers in each year group.

The proposed school will admit 180 students a year at Year 7 (total 900 11-16) and will have a sixth form of 250 as part of a federated sixth form with other nearby Harris Academies.

**When do you hope the Free School will start operating** (for your first set of pupils)?

This depends on how long it takes to procure a site and on extent of capital funding but the aim would be to open the new building in September 2013. If the funding can be obtained for this, the Academy could open in September 2012 in temporary accommodation. The Federation would be prepared to open the free school in September 2011 if a suitable temporary building could be found which could house two years of 180 intake, and the feasibility of the long term site and building could be confirmed by mid February 2011. The Federation has experience of opening Academies in these timescales and of operating start-up academies in temporary buildings.

**PREMISES**

**What steps have you taken to identify a potential site?** Please include details of the geographical area the school seeks to serve; a list of any sites you have considered; and any discussions you have had to identify a suitable site. If known, please include the proposed location, premises and postcode of the Free School.

It has been difficult to ascertain the availability of sites in the absence of support from Bromley Council. Indeed acquisition of a site, if not surplus to Bromley's needs, requires capital funding or other lease/development agreements and the availability of funding needs to be ascertained. The parents group has identified sites on [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in Beckenham which appear currently to be available and suitable, though a full feasibility study would be necessary to determine whether the size of buildings and play areas required could be achieved on both sites. Both would require purchase or development agreements with the owners.

**Further information**

Please note, all information provided on this form will be published on the Department for Education website. Information that you supply on this form may be shared with (a) the New Schools Network and (b) the Local Authority in which you wish to set up the Free School. Information about the New Schools Network can be found at <http://www.newschoolsnetwork.org>.

Submission of this form will be treated as consent, from both you and anyone else whose personal data is contained on this form, to the sharing of this information as set out above.

In addition, information that you provide on this form, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Next Steps**

Please email completed Proposal Form to  
[freeschools.registration@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freeschools.registration@education.gsi.gov.uk)

You will hear back from a named official at the Department for Education within two weeks, who will offer you advice on how best to progress your application. The Secretary of State will make a judgement on the potential of the project based on criteria relating to educational aims and objectives, evidence of demand, potential premises, suitability of provider and any other relevant considerations to decide whether the proposed Free School project should move into stage 3, namely that of drawing up a business case and plan.