



Department
for Education

Free school application form 2015

Alternative Provision (AP) (updated
February 2015)

THE BRIDGE AP FREE SCHOOL

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Completing and submitting your application

Before completing your application, please ensure that you have read both the relevant 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet carefully. Please also ensure that you can provide all the information and documentation required.

The free school application is made up of nine sections

- **Section A:** Applicant details and declaration
- **Section B:** Outline of the school
- **Section C:** Education vision
- **Section D:** Education plan
- **Section E:** Evidence of need
- **Section F:** Capacity and capability
- **Section G:** Budget planning and affordability
- **Section H:** Premises
- **Section I:** Due diligence and other checks

In **Sections A and B** we are asking you to tell us about your group and provide an outline of the school. This requires the completion of the relevant sections of the Excel application form

In **Sections C to F** we are asking for more detailed information about the school you want to establish and the supporting rationale. This requires the completion of the relevant sections of the Word application form.

In **Section G** we are asking specifically about costs, financial viability and financial resilience. This requires the completion of the relevant sections of the Excel budget template and Word application form.

In **Section H** we are asking for information about premises, including information about suitable site(s) you have identified. This requires the completion of the relevant section of the Excel application form.

Section I is about your suitability to set up and then run a free school. There is a separate (downloadable) Word form for this.

Failure to submit all the information required may mean that we are unable to consider your application.

Sections A to H, i.e. the completed Word AND Excel templates and the budget plans, need to be submitted by email to the Department for Education (by the application deadline) to:
alternativeprovision.fsapplications@education.gsi.gov.uk. Your email must be no more than 9MB in size.

The Word template should be: between 50 and 100 pages long; formatted for printing on A4 paper; completed in Arial 12 point font; and include page numbers. Annexes are excluded from the page limit and should be restricted to CVs for key individuals. Please do not include photographs, images and logos in your application.

The contents of the Excel budget template and Excel application form are excluded from the page limit.

Please include the name of your school in the file name for all Word and Excel documents.

You also need to submit two hard copies (of **sections A-H** and the budget plans) by a guaranteed delivery method such as 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Free Schools Applications Team, Department for Education, 3rd Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

It is essential that the hard copies are identical to the version you email.

Section I, i.e. the **Personal Information form**, is required for each member, director and principal designate that has not submitted forms within the past 365 days, together with a list of those members, directors and principals designate who have submitted Section I forms within the past 365 days. These need to be submitted as hard copies with a copy of Section A (from the Excel template) by a guaranteed delivery method such as 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Due Diligence Team, Department for Education, 4th Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

Data Protection

Personal data is collected on the Word and Excel templates in order to consider an application to set up a free school and will not be used for other purposes. For the purposes of the Data Protection Act, the Department for Education is the data controller for this personal information and for ensuring that it is processed in accordance with the terms of the Act. The department will hold all personal information you supply securely and will only make it available to those who need to see it as part of the free school application process. All personal information supplied in these forms will only be retained for as long as it is needed for this process.

Application checklist

| Name of task | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Have you established a company limited by guarantee? | X | |
| 2. Have you provided information on all of the following areas: | | |
| Section A: Applicant details | X | |
| Section B: Outline of the school | X | |
| Section C: Education vision | X | |
| Section D: Education plan | X | |
| Section E: Evidence of need | X | |
| Section F: Capacity and capability | X | |
| Section G: Budget planning and affordability | X | |
| Section H: Premises | X | |
| 3. Is the information in A4 format using Arial 12 point font, includes page numbers and is 50 to 100 pages (excluding annexes) in total? | X | |
| 4. Have you fully completed the budget plans? | X | |
| 5. Independent schools only*: have you provided a copy of the last two years' audited financial statements or equivalent? | n/a | |
| 6. Independent schools only*: have you provided a link to your school's most recent inspection report and completed a self-assessment form describing how your school would perform against the Ofsted Section 5 criteria | n/a | |
| 7. Reapplications only. If you are reapplying after being unsuccessful in a previous round, have you changed your application in response to the written feedback you received? | n/a | |

Declaration

****This must be signed by a company member on behalf of the company / trust****

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I further confirm that if the application is successful the company will operate a free school in accordance with:

- the requirements outlined in the 'How to Apply' guidance;
- the funding agreement with the Secretary of State; and
- all relevant obligations and requirements that apply to open academies (e.g. safeguarding, welfare and bullying) – this includes statutory requirements (those that are enshrined in legislation) and non-statutory requirements (those contained in DfE guidance).

I have fully disclosed all financial liabilities and the full extent of each/any debt for which the company, trust or existing school is liable.

I confirm that I am not and have never been barred from Regulated Activity within the meaning given by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. I further declare that all current Members and Directors of the Company have confirmed to me that they are not and have never been so barred, and that if it comes to my attention whilst I am a Member or Director of the Company that I or any other Member or Director are or have been so barred I will notify the Department for Education. I and all other Members and Directors of the Company understand that the Company's free school application may be rejected if a Member or Director of the Company is found to have been barred from Regulated Activity.

I acknowledge that this application may be rejected should any information be deliberately withheld or misrepresented that is later found to be material in considering the application.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Position: [REDACTED]

Print name: [REDACTED]

Date: 22nd May 2015

NB: This declaration only needs to be signed in the two hard copy versions of your application. Please use black ink.

Please tick to confirm that you have included all the items in the checklist.

Section A: Applicant details

Please complete the Excel application form.

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

Section B: Outline of the school

Please complete the Excel application form.

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

Section C: Education vision

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

Section C1

Medway has a vibrant range of educational provision comprising: selective grammar schools; Maintained Primaries, Academies; Voluntary Aided; and Comprehensive schools. To address the needs of children with challenging behavior and special educational needs, Medway has 4 special schools; 16 special resource units attached to mainstream schools and 3 Pupil Referral Units. Together there are 85 schools in the primary sector and 17 schools in the secondary sector.

Standards in the specialist units are good, providing a much needed resource and outreach support for mainstream schools. The standards across the special schools are good to outstanding. However, the breadth of provision across the range of specialist provision is insufficient to meet the increasing demand for students whose main presenting need is BESD. As a result, this application for an AP Free School is being made to expand and formalize the very successful Bridge project in Medway, which supports all primary schools, offering full time and shared care places for children with BESD needs who are at risk of permanent exclusion.

The four Special Schools encompass provision for students with severe and Profound Learning Difficulties for 4-19 year olds; moderate Learning Difficulties and Complex Learning Needs; a primary school for 4-11 year olds and a secondary school for 11-19 year olds; and Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties and Medical Provision

The Special Resource Units, attached to mainstream schools, encompass provision for specialist education for children and young people with: Visual Impairment; Autistic Spectrum Disorder; Specific Learning Difficulties; Language and Communication; Moderate and Complex Learning Difficulties and Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties.

Within this range of special educational provision there are coherent, clear pathways for educational progression across Medway for children and young people with

statements of SEN, requiring a specialist placement: the exception being provision for BESD.

The Chalklands BESD resource unit for primary children is led and managed within the Williamson Trust, which has reached its capacity. In 2012, OfSTED inspectors reported that this small school provides a good standard of education for children with complex emotional and behavioural needs, although the majority of students have a statement of SEN mainly related to ASD'.

In response to the growing need in Medway for specialist EBD provision, the Bridge project was started in 2011. The unit provided 15 full-time and shared care places for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion from primary schools across the authority. The Bridge was located at Delce Junior School (now Delce Academy within Castle Trust). High Needs funding was allocated from the LA budget directly to the school. The vision underpinning the unit was that of a nurture model, with highly personalized learning experiences for the children. Long-term work was carried out to address the needs of the children, including social, emotional and behavioral. As the pupils gained in confidence and acquired coping strategies, they joined into mainstream classes at Delce Academy and eventually returned back successfully back to their mainstream schools. Those whose needs were greater were transitioned into specialist schools in order to provide a long-term successful educational journey. The success rate for reintegration has been very high. Only one child has been permanently excluded by their home school after returning from The Bridge Project.

The recent creation of the INSPIRE Free School in Medway and the Medway Technical University (MTU) provides a long-term educational path for the most of these vulnerable pupils at secondary age. The Bridge AP Free School will work closely with Inspire and MTU for Year 5 & 6 pupils to ensure they engage in long-term educational options, thus improving their life chances considerably. The expectation though is that children who are placed in The Bridge Free School will be able to successfully transition back into mainstream schools at ages 7, 9 or 11.

Whilst the Local Authority is providing high levels of co-ordinated support to mainstream schools to enable them to work with students with challenging behaviour and those presenting with emotional and behavioural problems, the expertise required to educate these vulnerable children needs to be harnessed. Parents, who have been involved with The Bridge project have been consulted and are very clear that the proposal of The Bridge AP Free School would be a welcomed,

more permanent solution for this vulnerable group of children across the authority. In response the Local Authority are supporting this bid to open a Free Special School for young people with BESD, serving the whole of Medway. Confirmation by LA is in Section E. Details of the letter and consultation with parents and carers are outlined in Section E of this document.

In summary, the current provision for students who have been assessed as having significant social, emotional and behavioral needs, have experienced failure in the education system and have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream education, is insufficient in Medway.

The Bridge AP Free School will provide up to 40 more places over three years for children in Medway who are currently at risk of permanent exclusion from KS1 and KS2. It offers the opportunity to support these children, engage them in learning and help them develop strategies to ensure success in main stream schools. It provides continued support of specialist services to remove the barriers to learning in order for the pupils to be successfully reintegrated into mainstream schools. The early support and intervention for young children will be very cost effective, ensuring that change is made early, reducing in the longer term the need for highly specialized, expensive secondary options.

Our proposed Free AP School, The Bridge AP Free School, will change this by providing them with an innovative, dynamic approach to academic achievement and learning for life in an alternative school setting.

The Bridge AP Free School, will be a cutting edge alternative provision school for young people aged 5-11 with Social, Emotional and Behavioral difficulties, set on the vibrant Delce Academy learning campus in the heart of Medway. The vision and aspirations for the art of the possible are created and shaped by the sponsors, who are outstanding leaders in the local and national field of education including [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], along with committed directors of Castle Trust who include parents of children from the Bridge project. This group of people has a unique range of experience, including expertise of Special Educational Needs and is ideally placed to open a Free School that will serve the most vulnerable students with BESD in Medway.

The Rationale for a new Alternative Provision Free School

The sponsors have the expertise, skills and competencies to develop on from a highly successful pilot project to a full Free AP School in Medway which will provide an innovative approach to the curriculum. The compelling rationale for this proposal is as follows:-

- Full support from the Local Authority to meet a gap in provision for a Special BESD School in Medway, which will raise standards of achievement for the most vulnerable young people and shape their future, through creating a pathway to mainstream education and, in the longer term, training and employment significantly improving the life chances of these most vulnerable children;
- The lack of coherence in the provision for young people with BESD across Medway: the new Free School will provide a proactive support mechanism for mainstream primary, infant and junior schools across Medway, providing full time and shared care options for the children, improving their skills, self-esteem and emotional well-being in order for them to access education successfully in a mainstream school at an appropriate transition point;
- To bring parity in the local provision to meet the needs of young people with BESD in Medway. There is currently one primary EBD unit in Medway which has insufficient capacity for the 85 primary schools, given the growing allocation of EHC plans for EBD as the prime need;
- To provide academic and whole child development opportunities for young people aged 5-11 to support their growth and development, leading to their reintegration into mainstream schools at an appropriate transition point;
- To establish an AP Free School with an educational offer that will motivate and inspire young people, creating ambition for the future. This will underpin the required improvement in unsatisfactory levels of attendance to drive progress and raise the current satisfactory levels of attainment to outstanding;
- The Bridge AP Free School will meet the aspirations of the SEN Green Paper and be perfectly placed to pioneer new approaches in response to the legislation imposed through The Children and Families Bill for implementation from 2014. As a Free School, The Bridge Free School will commission the

services parents want for their children through a close partnership with health, care and education.

The Bridge AP Free School will meet the challenges to provide a place where young people aged 5-11 who have a statement of Special Educational Needs or are seeking an assessment place for their social, emotional and behavioral special needs will have an outstanding experience of learning and development for life. From 2014, with the anticipated change in legislation, these students will be the subject of an integrated education, health and care plan or may be referred by a Local Authority for an assessment place. Operating a very different model from mainstream schools, the sponsors will continue to build on their excellent track record to ensure that every young person achieves, acquiring the core skills to make them literate and numerate, enhancing the chances of this group of children significantly to be positive learners, who achieve academic and EBD outcomes which support their long-term life ambitions.

Vision and Ethos

The Bridge AP Free School will be a pioneering Alternative Provision school with a dynamic personalised curriculum, tailored to the needs of the individual, securing progress and success for every student. An unrelenting focus on making the core curriculum innovative and accessible will ensure our learners are numerate, literate, socially responsible and superbly prepared for their next stage of education in mainstream school. The Bridge Free School will work closely with all stakeholders including students, staff, parents and partners who will be given the opportunity to develop as learners, both within and beyond the school gate. This unique provision draws inspiration from the research and practice around the power of nurture.

Nurture groups (NGs) were established in the 1970s by [REDACTED], an educational psychologist, as a response to the high numbers of children entering primary school with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties (Cooper & Tiknaz, 2007). They were first commended in the Warnock Report (1978) and have since been recognised as an effective early intervention promoting inclusion (DfES, 1997) and supporting children with challenging behaviour (Ofsted, 2011). As such, in recent years there has been an increase in the numbers of accredited NGs across the UK (The Nurture Group Network, 2013).

Nurture groups are largely underpinned by [REDACTED] seminal Attachment Theory. The theory proposes that the quality of interaction between an infant and caregiver affects how the infant internalises and thinks about other people's behaviour towards them. Children who have not experienced a supportive attachment figures may appear to have low self-esteem and lack trust in others

(Geddes, 2006). █████ recognised that children who had impoverished early experiences found it difficult to build trusting relationships with staff and were less able to respond appropriately to peers. Consequently, this meant they were not ready to cope with the cognitive and social demands of school (Binnie & Allen, 2008) and were often at risk of failure. Nurture groups are largely underpinned by █████ seminal Attachment Theory. The theory postulates that the quality of interaction between an infant and caregiver affects how the infant internalises and thinks about other people's behaviour towards them. Children who have not experienced a supportive attachment figures may appear to have low self-esteem and lack trust in others (Geddes, 2006). Boxall recognised that children who had impoverished early experiences found it difficult to build trusting relationships with staff and were less able to respond appropriately to peers. Consequently, this meant they were not ready to cope with the cognitive and social demands of school (Binnie & Allen, 2008) and were often at risk of educational failure (O'Connor & Colwell, 2002). Nurture groups were designed to help children experience nurturing and warm relationship with an adult in a safe and predictable environment which in turn promoted social, emotional and cognitive development (Boxall, 2002). Whilst a classic nurture group is based in a discrete classroom within a mainstream school, The Bridge AP Free School will develop this on as an explicit school, sharing the site of a mainstream school – allowing for the pupils to develop and grow in a safe, discrete school, whilst having the opportunities to use the mainstream school as a transition tool in their journey towards returning to main stream.

The nurture environment will be specifically designed to emulate aspects of the classroom and home environment and run by highly trained members of staff. Children attending the Bridge AP Free School will have been identified as those who frequently have difficulties adjusting to learning in the mainstream classroom. They are usually identified through the Inclusion route in schools, supported by an EHCP where the Boxall Profile (BP) has been used as a purposely designed assessment tool to help teachers identify precise areas of need and to measure children's social and emotional development (Bennathon & Boxall, 1998). Up to fifteen children will attend a NG on a full or part time basis and usually return to their mainstream classes within four terms (Sanders, 2007). The Bridge Free AP School aims to provide three nurture provisions within the one school – Early Years/Key Stage one, Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 & 4) and Upper Key Stage Two (Years 5&6).

The Bridge AP Free School will be carefully designed to provide a balance between structured teaching of the national curriculum and experiences that build children's trust in adults and increase self-esteem (based on the successful practice developed through The Bridge Pilot)

The following principles underpin the school's vision:

- Staff respond in a non-judgmental way to children's developmental needs;
- The classroom is a secure base which helps make the link between emotions and learning;
- There is an emphasis on reciprocal activities between children and adults, and on listening and responding appropriately to foster children's self-esteem;
- Children are helped to verbalise and understand their feelings;
- Staff are encouraged to understand what a child is communicating through their behaviour;
- Transitions are managed carefully as these can be difficult for vulnerable children;
- opportunities for play with peers to support the development of social and communication skills.

The children who will attend the Bridge AP Free School will be identified as having social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) and will have an EHCP or working towards one which identifies EBD as the prime need. Under the current legislation schools are required to meet the SENs of children within mainstream provision unless it is incompatible with the effective education of other pupils or against parents' wishes (SEN Code of Practice, 2001). Sometimes this can be difficult. For example, children with SEBD often report negative school experiences and seem to be misunderstood by many peers and adults (Mowatt, 2010). Furthermore, teachers may feel deskilled, stressed and vulnerable in the face of challenging pupil behaviour. Consequently, they may find it difficult to find and use effective strategies to support children with SEBD in the mainstream classroom (Corrie & Lane, 2010). This is reflected in the Government statistics which report children with special educational needs (SEN) to be nine times more likely to be permanently or fixed term excluded (DfE, 2012). Therefore, The Bridge AP Free School is providing support, nurture and academic success to pupils, their families and their schools for those children most at risk of permanent exclusion. This will provide these vulnerable children with positive school experiences and educational success within the Bridge AP Free School, and then on into mainstream schools as a result of effective planned structured transitions at appropriate points in a child's educational journey. The curriculum offer will have an unrelenting focus on the core

curriculum, using the most creative teaching and learning methods and resources to bring literacy and numeracy to life for the students. Initial assessments of prior learning and barriers to achievement will be crucial to creating the personalised programmes for each individual. In addition there will be a focus on developing within each individual the need for social responsibility and a positive sense of belonging to both the school and local community. The difficulties and challenges of each individual's behaviour will be at the core of this work with each learner looking to develop self-discipline and employ and transfer such positive social and emotional attributes with increasing success in a variety of settings.

The skills teaching will be set within the context of the young person's motivation for planning and leading their own learning based on their own interests and experiences. For example, a student who is keen on lorries/transport will would access the curriculum through a project on Eddie Stobart. These personalized projects have been highly successful in the pilot project. Children have gained confidence, following a topic on which they are often the 'expert'. This raises their self-esteem and willingness to access the curriculum, especially with writing.

The early assessment of English and mathematics against the National Curriculum age-appropriate standards will be necessarily detailed and accurate to plan the teaching programme and monitor progress against targets. The resource banks for teaching formal grammar, spelling and writing structures and scaffolding learning for students will be used consistently across the school to provide continuity and shared expectations. A wide range of ICT programmes and devices will be used to maximise access to learning and reflect the preferred learning style of each student.

The core curriculum, comprising English, mathematics, science, ICT, PSHCE [Personal Social Health & Cultural Education] and Physical Education will be tailored to match the individual's expertise, ability and prior learning.

For all pupils the core curriculum will be accessed through a highly personalised creative curriculum approach. Each topic will be planned to include key experiences and active learning, involving key skills and knowledge that will capture, foster and develop talent in addition to motivating positive and socially responsible behaviours. Students and staff will have the opportunity to design the topics, maximising opportunities to engage outside experts and activities to inspire learning.

The pupils will also have personalized programs to support their wider needs including occupational therapy, sensory, social stories as well as nurture time including collective eating, cooking and gardening.

The Bridge AP Free School will aim for all children in the school to achieve age-appropriate milestones or to make accelerated progress from their own starting point.

Assessment systems will show both academic progress and EBD progress, using externally validated systems from NFER and Boxall. Each small step in progress will be evidenced by the children using personal assessment gathering systems. Celebration of progress and achievement, raising self-esteem, will be central to the system.

In order to realise this vision, it will be crucial for the Free School to work in tandem with partner agencies: health and social care colleagues, the Medway Troubled Families team, building on strong partnerships for health, care, advice and guidance. The Free School will take on a commissioning role to secure the right services for the right children and their families at the right time. The Bridge AP Free School would commission services to ensure the physical and mental well-being of these children including art therapy, counselling, SALT and OT. These services, free at the point of delivery, will be commissioned by the Free School to meet the needs of young people and their families. Families will take a lead in the decision making process around the commissioning process. This will meet the requirements of the Green Paper to secure timely and appropriate multi agency specialist intervention to support young people and their families.

Promoting leadership skills and developing self-esteem are two key ingredients for success. This will be promoted through in school opportunities such as School Council and the Learning Council, alongside opportunities to engage with the wider local community including accessing sports and cultural activities. The Bridge Free AP School will create programmes and projects to involve parents, increasing their parenting capacity to act as advisors and positive role models through engaging them in the education and enrichment opportunities for their children.

Aspirations and Outcomes

The Bridge AP Free School is building on the success of the Bridge pilot project; the results of the pilot project over the last three years, shows the power and effectiveness of the model already. The people involved in the creation of this free school have an in-depth knowledge of the local area, an understanding of the most complex families and the specialist experience of educating young people, with knowledge of outstanding practice in special schools for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a result, the outstanding leadership credentials and track record of the sponsors will guarantee the success of The Bridge Free AP School.

Educational Aspirations and Ambition

The realisation of the aspirations and ambition to create an outstanding Free Alternative Provision school will be judged and measured in tangible outcomes. The wide range of indicators will include progress towards measurable targets, pupil and parent/carer perceptions, the popularity of the school and the views of partners in the community.

However, the school will ultimately be judged by OfSTED; the school aims to be Good to Outstanding at its first inspection. The ambition is to transform the opportunities for BESD students across Medway, marketing the new Bridge AP Free School as a school which will enhance the future, academic and vocational achievement for these young people. This will build on the strengths of the current practice in multi- agency support for the potential vulnerable cohort and radically invigorate the curriculum to make rapid progress towards the ambitious targets, earning an outstanding judgement of within the first 2 years of operation.

The Educational Aims and Targets

- All pupils engage in learning and make good progress as a minimum against their starting point.

Challenge/Support: Governors will focus discussion on literacy and numeracy/ enrichment opportunities / Rights and Responsibilities as a learner/ Well-being of pupils/Transition success rates

- a. 85% of students achieve age-appropriate milestones or accelerated progress against their starting point in mathematics and English;
- b. Well-being profiles show 95% of pupils are progressing towards their transition EBD targets;
- c. 80% of pupils transition back to mainstream after 1 period in school (2 years).

This means matching a creative and innovative curriculum to the needs analysis of the individual, with the core skills framework at the heart of high standards. This is set within a context of recognition and celebration to promote self-esteem, success and achievement through the nurture model. The relentless focus on the core curriculum will be reinforced through a thematic approach to other accredited learning opportunities, embracing the full National Curriculum.

Challenge/Support: Governors will focus discussion on academic achievement (age appropriateness), progress levels, Quality of teaching through lesson observations

- a.** 80% good and outstanding lessons in first year increasing to 90% in second year;
- b.** 85% of pupils are at age-appropriate by the end of their block in school (2 years);
- c.** To provide all students with challenge, excitement and success in a curriculum for life

This means extending the school day to encompass wide ranging and motivating extra-curricular opportunities, including; local visits, outward bound opportunities, engaging with external experts linked with topics delivered.

Challenge/Support: Governors will focus discussion on attendance targets, extra-curricular participation and awards – sports leaders etc/ student and parent/carer feedback, analysis of teacher appraisal outcomes.

- a.** Parent/carer feedback to be positive at end of first year with 95% of parents seeing the school as making a difference to their child's engagement in learning;
- b.** 92% attendance rates for all pupils by end of first year, 94% or above in second year;
- c.** 98% of students have taken part in extra-curricular activities by end of first year;
- d.** 90% of families to have taken part in family learning opportunities in first year, 95% by end of second year;
- e.** To promote tolerance, respect and courtesy towards others.

This means the school will work with parents to engage them in wider school life, to support and coach them through using the local area as a high quality learning experience for their family. The school will work with other professionals to support attendance including managing external appointments so they minimally disrupt learning time at school. The school will support children to gain access to and be successful in after-school sports and other clubs.

Challenge/Support: Governors will focus discussion on analysis of serious incidents, behaviour system rewards, conflict resolution, restorative justice, exclusions, analysis of grades for lesson observations on quality of behaviour for learning.

- a. Behaviour Incidents to be reduced through the year, (term on term judgement by pupil);
- b. Exclusions to be minimal for all pupils;
- c. 85% of lesson grades for the quality of behaviour are good or better by 2015
- d. To focus on the health and well - being of the individual

This means addressing key barriers to learning including counselling, parental engagement and mental health issues, through a multi -agency approach. It means working with the families within a therapeutic environment to address systemic challenges facing young people and their families.

The sponsors will require all staff and partners to have high expectations and a strong belief in what the dynamic ethos and culture at The Bridge Free AP School can achieve to ensure all students make discernible progress and enhance their life chances. We will protect and safeguard all students and adults.

Challenge/Support: Governors will focus discussion on student survey, parent/carer survey response, safeguarding reports and judgements, engagement of Troubled Families and developing parenting skills.

- a. 85% successful engagement of Troubled Families identified by Medway Team
- b. OfSTED judgement of good to outstanding for safeguarding at first inspection

In summary, the creation of The Bridge Alternative Provision Free School in Medway has the endorsement of the Local Authority, local headteachers and young people and their parents as evidenced in the outcomes of the consultation in section E of this application. The school rationale is based on the successful Bridge pilot which has run successfully over the last three years in Medway. The Bridge AP Free School will be led by inspirational sponsors with a clear vision and understanding of outstanding provision for

the most vulnerable young people and their families. The attendance and educational outcomes for future cohorts will improve dramatically through a well-designed bespoke curriculum offer that motivates and inspires them to select a pathway to return to mainstream education in order to achieve their dreams and ambitions.

Section D: Education plan – part 1

In the table below, please provide the proposed numbers in each key stage at the point of opening and an explanation of how pupil numbers will build up over time. Please add additional rows/columns if appropriate. We would expect an AP free school to reach full capacity by the fourth year of its operation.

If you are an existing provider, please use the first column to show how many pupils you currently have. Pupil numbers should be given as full-time equivalents (FTE) over the academic year. For example if you have fifteen pupils who attend for one day a week for a term (in a school that has three terms in an academic year), that counts as one FTE pupil. If you are proposing more than one school you will need to complete a separate table for each.

If you are proposing to open later than 2016, please leave the relevant earlier columns blank.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

| | Current number of pupils (if applicable) | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Key Stage 1 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| Key Stage 2 | 10 | 10 | 15 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Key Stage 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Key Stage 4 | | | | | | | | |
| 16-19: commissioner referred | | | | | | | | |
| 16-19: student applications | | | | | | | | |
| Totals | 14 | 15 | 25 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 |

Section D: Education plan – part 2

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

In the table below, please provide details about each subject and any enrichment/out-of-hours activities in the planned curriculum. This table contributes towards D1. Please add additional lines as required.

This section must be completed by route 2 applicants.

| Subject/other activity (e.g. enrichment) | Hours per week | Mandatory/ Voluntary | Comments |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Mathematics | 5 hours | Mandatory | Cross curricular links will be used |
| English | 5 hours | Mandatory | Cross curricular links will be used |
| Creative Curriculum | 10 hours | Mandatory | Cross curricular links will be used and will include maths and English links |
| Nurture Activities | 5 hours | Mandatory | Includes meals, cooking, team building, feeling safe, keeping safe |
| Enrichment Activities | 5 hours | Mandatory | Linked to children's interests, creating opportunities to widen their life experiences |
| PSHE | 5 hours | | Includes British values, sex education and personal safety (physical and cyber). Explicit sessions as well as interwoven through the day |
| Physical Education | 5 hours | Mandatory | Explicit lessons, including through enrichment opportunities using local options such as skiing, horse riding, swimming, trail cycling, sailing, climbing. |

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| SEND | As required | Personalised | Includes sensory, OT and S&L |
| Pastoral | As required | Personalised | Includes art therapy, play therapy and 1-2-1 counselling |
| School Clubs | Transition | Personalised | The school will have access to its sister school's facilities and club offer, which will be used |
| Holiday Clubs | School Holidays | Personalised | Support for families over the holidays, using FHA, and local facilities to ensure children have opportunities to continue to be supported and engage in learning through the school holidays with a focus on family learning |

Section D1:

Based on our experience to date with our 3 year pilot programme, The Bridge Free School will deliver an ambitious, positive learning experience for all its pupils; the school's vision is for the pupils in the school to be able to develop successfully academically, socially and emotionally in order for them to return to mainstream education at an agreed transition point. By addressing their specific emotional and behavioural needs at an early stage at The Bridge Free School, their improved academic and personal standards will allow them to be fully effective contributors to our local and national community.

The curriculum will be designed for each individual pupil in order to meet their personal needs. Each programme will be created in order to develop the pupils' academic, social and emotional needs from their own starting point.

The pupils will have a broad and balanced curriculum, initially starting from their own areas of interest. The topics and subject coverage will widen over time, ensuring pupils can and will engage successfully in National Curriculum. The children will be supported to achieve mastery of basic skills in mathematics, English and Science as a minimum, where good progress from their base starting point is the norm.

The wide enrichment programme will support their personal, emotional and social development. Pupils will become more resilient, independent and reflective. They will build good inter-personal skills ensuring they can function successfully in a classroom, a school and within their wider community. They will improve their self-esteem and learn to face and resolve challenges successfully, both as a learner and as a member of a community.

The length of the day will allow for further enrichment activities, family learning opportunities and access to clubs and societies, based on their interests, which allow them to engage with the wider community successfully.

The enhanced school year will ensure that progress is not lost over school holiday periods. Personal development weeks will be planned and delivered to ensure children have full access to a wide range of enrichment activities in school holidays.

Transition programmes will support the children who return to mainstream school, working closely with receiving schools on a carefully constructed transition programme over time.

At the transition points:-

1. pupils should have achieved academically age-appropriate levels in reading, writing and mathematics or have made accelerated progress from their on-entry point; and

2. pupils' personal, social and emotional abilities will be enhanced, showing good improved through appropriate assessment (e.g. Boxall profiling) from their starting point.

Additional providers: the Bridge project has already created excellent links with a number of organisations and The Bridge Free AP School will continue to build on these. These include the [REDACTED], local Autism support groups such as [REDACTED] and local parent support groups such as [REDACTED]. Family support organisations such as the [REDACTED] will also continue to be developed.

For pupils, who are in The Bridge Free AP School on a shared care basis, the school will work closely with the home school to ensure children are able to build on their success at the Bridge Free AP School back at the home school. Support and professional development of teachers and support staff at the home school will be used to improve outcomes for the pupil.

Section D2

Assessment & Tracking

All pupils will be monitored on a regular basis. Formative and summative data, relating to National Curriculum, will be used to inform next steps of learning for each pupil.

Formative assessment will be used on an on-going basis to inform teacher's planning. Assessment portfolios will be created for each pupil to show progress being made. The school will use the Trust's assessment systems to collect evidence; evidence will be gathered by teachers and the pupils through the wide range of pedagogical approaches which will be used in the school.

Summative assessment will be gathered at appropriate times, using nationally agreed formats including SATS at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Whilst the Academy Trust is currently working with all its staff on developing our new assessment ethos as well as the practical elements within our new systems as expected through the Life without Levels (LWL) agenda, the Trust has made good progress on creating practical materials which support teachers on a daily basis which will be used at The Bridge Free AP School.

The Trust is also working with its supplier on developing the formal tracking system for the school. The Trust has committed to using [REDACTED]. This system allows teachers to record assessment data against the Key Performance Indicators (KPI, creating a whole pupil picture of their current position against age-appropriate expectations. The system records whether the pupil is at the point of emerging, mastering or enriching. The system provides analysis by pupil, group, class or year, showing the gaps in learning which need

to be planned for and delivered in lessons through the children's personalised programmes.

Personal, social and emotional tracking will be completed using Boxall profiling along with the school's own assessment system of core values. This provides detailed analysis of the pupils' personal and social development as well as a needs gap analysis for staff to plan from.

Annual PASS surveys will be used to provide evidence of long-term social, emotional development.

Written reports from specialist such as Speech & Language, Occupational Therapy, Dyslexia and CAMHS therapists will also be gathered as further evidence of development. All of the assessment information will support successful re-integration into mainstream schools.

Pupil Performance, Behaviour and Attendance

Pupil performance will be monitored through the agreed systems in the trust's schools. Teachers assess pupils during learning time using formative assessment techniques including verbal feedback, peer and self –assessment as well as marking and feedback. Consolidation and challenge are set through Green Pen Questions, which the children respond to during the follow-up lesson.

Pupil performance is assessed against the school's KPIs which have been developed from the new National Curriculum. Teachers record children's progress as an on-going assessment; this data is used for a number of purposes including planning the next steps of learning for pupils as well as summarized to provide management data for the SLT which is used to challenge teachers in pupil progress meetings held every 6 weeks. Learning conferences are held with pupils and their parents every term, where targets are set for numeracy, literacy, personal and social as well as home learning.

Personal, social and emotional assessment will be carried out using Boxall profiles and the school's internal core values system. This provides information to show impact of their EBD programmes.

Data will be shared with governors on a termly basis in order for them to offer support and challenge the effectiveness of the teaching & learning and its impact on pupil progress.

Behaviour is monitored as an on-going matter; each pupil will have individualized behaviour for learning targets. Personalized programmes for learning and personal development will impact positively on behaviour and trend analysis is carried out on a daily, weekly and termly basis. Adjustments are made to ensure triggers are removed, transitions planned and strategies are working for the pupils. Additional support through counselling, art therapy, SALT and OT all support pupil behaviour improvement. Costed

provision maps support school leadership to ensure maximum value for money and impact. Governors receive this data on a strategic level once a term for support and challenge. The school will work with multi-agency teams and the family to ensure correct support is garnered and the positive outcomes are transferred to situations outside of school and at home.

Attendance is important, and in the pilot was a key development point for parents and pupils. Supporting parents to get children into school every day, utilizing transport options and supporting home strategies with parents including working with other agencies over appointment times, length and locations all helped raise attendance levels for children. Improvement in behaviour and plans, linked to avoiding exclusions, meant children spent far more time in school. Highly personalised learning through the week, and rewards linked to learning, behaviour and attendance all encouraged better rates of attendance. This action research which showed successful outcomes for pupils will be the base of the school's approach to behaviour and attendance.

Governors will receive termly reports on behaviour for learning, cyber bullying, attendance, pupil academic and social emotional progress in order to support and challenge the leadership of the school.

Daily communication with parents at both ends of the day is a vitally important part of gathering information for the day to be a success as well as feedback positive messages to parents of pupil success. Teacher parent meets at the beginning and the end of the day are planned. Email communication is used to share with parents the pupils' positive behaviour choices and successful learning outcomes; it is also used to inform parents regarding choices and possible consequences. These mechanisms are used to liaise successfully with home schools for shared care pupils.

School Performance

The trust has mechanisms in place to support and challenge its schools on their school improvement journey. All areas of teaching & learning are regularly monitored using the senior and middle leadership teams. Environment, books, teaching and learning are all monitored, with proactive feedback to teachers on the next points for development. A comprehensive professional development plan will be in place, ensuring good practice is improved to outstanding. Robust performance management systems are in place in the trust, which support teacher development, school improvement and improving pupil outcomes.

All data is shared, analysed and explored by governors through the year on an agreed timetable of meetings. School development plan, Raise Online and school monitoring form the basis of the school self-evaluation (SEF).

Section D3

The Bridge Free AP School will have a staffing structure that reflects the needs of the pupil. The school will also have the ability to call on expert support and resource from other schools in the trust (Delce Academy) and from schools the trust works closely together with i.e. Bradfields Academy Trust, Danecourt School, Westbrook Trust, Williamson Trust.

The staffing levels will reflect the needs of the children, growing alongside pupil numbers.

Year One

| Personnel | No | Hours/week | | Notes |
|----------------|----|------------|------------|--|
| Head of School | 1 | 1.0 | F/T | With teaching responsibility in Year 1 |
| Teacher | 1 | 0.8 | P/T | To provide teaching support & leadership time for HoS |
| EBD | 3 | 1.0 | F/T | Three already in post; one to be appointed |
| Art therapist | 1 | 0.2 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Counselling | 1 | 0.1 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| SALT | 1 | 0.2 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| HSSW | 1 | 0.8 | P/T | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Cleaner | 1 | 0.6 | F/T | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Playworkers | 3 | 0.5 | P/T | To provide holiday/weekend family learning opportunities |

Year Two

| Personnel | No | Hours/week | | Notes |
|-----------------|-----|------------|-----|---|
| Head of School | 1 | 1.0 | F/T | With partial teaching responsibility in Year 2 |
| Teacher | 1.5 | 1.0 + 0.6 | F/T | To provide teaching hours in school to support growing role in addition to providing teaching support & leadership time for HoS |
| Graduate Intern | 1 | 0.6 | F/T | Appointment to be made |
| EBD | 4 | 1.0 x 3 | F/T | 2 additional appointments |

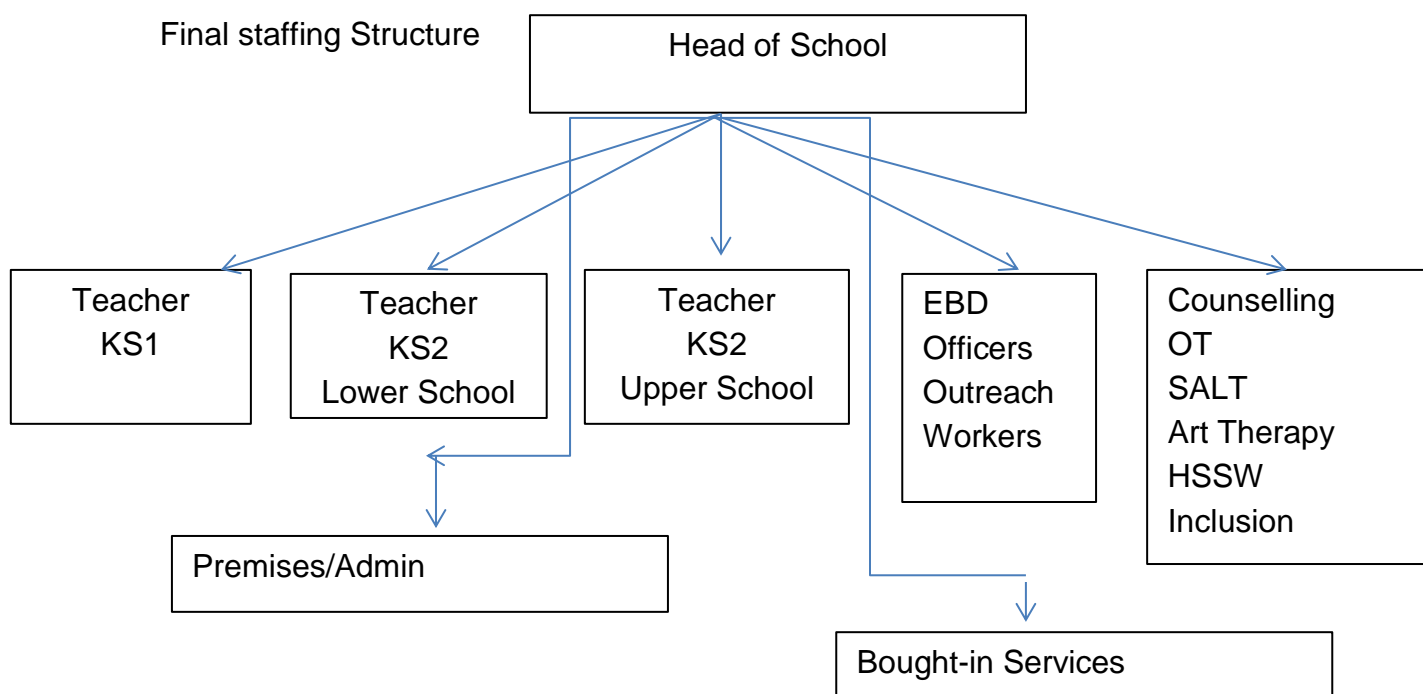
| | | | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------|------------|--|
| | | 1.0 x 0.8 | | |
| Outreach Worker | 1 | 0.6 | F/T | Career development opportunity for EBD officers; appointment of specific person in role. |
| Playworkers | 4 | 0.5 | P/T | To provide holiday/weekend family learning opportunities |
| Art therapist | 1 | 0.3 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Counselling | 1 | 0.1 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| SALT | 1 | 0.2 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| HSSW | 1 | 0.8 | F/T | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Inclusion | 1 | 0.8 | F/T | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Admin/Finance | 1 | 0.6 | F/T | |
| Cleaner | 1 | 0.8 | F/T | |

Year Three

| Personnel | No | Hours/week | | Notes |
|-----------------|----|------------|-----|--|
| Head of School | 1 | 1.0 | F/T | With partial teaching responsibility in Year 2 |
| Teacher | 3 | 3.0 | F/T | To provide teaching hours in school to support growing role in addition to providing teaching support & leadership time for HoS. Internship programme will provide one additional teacher. |
| Graduate Intern | 1 | 0.8 | F/T | Appointment to be made |
| PGCE Student | 1 | 1.0 | F/T | Internship Year 2 – PGCE placement with Goldsmiths, University of London Partner. Placement partners – Bradfields, Danecourt |
| EBD | 5 | 1.0 | F/T | 2 additional appointments |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---|------------|------------|--|
| Outreach Worker | 2 | 0.8 0.6 | F/T | Career development opportunity for EBD officers; appointment of specific person in role. |
| Playworkers | 6 | 0.5 | P/T | To provide holiday/weekend family learning opportunities |
| Art therapist | 1 | 0.4 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Counselling | 1 | 0.2 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| SALT | 1 | 0.4 | Consultant | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| HSSW | 1 | 1.0 | P/T | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Inclusion | 1 | 1.0 | P/T | Expansion of existing provision in Trust |
| Admin/Finance | 1 | 1.0 | F/T | |
| Admin Assistant | 1 | 1.0 | F/T | |
| Caretaker | 1 | 1.0 | F/T | |
| Cleaner | 1 | 1.0 | F/T | |

Final staffing Structure



Initial budgets are based on [REDACTED]. Top up agreement with Medway is [REDACTED] and will [REDACTED]. As a result, this means in the first year, the trust has to take care not to overspend. As funding comes on stream,

additional programmes and support will be developed, which should be from the end of Term 1. The Directors will take care that the core offer by The Bridge AP Free School can be met within the basic budget. The numbers indicated by the Medway LA at this point in time show that the Bridge would be full within its first year, and that planned pupil places indicated in the school development plan will be needed by the authority. The Bridge Free School is able initially to share Delce Academy accommodation, and so additional premises/admin/overheads costs are already within the Delce Academy budget. Separation of these costs will come when the Bridge Free School is housed in its own purpose built building on the Delce Academy site. The costing associated with running a stand-alone unit within the grounds of Delce Academy are not considered to be unaffordable. Most services will be good value for money, as Castle Trust will be able to negotiate preferential deals for all parts of the organisation and The Bridge AP Free School will be able to benefit from economies of scale achieved through corporate negotiations on insurance, utilities and consumables. Staffing will be developed on from the existing structure; the lead teacher and three EBD officers are already in post from the pilot project. These staff will be available for the Bridge Free AP School. The trust will appoint further suitably qualified teachers, with EBD experience, supporting high quality professional development for all staff. Teaching staff experience will cover all age ranges from early years to end of Key Stage 2. Personalised programmes of learning will need to be developed for each pupil, from their starting point – accelerated progress will ensure they are performing to a high standard, with the aim for pupils to transition back at an age-appropriate level at Year 3, Year 5 or Year 7. Staff within the wider trust will be able to support The Bridge AP Free School in subject knowledge. Professional development needs will be catered for across the wider trust schools, ensuring consistency and value for money.

All of the 'whole child' programmes will be delivered by consultants already in Castle Trust through contract extensions. All of the staff has additional capacity to cover this expansion. The directors are currently advertising nationally for a Head of School, working closely with our special school partners, to ensure the best calibre leadership will be in place for 2016 as the Bridge Free AP School is developed out of the Bridge project. Castle Trust has a graduate internship scheme for growing its own teachers; this scheme will be expanded to include a SEN teacher internship each year from 2016. This will create capacity within the school to support the development of the programme.

Additional funding streams will lag behind and be based on actual pupils in the school; as a result, directors have been careful to plan staffing on the minimum funds already allocated to the Trust through the GAG to avoid overspend.

Section D4

The particular needs of the children coming to The Bridge AP Free School have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately. The school will cater for pupils with statements or EHC plans with BESD as the prime need. The school will also cater for children who have not reached this milestone but are at risk of permanent exclusion. The pilot project to date has catered for these children, many of whom are Looked After, under Child Protection and have ASD/ADHD traits or diagnosis.

The ethos of the school has been carefully crafted over the last three years, as the pilot project has been delivered for schools in Medway. The underlying ethos of the school is for the children to receive a personalised education within a nurturing environment in order to build their self-esteem, their self-confidence and their sense of security and well-being. As the pupils begin to feel safe, their academic progress is developed using highly personalised educational experiences and interests. The academic rigour is woven into the individual projects, and as children gain in confidence through success, the projects they work on widen to include more mainstream elements. They are supported to join mainstream classes, as their individual success builds. As the success builds, they look to return to a mainstream environment full time.

In addition to their academic needs being carefully analysed and met, they are also supported alongside in developing their personal, social and emotional skills. Boxall profiling is used to assess their EBD strengths and challenges; personalised programmes are then put in place to strengthen these skills. Social stories, nurture opportunities such as shared meals and conversation, clear boundaries and rewards, outdoor learning opportunities such as gardening and woodland crafts all support the children developing their sense of self and support their understanding of successful social interactions, rules and social mores. As they become more confident and able to cope in a mainstream environment, they join learning in larger classes with support. As success builds, the work starts to transition the pupils back into mainstream schools.

The outreach work supports schools to understand the needs of these vulnerable pupils; work is completed with school staff in order for mainstream schools to feel confident to provide the correct inclusive programmes for EBD children within a mainstream school. Support is provided to ensure a structured reintegration is successfully achieved. It is anticipated from the pilot experience, that transition is best achieved in Years 3, 5 and 7.

Children are referred either by individual schools and/or through DMG. The team will discuss the needs of the child with the parents and the current school, consider all provided paperwork and carry out several observations of the pupil in their home school before offering a place. The team will then plan for the child's integration into the provision. All schools who wish to make a referral must have involved Medway LA Inclusion Manager in the review process. Transport needs are considered with the local authority as well as methods for parental/school communication.

Assessment systems in the trust will be used to assess the children academically and EBD needs are monitored through Boxall and the trust's own core values PSED system, developed with Bradfields Academy (SEN school).

The school will be supported by the Inclusion Leader, who is a member of the SLT for Castle Trust. The trust would expect to appoint an inclusion lead for the free school towards the end of the first academic year. The inclusion leader will work in tandem with the Head of School to provide a highly inclusive educational experience for the pupils, where good progress from their starting point will lead to age-appropriate outcomes at the relevant transition points for all pupils. The Inclusion leader and the Head of School will work closely with all agencies, ensuring that a constructive, supportive and appropriate wrap-round health, care and education plan is in place for all pupils placed in the school with the pupils and their parent(s) at its heart.

The Bridge project has over the last three years worked with a number of national experts on behaviour, nurture and special school education. This has allowed the team to become experts in this area. On-going professional development underpins the best practice in the unit. Close ties with other local schools, which are good and outstanding, help provide professional dialogue and supports action research in school. This good practice will continue at The Bridge AP Free School. Additional opportunities will exist, as the school is able to increase its outreach support to schools locally, thus ensuring positive outcomes for pupils transitioning back into mainstream schools and supporting those pupils who may not receive a place at the school due to demand.

Engaging parents in the project has been very important to a pupil's success. Wider support around the family has been achieved through the HSSW and therapeutic options available. Whilst a majority of the development is with the children, this has where necessary been expanded through to the wider family i.e. family therapy, support for housing and benefit applications, work around home boundaries and transference of skills learnt at home. The school has plans to ensure that holiday times are supported with families to ensure these are constructive time, with little or no EBD slippage. Our links with [REDACTED], local churches and school holiday offers provide excellent options to engage families in family learning during the holidays. Additional extra-curricular opportunities will also exist which will include family learning opportunities – healthy living, cookery, family play.

The Trust has clearly defined policies and procedures to ensure safeguarding. Attendance is an important life skill and this is often key early work with families and pupils. Attendance has improved markedly for all pupils who have attended the pilot project, leading to improved educational and EBD outcomes. As pupils have EBD needs, this is a fundamental part of the pupil development carried out in the unit. The school has a clear behaviour for learning policy, which the children when in the mainstream learn to engage with. They enjoy the rewards system, which gives them opportunities to be

rewarded for their successes. Much work is done to ensure small steps of improvement are planned, that learning is accessible and challenging, and that their emotional well-being is improved. Each pupil's personal development plan supports their improved engagement in lessons, school and the wider learning community.

All pupils who are offered a place will have an EHC plan or be working towards one. The school will work closely with home schools and the LA to ensure the plans are appropriate and that the provision offered will meet their needs. The expectation is that pupils will have opportunities to transition back into mainstream schools over time at key stages in education i.e. Years 3, 5 and 7. Some children may not achieve this and during the review stages consideration will be given to a long-term educational placement. It is expected that most children will stay at least two years at The Bridge AP Free School; reviews will take places annually unless they are called forward in order to respond to a changing picture.

Section E: Evidence of need – part 1

Please complete the table on the next page, using the information below to assist you.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

If your school is new provision:

- In **column A** please provide the proposed number of places in each key stage.
- In **column B** please provide the anticipated demand from your commissioners or, for 16-19 year old students, the numbers of students that have confirmed that the proposed school will be their first choice.
- Leave **column C** blank.
- In **column D** please express the demand (column B) as a percentage of the places available (column A). i.e. $D = (B/A) \times 100$.

If your school is an existing provider applying to become an alternative provision free school:

- In **column A** please provide the proposed number of places in each key stage.
- In **column B** please provide the anticipated demand from your existing commissioners or, for 16-19 year old students, the number of students already on roll at your school.
- In **column C** please provide the anticipated demand from your additional commissioners, if applicable, and, for 16-19 year old students, the numbers of students that have confirmed that the proposed school will be their first choice.
- In **column D** please express the total demand (column B + column C) as a percentage of the places available (column A). i.e. $D = ((B+C)/A) \times 100$.

| | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | |
|---|--------|----|----|------|--------|----|----|------|
| | A | B | C | D | A | B | C | D |
| Key Stage 1 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 100% | 10 | 10 | 10 | 100% |
| Key Stage 2 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 100% | 15 | 15 | 15 | 100% |
| Key Stage 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Key Stage 4 | | | | | | | | |
| 16-19: commissioner referred | | | | | | | | |
| 16:19: student applications | | | | | | | | |
| Totals | 15 | 15 | 15 | 100% | 25 | 25 | 25 | 100% |

Section E: Evidence of need – part 2

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

Section E1

Medway LA approved the Bridge pilot in 2011; this pilot provision has been running successfully for the last three years providing an alternative option for pupils locally who are at risk of permanent exclusion. Fixed term and permanent exclusion data for Medway is high, and permanent exclusions in the primary sector have been rising year-on-year. As a result of this, the authority was a pilot authority for the SEN reform and for the Troubled Families national agenda.

| Permanent Exclusions as at 6/3/15 | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | No of exclusions Issued | No of exclusions upheld | No of exclusions retracted | No of exclusions awaiting outcome |
| Primary | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Secondary | 35 | 25 | 8 | 2 |
| PRUs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Whilst primary exclusions are rising, the failure to address needs of vulnerable EBD children earlier in their lives is having a negative impact on secondary outcomes including high exclusions and failure to achieve qualifications regarded important for a successful future life.

Medway JSNA provides data which supports the need for The Bridge AP Free School. It states that 'rates of exclusion are rising in Medway, increasing the need for interim provision for primary and secondary pupils. Approximately 60% of those given fixed term exclusions (FTE) are identified as having SEND.....approximately 35% of those with FTE were at school action plus because of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). However, those with Autistic Spectrum disorders (ASD), moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and specific learning difficulties (SpLD) were also represented. For those with Statements of SEN who received FTE, 16 had BESD, 16 ASD and 11 MLD. This suggests strongly that some SEND are not being addressed in all schools and are leading to behavioural difficulties.' (Section 4, summary, SEND)

Medway LA has identified gaps in its own provision – ‘pupils requiring specialist SEND provision continues at two-thirds of its current rate, the shortfall could be as much as 258 places.... Therefore, projections assume that in the medium term it is necessary to plan to provide additional capacity for around 151 pupils. If no further provision is developed, these children will have to be placed in independent provision, some outside of Medway, putting significant pressure on the local authority’s budget.’

This analysis of need by Medway LA shows the negative impact on pupils and families if no additional capacity is created such as The Bridge AP Free School.

The JSNA also documents Medway’s operational and strategic SEN processes for assessing and supporting children and young people with SEND identifying that ‘Parents whose children have an Education, Health and Care Plan having the right to seek a place at ... an Academy or Free School.’ The Bridge AP Free School would meet the needs of a specific group of pupils in Medway at an early age, therefore improving their educational and personal outcomes, ensuring they have a greater chance to succeed in life.

Medway LA, under the provision for SEND, highlight that ‘Local specialist school provision to meet the assessed need’ should be available and have requested Castle Trust to provide this as a specialist in the area, based on the Bridge pilot project to date. They also identify in the JSNA that a ‘ local interim provision for those with SEND excluded from school’ also needs to exist; The Bridge pilot project has been providing this option, working closely with the local authority’s Inclusion Manager to provide an education option for those children whilst excluded including children who have been permanently excluded from their home school.

Medway LA has explicitly asked for The Bridge pilot to become a permanent provision within Medway. The existing KS1/2 provision locally, Chalklands, is also full and offers few options for expansion at this point in time. Castle Trust, as a sponsor MAT, has considered options available to it; as a result of these reflections, the directors have agreed to make an application for a Free School – Alternative Provision in order to formalise the Bridge pilot project and meet the needs of the local community on behalf of Medway Council.

Section E2

Confirmation from Medway LA

Hi, [REDACTED]. Hope you are well.

I can confirm the following as a response from Medway Council:

The Council requires an additional 15 places in Medway for primary aged pupils with a primary need of social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Some of these pupils may also have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum disorder (ASD). The pupils will be of cognitive ability within the range of just below to above average ability. The 15 pupils will have Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP).

The school will also have an additional 5 places to make respite provision for primary aged pupils with similar needs to those outlined above. An EHCP will not be necessary, and the provision will be used by Medway mainstream primary schools.

The Council supports Delce Academy's proposal for a free school (The Bridge) in Medway to make this provision in response to unmet need.

Hope this helps.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Medway Council

Gun Wharf

Dock Road

Chatham

Kent ME4 4TR

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 May 2015 10:48

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: The Bridge Application

It would be most helpful if I could have an email confirming the LA's position on the Bridge as a Free School option within Medway to put in the documentation to the DfE.

I assume an email is fine which I can pop into the doc.

It has to be with the Dfe next week.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Delce Academy

The Tideway | Rochester | Kent | ME1 2NJ



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Website: www.delceacademy.co.uk

Letter to all heads in Medway

12th March 2015

Dear All.

The Bridge – Alternative Provision Free School

Initial Consultation

As many of you will be aware, Delce Academy has been piloting an alternative provision for those children in KS1 and KS2 at risk of permanent exclusion in Medway. We have worked with a number of schools in Medway, supporting pupils in a shared care arrangement. They have attended The Bridge on an agreed timetable, receiving personalised learning programmes in order to improve their engagement in school life. Many of these children, in time, have been able to return successfully to their mainstream schools or have successfully transitioned to more appropriate long-term placements. As a result of this pilot, we are now looking to create The Bridge provision as a permanent provision in Medway for EYS KS1, KS2 pupils by applying to create a Free School - Alternative Provision.

The school will open, if approved, in September 2016 - places will be allocated at The Bridge through Medway's SEN route. Most children will have an EHC plan or be working towards one. In the first year, there will be 10 full time places where the children will be on-roll at The Bridge School, and 5 nurture places where they will be on a shared care, dual role basis. The roll will increase each year to a maximum of 25 full-time places and 15 nurture places.

Medway LA has agreed to the provision and to provide appropriate top-up funding from the High Needs Block. Therefore, pupils transferring into The Bridge, either as a permanent pupil or as a nurture pupil through the SEN route, will be funded by the Local Authority and not by schools' mainstream budget.

This provision, if accepted by the Regional Schools Commissioner, will sit in Castle Trust, which is the Multi-Academy Trust, alongside Delce Academy.

As part of the application process, applicants are encouraged to consult with local interested parties. The members of Castle Trust are keen to hear the views of Medway schools at this point in time in order to show support for this KS1 and KS2 provision. Please direct your comments to [REDACTED] for the members' consideration.

Best wishes,

██████████

Castle Trust

Responses to this letter were positive, showing that heads locally supported the plan for a KS1/2 AP provision within Medway for children with EBD issues.

Reply 1

Dear Trust members

I think that the idea of an alternative provision for Medway primary children is brilliant. We have a pupil from our school in the provision already and have worked collaboratively with your staff to set and work with targets to help this pupil to succeed. He now attends The Bridge full time as his difficulties have escalated and we are working on a joint referral process.

Reply 2

Dear ██████████

Firstly, may I say congratulations for the work you have lead on so far with The Bridge. It has proved to be an invaluable resource for us at Brompton-Westbrook and has provided a means to meet needs for children that has not been available elsewhere.

Secondly, I feel that the EYFS and KS1 provision will be a great addition to the services on offer.

I would just like to say that, in my opinion, The Bridge has proved to be so effective because it has not been constrained by SEN process and procedure, which can be time consuming, arduous and lack flexibility in response to emergent needs and concerns. I would hate to see this flexibility restricted and possibly the 'flow' of pupils able to access the service reduced.

Kind regards and thanks for your consultation

██████

Reply 3

Dear Members

I feel such a provision is vital for Medway. Main stream schools are often not able to give the time these children need to develop the right attitude towards school - however some can be reintegrated given the right early support.

You have my full support

[REDACTED]

Reply 4

Dear [REDACTED],

I am delighted that the Bridge will become a 'school' and that its position in Medway will be secured for the long-term. It has been a very valuable resource for schools and children across Medway in recent years.

One of the most valuable aspects has been the ability to contact the school directly and, given the funding and application arrangements, I would hate to think that opportunities to place children at the Bridge might become steeped in local authority bureaucracy.

Reply 5

Dear [REDACTED],

I am delighted that the Bridge will become a 'school' and that its position in Medway will be secured for the long-term. It has been a very valuable resource for my school in recent years.

One of the most valuable aspects has been the ability to contact the school directly and, given the funding and application arrangements

The Local Authority has commissioned the places from the school already and has agreed [REDACTED] depending on

the SEN banding agreed at DMG. The school is continuing the pilot through 2015-2016, whilst the application is being made for it to be a free school. We have pupils already in place and more waiting for places as EHC plans are being issued by Medway LA through the DMG process.

Hi [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (this comes from the EFA directly to the school if it has academy or free school status).

As advised, we calculated that [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] We may need to discuss this further to determine the correct funding for the band.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Medway Council

Gun Wharf

Dock Road

Chatham

Kent ME4 4TR

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 20 January 2015 09:59

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Pupil costs

Hi [REDACTED]

Hope all is well with you; please can you confirm the basic rate for a High Needs pupil and the range of top up fees which will be applied for The Bridge pupils.

Need to put in some paperwork.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Delce Academy

The Tideway | Rochester | Kent | ME1 2NJ

Section E3

It has been agreed that all referrals will be made through the Medway LA using its existing SEND processes. When a pupil has successfully been put forward for an EHC plan to DMG panel, the approved EHC plans will be sent to the free school for consideration. The school will consider each case, looking at whether The Bridge Free AP School is able to meet the needs of that particular pupil. The EHC plan will have an identified prime need of EBD or ASD, with a likely secondary need of ASD/ADHD or EBD. Further consideration will be given to those children who are looked after, within the child protection system or within the troubled families project. From the pilot, the school has a clear understanding of the children most likely to be successful at the Bridge and would work with the LA to ensure clarity in the pupil picture. This will ensure that pupils coming into the provision are most likely to succeed.

From the pilot project, the school has a clear and effective plan which ensures children successfully transition into the school. The established processes and procedures will be used in The Bridge AP Free School. Transitions for the pupils, if accepted, will be planned meticulously. Observations within the home school will be undertaken, professionals will have the opportunity to share information, successful strategies and general information. Meetings with the parent and the pupil will be carried out including a visit to the school for familiarisation. Transport and uniform issues will be resolved as well as communication undertakings between the school and parent, and parents and the school. Transition into the school will be planned and agreed by all parties. Risk assessments, medical care plans, internet access, school trips and activities and positive handling plans all agreed and signed off before the pupil commences.

For pupils who are at risk of exclusion, and whose EHC is not ready, the school will work closely with the home school and the LA Inclusion Manager, and where places are available will plan a transition into the Bridge. The system planned is the accepted, agreed procedure for all special provision within Medway. The admissions system, described, is fair, objective and transparent.

In order for the pupils to succeed, pre-assessment information is gathered from the home schools, including formal paperwork and in-class (or in-school) observations and assessment of their needs. Professional discussions, including SENCOs, class teachers, LA Inclusion Manager, parents and the pupil ensure that every avenue is explored prior to the placement starting. Time is given to engage with parents and the pupil, ensuring there is a clear understanding between all parties of the expectations, the daily arrangements, consequences, the pupil's, the family's role and the school's role in the successful placement. The placement would expect to be for two years or to complete at the next logical transition point (Years 3, 5 or 7) depending on the needs of the pupil, reflecting on the academic progress, engagement and BESD development against their targets. No child would be returned who was not ready to return to mainstream school and some children will move onto specialist provision if this is deemed more suitable. Annual reviews of the EHC plan will ensure all parties, including the commissioners, have the opportunity to reflect on the success of the placement and the next steps. Parents will have daily and termly opportunities to discuss their child's engagement in school both formally and informally.

Evidence of parent voice

██████████
I have lived in Rochester for the majority of my life and am committed to the community and local education. I have worked in education for 19 years in a variety of roles in an FE setting. I am currently the ██████████
██████████ and have had significant involvement with supporting students with additional learning support needs and specific learning difficulties. I am committed to inclusive learning and student progression, particularly at foundation level English and maths and the transition from D to C grade GCSE.

I am a single parent to ██████████, both of whom attended Delce Academy, leaving ██████████. One of my children is diagnosed with ASD (specifically Aspergers Syndrome) and was supported both within Delce Academy as an independent mainstream student and through the Bridge project. During this time I worked very closely with the Bridge team and other colleagues at Delce to enable continued participation in mainstream education for my son, something that was particularly important to me given his ambition to progress on to the Sir Joseph Williamson Mathematical School – an

ambition I am pleased to say has been realised. This would not have been possible without the support, dedication and exemplary work of the Delce Academy and the Bridge unit and how they prioritised my inclusion and input as a parent. I believe that this was the foundation to my son's successful achievement of his ambition, but perhaps more importantly, of his acceptance of his condition, the tools and strategies he was given to cope with the difficulties he faced and the trust that he was able to build with his key contacts. Skills he continues to utilise as a successful student at SJWMS.

As a parent, with no previous experience of having a child with a support need, I found the support and guidance of the team at Delce to be invaluable in my own learning journey. I learned over time to be both a parent supporting my child, and an impartial observer looking at and learning about my son and how he sees the world around him. Only then was I able to fully support him and his journey without an emotional bias. I believe this is vital perspective to take as a parent working alongside a school to achieve the best outcome and would welcome an opportunity to be a voice for other parents who find themselves in the same situation.

I fully endorse the work of the bridge unit and support its continued development.

Section F: Capacity and capability

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

All applicants must complete sections F1-F8 as set out in the table below:

| Type of applicant | Which sections to complete |
|--|----------------------------|
| Route 1 applicants (both single and multiple) | F1-F6* |
| Route 2 applicants applying for one free school in this round | F1-F4* |
| Route 2 applicants applying for more than one free school in this round | F1-F6* |
| Route 2 applicants applying for one free school in this round who already have an open academy | F1-F6* |
| Independent schools wishing to 'sponsor' a new free school | F1-F6* |
| Independent schools wishing to become free schools | F1-F4 and F7-F8 |

* If you are an approved academy sponsor the department will already hold material that would be relevant to your free school application and will therefore not expect you to provide this information for a second time. As a result at this point do not fill in sections F5 and F6 of the application relating to your educational track record until we have assessed whether we already have enough information on these aspects of your performance. If required, we will make sure that we give you sufficient time to provide any clarification or additional material to help us take a view in regard to these factors.

In addition if you are not an approved academy sponsors but are interested in finding out more about this role and potentially apply to become a sponsor please make contact with the department's [Sponsor Approval team](#).

It is important to make clear that approval as an academy sponsor will not guarantee a free school application is approved. Each free school application is considered against the criteria set out in the assessment criteria booklet. Similarly, approval to deliver a free school project does not mean that you would be automatically chosen to deliver a specific academy project. All projects are carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. It is the role of the department to consider which of our sponsors will provide the best possible solution for a particular school(s), and Ministers will make a final decision as to whether the proposed sponsor should take forward a specific project, based on that advice.

There are some tables below which you must also complete. These relate to F1, F3 and F6. Please feel free to add additional lines to these tables as required.

F1 (a) Pre-opening skills and experience

You must complete a separate line for each member, director and anyone else that is part of your project group. Please include CVs for all named individuals in the annex. Guidance on what should be included in each CV is in the assessment criteria booklet and a template is included as an annex to this document.

| Name | Member of core applicant group (Y or N) | Where live (town/city) | Role(s) in pre-opening | Summary of relevant expertise | Available Time (hours per week) |
|------------|---|------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------|
| ██████████ | Y | Rochester, Kent | ██████████ ██████████████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ | ██████████████████ ██████████ ██████████████████ ██████████ | 2-3 No Cost |
| ██████████ | Y | Rochester, Kent | ██████████████████ ██████████████ ██████████████████ ██████████████ | ██████████████ ██████████ ██████████████████ | 20 No Cost |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|--|------------------|
| | | | | | |
| | Y | St Albans Hertfordshire | | | 6-7 No Cost |
| | Y | Rochester, Kent | | | 2-3 No Cost |
| | Y | Rochester, Kent | | | 2-3 No Cost |
| | Y | Maidstone, Kent | | | 10-15 No Cost |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| <div>██████████</div> | Y | Rochester, Kent | <div>████████████████████</div> <div>██████████</div> <div>██████████████</div> <div>████████████████████</div> | <div>██████████████████</div> <div>██████████████████████</div> <div>██████</div> | 5-6 No Cost |
| <div>██████████</div> | Y | London | <div>██████████</div> <div>██████████</div> <div>██████████████</div> | <div>████████████████████████████</div> | 2-3 No Cost |

F1 (b) Skills gap in pre-opening

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section. Please add additional lines as required.

| Skills/experience missing | How you plan to fill the gap |
|---------------------------|--|
| Law | Continue to use the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] |
| Auditing | Continue to use the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Biographies: Members

[REDACTED] took a first class degree in English Literature from [REDACTED], and then went on to do a PGCE and teach in a range of 11-18 comprehensive schools between [REDACTED]. She was [REDACTED].

She trained for [REDACTED] whilst living in [REDACTED], and did an [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was [REDACTED], and served as [REDACTED] and also as [REDACTED]. She was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] She moved back to [REDACTED]. She is also a [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is married to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]: 30 years teaching in [REDACTED] of Cluster of group of 13 local schools for 5+ years. Headteacher mentor. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Also supports sponsored academies in pre-transfer documentation for DfE & post-transfer support in SIP role.

[REDACTED]: As [REDACTED] of a full-service, independent [REDACTED], I am involved intimately in day-to-day business issues at a high level, and bring valuable practical management and commercial experience to my voluntary roles within the education sector. I am also a [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. I am intimately involved with copyright issues and take a special interest in educational music. [REDACTED], publisher

of some of the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] also exclusively provides online and physical resources for [REDACTED],
[REDACTED]. I have served for
[REDACTED], a substantial (3-4 form entry) school, 8
years as a [REDACTED], through which time I have led the appointments of two Head Teachers
and two Deputies, and overseen three Ofsted inspections. My wife and I are [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. Over the past 9 years we have
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]: Financial/Banking Sector. [REDACTED]
which required skills of business analysis, interpretation and analysis of financial
accounts and other financial competencies. [REDACTED] undertaking
bookkeeping for clients and training in bookkeeping (including Sage accounts). [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I am confident that I have a strong skill set
comfortably exceeding the standard required to understand, interpret, monitor and
challenge the internal and formal accounts of an Academy school.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] She has extensive knowledge and understanding of the community
the academy serves as well as education expertise.

[REDACTED] which provides
education for students aged 4-19 with complex learning difficulties and disabilities
(SLD/MLD/ASD) who primarily experience complex learning difficulties and disabilities
that may include speech, language, emotional, sensory, physical or autistic spectrum
secondary disabilities. All of the students at Bradfields have a statement of Special
Educational Needs and 45% have additional health and medical needs. The 2012
OfSTED report states:

‘This school is determined to be outstanding. It is improving rapidly because of
outstanding leadership...Students make outstanding progress in relation to their
starting points and abilities as a result of good teaching, an outstanding curriculum and
excellent pastoral care and support. [REDACTED] has 34 years SEN teaching
experience which includes working in mainstream and special school day and
residential settings. These are detailed below.

Leadership & Management :

- [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]

Other Former Posts :

- [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]

Also currently :

- [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]



Governing Body

The Bridge Free School will have a local governing body, which will act in the best interests of the school and report into the directors of Castle Trust. For clarity the term Governor is used throughout this section to refer to the role of Director/Trustee/Governor of the Trust.

The Trust Governors will be responsible for setting and monitoring of quality standards and may implement this as needs dictate by either:

- Appointing/nominating an individual
- Appointing/nominating a group
- Delegating tasks to existing governors
- Appointing an external independent organisation

The Governance and management structure for The Bridge AP Free School will be designed with the following key **short term** aims:

The short term objectives – from September 2016

- To open and operate a successful AP Free School
- To constitute and implement a focused local governing body
- To constitute and implement an educational management structure clearly placing the head teacher at the centre of educational delivery and standards.
- To ensure the highest level of educational standards are achieved
- To work towards our aim of receiving OfSTED Outstanding classification within three years from 2016.
- To enable access for students to transition successfully into mainstream education at an appropriate transition point;
- To achieve and maintain high standards in relation to the staff cohort;
- To have regular reviews in place to ensure the structure is working.

Long term aims will include:-

- Fully engage and build long term commitments to students, young people, and local community, including MTU and Inspire in order to enhance the educational opportunities available to young people in Medway with EBD needs and encourage the local community to share and promote our values.
- Attract and develop high quality leaders and staff with a focus on educational excellence, value based learning and challenging extra-curricular activities.
- Develop an enhanced, personalised and enriched curriculum for students with EBD needs, and supportive professional development for all staff.

The **key responsibilities** of the Local Governing Body will be:

- Define and implement a process for monitoring and ensure the quality of the educational provision and embedment of the ethos, vision and values into all its activities;
- Define and implement a process that allows constructive and effective challenge and monitoring of the overall performance of the AP Free School;
- Define and implement a process for full engagement with the local multi agency services;
- Oversee and ensure the effective management of the free school's finances, property and other assets;

- Oversee and ensure a full range of operational services are provided in support of the free school;
- Oversee and ensure the ongoing educational research and development takes place to maintain best practice in the support of students with EBD/Special Educational Needs;
- Work with Castle Trust Directors to ensure suitable staffing are appointed, robust performance management systems are in place and Castle Trust supports the school with any performance management issues, which may lead to capability processes being implemented.

Castle Trust directors will work alongside the LGB for the Bridge AP Free School to ensure that the school will have:-

- A clear scheme of delegated authority defining task/topic focused management groups, their terms of reference and reporting lines back to the Board.
- Clear performance objectives and targets for the head teacher
- Preparation of a set of educational materials and plans, in particular an
- assessment model and code of practise – linked to the assessment and development of individual students
- A detailed and costed staff plan to create excellence in teaching and staff development opportunities
- A comprehensive staff orientation plan linked to the values and vision together with a continuous professional development programme to ensure best practise is maintained by both teaching and support staff
- Development of an effective performance management system for both staff and students

Castle Trust will be overseeing the school with the LGB reporting back on the success and challenges of the project. Castle Trust would therefore be aware and if required be able to support and challenge the LGB further. Castle Trust Directors would have the overriding responsibility for scrutinising the effectiveness of the school.

F3 (a) Proposed trustees

You must complete a separate line for each person that will be on the board of trustees, including your proposed chair of the board if you have one. If this application is for a free school that will form part of a multi-academy trust you must provide information for the individuals on the MAT board and the individuals on any local governing body, and ensure that you have shown clearly on which board each individual will sit. Please include CVs for all named individuals in the annex. Guidance on what should be included in each CV is in the assessment criteria booklet and a template is included as an annex to this document.

| Name | Where live (town/city) | Role on board of trustees | Role(s) in pre- opening | Summary of relevant expertise | Available Time (hours per week) |
|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|
| ██████████ ██████ | Medway | ██████████ ██████ | ██████████ | ████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ | 2-3 |
| ██████████ | Medway | ██████████ | ██████████ ██████████ | ██████████ ██████████████ ████████████ ██████████ | 20 |
| ██████████ | Medway | ██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████████ ██████████████ ██████████ | 2-3 |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|------------|--|--|-----|
| ██████████ | Medway | ██████████ | ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ | ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ | 2-3 |
| ██████ ██████ | St Albans | ██████████ | ██████ ██████ ██████████ ██████████ | ██████ ██████ ██████████ ██████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████ | 5-6 |
| ██████████ | Maidstone, Kent | ██████ | ██████ ██████ ██████ ██████████ ██████████ | ██████ ██████ ██████████ ██████ ██████████ ██████████ | 20 |
| ██████████ | Rochester, Kent | ██████████ | ██████ ██████████ ██████ ██████████ ██████████ | ██████████ ██████████ ██████ ██████████ | 5-6 |
| ██████████ | London | ██████████ | ██████████ | ██████ | 2-3 |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|------------------|--|
| | | | ██████ ██████ ██████████ | ██ ██████████ | |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|------------------|--|

F3 (b) Skills gap for board of trustees

NB: If you do not have a proposed chair the board of trustees please include details of the relevant skills and experience that you will be looking for in this table.

| Skills/experience missing | How you plan to fill the gap |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| N/A | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Plans for recruiting a head teacher and other staff and governors

Recruiting an outstanding leader for The Bridge AP Free School will be a crucial factor in achieving success. The Bridge AP Free School will be led by an outstanding head teacher, appointed and mentored by the [REDACTED], who designed, implemented and has overseen the Bridge pilot project for past three years. Additional resource will come from [REDACTED].

We seek a headteacher for the school with experience of leadership in alternative provision/special schools, with a proven track record in BESD, who, like the steering group is passionate about the role that this school can play in raising standards and improving young people's life chances. We also place high value on the commitment to working with the local community and its families. The prospective candidate should be forward looking in order to lead an innovative curriculum.

Additionally the headteacher should show the attributes of a successful school leader. The qualities we are seeking are based on the National Standards for head teachers which embody our key values:

The national standards are set out in six key areas that together represent the role of the head teacher:

Shaping the Future:

- Securing the mission, creating vision and establishing the strategic direction of the school. The candidate should show the imagination and flexibility to seek innovative solutions.
- Managing change and shaping the future of the school. As this is a new school, it is important that the headteacher has a proven ability to articulate vision and take the steps to put this into practice

Leading Learning and Teaching

- Securing success and improvement for the school through school self evaluation;
- Ensuring high quality teaching, high quality individual learning. The appointed head teacher will need strong leadership skills to drive teaching standards.

Developing Self and Working with Others

- Ensuring his/her own professional development and the professional development of all staff in the school. The headteacher will need state of the art knowledge of the school's specialism and the changes in the educational landscape.

Strengthening Community

- Securing the commitment of the wider community to the school by developing and maintaining effective networks. This is especially important as the school is for Medway, by Medway.

Time line for recruitment of headteacher

| Date | Action |
|----------------|--|
| September 2015 | Develop Job Description and Persons Specification |
| September 2015 | Contact Search and Select companies to discuss the options for employing them to 'Head Hunt' a Headteacher for the school. |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| October 2015 | Involve colleagues with Marketing and PR expertise to confirm advertising strategy and appointment procedures |
| October 2015 | Set out staff selection process to shortlisting of applications, interviews and other assessment. Prepare information pack for enquiries. |
| October 2015 | Develop appointment procedures for headteacher and later appointments to include CRB and reference checks according to Safer Recruitment best practice and regulations |
| November 2015 | Place advertisement observing safe recruitment best practice guidelines, closing dates and interview dates |
| November 2015 | Identify interview / appointment panel to include HR, Governor, parent representative, steering group representative |
| November 2015 | Assess applications, check references and photocopied information. Agree shortlist and issue invitation to selection meeting |
| December 2015 | Hold interviews, check original documents, Make offer – January or April 2016 start date |
| December 2015 | Issue contract |

Securing Accountability

Attracting and recruiting a high performing head teacher, as well as drawing on the extensive experience of the MAT, will engage and attract the very best staff to the new Free School as they will be confident in the leadership and development opportunities they will receive. The rigour of the staff selection process will focus on the leadership qualities and potential of the candidates. The sponsors will be looking for staff who can demonstrate their abilities through experience, action research and existing school outcomes.

The appointments will ensure there are key staff who are able to meet the highest demands:

Insight: To have insight into the young people and their learning styles; to take the initiative and manage risk around the young person, their family and the school; to INSPIRE through teaching and learning and acting as a role model; to be fully involved in every aspect of the school partnership for learning to support and empower the young person and their family; to create opportunities and provide flexible programmes that motivate and find pathways for the future; to show integrity in partnership working and relationships at all levels to underpin a personalised curriculum offer for each young person and to implement the vision for The Bridge AP Free School, celebrating the success and planning future success along the learning journey.

Staff recruitment generally

Having secured our head teacher we will embark on the process of finalising our staff structure around our curriculum needs as well as the needs of the students that we expect to come to our school. Our first priority will be to secure the highest quality Senior Leadership Team as our early years needs will require SLT members to take on some teaching duties; as a result, we will need to consider the leadership and teaching needs at the same time.

Before embarking upon recruitment we will prepare detailed job descriptions and person specifications to ensure we have identified the specific requirements skills we require.

Our final recruitment strategy will be decided upon depending upon the range of skills we require and the market conditions at the time we wish to recruit.

As mentioned above, in the early years we will need to ensure that we can provide the maximum range of good subject coverage through our teaching staff, with special care being taken to ensure that staff has appropriate SEN experience, and that will mean SLT members taking on some teaching duties during those early years.

We are, therefore, considering that our initial recruitment-based strategy will involve an Open Day where we invite leaders and teachers to come and meet us and discuss opportunities. From this we can evaluate the skills of individuals and consider how our early years needs could be achieved by blending the skills of those interested into a coherent workforce which covers all our needs. Invitation to the Open Day would be through a national advertisement to ensure maximum coverage and a facility to engage will be planned for those unable to attend the Open Day. We would also advertise it through our established network of SEN contacts to ensure that individuals who are experienced in the field of SEN are aware of the recruitment drive. Each individual identified will be invited to a subsequent more formal interview and assessment to interrogate their skills and ensure they meet our needs.

In comparison to a traditional recruitment process the Open Day can be considered as the CV and short-listing process, followed by an interview and assessment process.

Any gaps in our needs will be filled through more traditional advertisement- style recruitment, as by that stage we will be able to be more definitive about our the requirements of individual posts.

Non-teaching and support staff will be recruited more locally, by use local advertising, recruitment websites and our SEN network.

Castle Trust and the LGB has vast experience and expertise in recruiting excellent staff and managing contracts and service level agreements for facilities management and other services. This expertise will be used to inform the advertising, job descriptions and contractual conditions for staff recruitment. In terms of facilities management and technical support, they will draw on their individual arrangements to look for value for money services and facilities management within Castle Trust, maximising the economies of scale for extending contracts and service level agreements where possible. They will also train and develop the expertise of the Board of Governors to secure the role of Castle Trust as a commissioner for

services from other agencies to directly meet the needs of the Free School and its students. The rigour of the staff selection process will focus on the leadership qualities and potential of the candidates.

The appointments for teaching and non-teaching staff will ensure they develop a team of staff who are able to meet the highest standards and demands:

To have insight into the young people and their learning styles; to take the initiative and manage risk around the young person, their family and the school; to inspire through teaching and learning and acting as a role model; to be fully involved in every aspect of the school partnership for learning to support and empower the young person and their family; to improvise in creating opportunities and providing flexible programmes that launch their pathway for the future; to show integrity in partnership working and relationships at all levels to underpin a curriculum offer for the individual and to implement the shared vision, celebrating success and planning future success along the learning journey.

All class teachers and the senior team will be qualified Teachers with specialist skills, qualification or expertise and knowledge in teaching young people with SEN, particularly those with BESD. The teaching tutors and Instructors working alongside the qualified teachers will be trained or have proven expertise and experience in teaching young people with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.

The staffing framework and structure maximises the links between the students' social and emotional wellbeing and their learning. Each class base or 'Home base' will be staffed by a Qualified Teacher and a Class Tutor to provide high quality teaching and pastoral care. These staff will work in partnership to be the leaders of learning and 'champions' for their young people.

Teachers will lead:

- Planning and preparation of courses and lessons for pupils;
- Meeting the needs on individual statements of SEN;
- Differentiating learning and delivering lessons;
- Assessing the development, progress and attainment of each individual;
- Agreeing, setting and monitoring the achievement of learning goals;

- Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

The EBD officers will lead:

- In class support to promote behaviour for learning;
- Focused support strategies for learning, particularly literacy and numeracy;
- Promoting, monitoring and pursuing issues of attendance and time keeping;
- Support for students while transitioning
- Emotional, personal and social day to day welfare

CPD opportunities

All staff will all be leaders of learning, provided with opportunities to develop their own skills and talents and to share their learning across the family of schools. All staff will be given the opportunity to learn from Castle Trust schools, have planned personal development opportunities, support and develop alongside their peers, Engage with the teaching schools locally including New Horizons and MTSA, conduct action research and gain accreditation for school-based learning through Christchurch Canterbury.

F6 (existing providers and any new applicants seeking to open more than one free school)

F6 (a) Shared services

You must complete a separate line for each person that will be in the central services team. Please include CVs for all named individuals in the annex. Guidance on what should be included in each CV is in the assessment criteria booklet and a template is included as an annex to this document.

| Name | Role in central service team by area(s) of expertise (e.g. educational, financial, etc.) | Other relevant area(s) of expertise | Hours per week | Cost £ |
|-------------|---|--|-----------------------|---------------|
| ██████████ | ██████████ | ████████████████████ | 5 | ██████████ |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Castle Trust is committed to developing an affordable school able to meet the needs of its students and to deliver the highest quality education within the funding levels available. We are committed to and confident that they will be able to work with DfE and Medway LA to refine this budget to ensure appropriate resources are available and value for money both in terms of the overall budget and any start up grants required in the early years. We further intend to utilise the advantages of being sited on Delce Academy site in order to achieve economies of scale. Medway have stated their support for this project and we hope and expect The Bridge AP School to operate within the Castle Trust family and within the wider family of Medway schools. We do not have any additional funding sources apart from those indicated within the financial plans. Our discussions with Medway

have indicated that they will top up the pupil places to the [REDACTED] We budgeted on the basis half of the pupils in the unit will be allocated the [REDACTED]

The approach has been to provide the minimum resources necessary to achieve the following criteria:

- Effectively deliver the educational ethos vision and curriculum plans
- Effectively operate the school
- Provide the best educational, ICT and operational resources possible

The objective has been to establish a balanced budget each year Background and Data used in the plansIn preparing the financial plans due consideration has been given to information developed for the curriculum planning, pupil number build-up and staffing levels.

| Role | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Head teacher | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Teacher | 0.8 | 1.6 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Inclusion | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| EBD | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 8 |
| Graduate Intern | 0 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 1 | 1 |
| PGCE | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Admin | 0 | 0.6 | 2.0 | 1 | 1 |
| Cleaner | 0.6 | 0.8 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Premises | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Therapists | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.6 | | |
| S&L | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.4 | | |
| HSSW | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.0 | | |
| Outreach Worker | 0 | 0.6 | 1.4 | | |
| Playworkers | 1.5 | 2.0 | 3.0 | | |
| Inclusion | 0 | 0.8 | 1.0 | | |

Pupil Number build up

If the proposal is approved, the school will open in September 2016 as AP Free primary school with the capacity for 15 students from years R- 6. It is expected that the pupil numbers will increase up to 40 across the school by 2019. We recognise that the staffing in initial years will be higher in order to ensure that robust systems are put in place as the school grows to capacity. The staffing needs both for SLT and teaching requirements for September 2016 have been assessed and are defined in elsewhere in this proposal. The following summary of both Teaching and Non-Teaching requirements is shown below.

In calculating the staff numbers, account has been taken of the curriculum needs as defined elsewhere in this proposal. In the early years, the need to appoint a strong SLT has been balanced with the cost of teaching staff. SLT posts will come with key teaching responsibilities in these early years.

Support and non-teaching requirements are more difficult to assess at this stage as the student profile will change and it is not expected that all students will join the school in the first year. Due to the system of commissioning, we expect that that students will join The Bridge AP Free School across the Key Stages.

Income for the school has been based upon the financial model provided by DfE along with discussions with Medway LA for top up funding.

To create a budget based upon as accurate budgets we have benchmarked all costs against the existing budget for the pilot project. Headline budget heads only have been used but we have detailed the type of expenditure against each budget head below:

Educational Supplies and Services

Student Rewards; Books; non IT equipment; Educational IT equipment; IT Educational IT consumables, Stationary, Photocopying; Educational Visit subsidy, External Consultancy, Subscriptions, Reprographics.

ICT Costs – non capital

We have not included inflation allowances against any items as such allowances are not included in the DfE model sheet. Within leadership posts we have picked the mid-point of a scale to allow for adjustments up and down on the basis not all staff will be at the same level. We consider the associated range of salaries provide a framework for the Trust to effectively work within when planning their pay and recruitment strategies.

IT equipment – non educational; IT consumables – non educational; IT Licensing

F6 (b) Shared services

Use the table below to provide details about the total running cost of your shared service, and how this is made up from contributions. Please add additional lines as required.

| Name of school | Budgeted contribution to MAT shared service | | |
|---|---|---------|---------|
| | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| The Bridge AP Free School (6% contribution) | | ██████ | ██████ |
| Adminstration | | ██████ | ██████ |
| Environment Officers | | ██████ | ██████ |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | ██████ | ██████ |

Section G: Budget planning and affordability

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

You need to demonstrate that the school will be viable within the expected levels of funding available both while it builds up and when it is at full capacity. You must provide an overview of how you developed your plans and the thinking behind them. As part of this, you should explain how you have delivered value for money, and describe how your budget plans support your education vision and plan.

In addition you should complete the Excel budget template.

G1: The Budget

The following budget represents the 3- year financial forecast for the school until it has achieved full capacity in accordance with its growth plans.

Capital costs associated with site acquisition and refurbishment/new build costs have not been included in accordance with the Free School guidance.

Revenue Budgets

The 3-year budget predications show the school retains a cumulative surplus in the five years building to full capacity once Start Up Grants are included.

Once full and the Start Up Grants have ceased the following are the key budget indicators:

1:7 Pupil/Teacher ratio

1:3 Pupil/Adult ratio

Other key indicator ratios can be found in the Finance Plan.

On the above analysis and the Finance Plan, it is considered the school is affordable as defined within the DfE/NSN guidance with a manageable and sustainable surplus for contingencies and special projects.

The predicted surplus in year 2019 when the school reaches capacity is shown as

■■■■■

G2: Sensitivity

We have considered the sensitivity of our budget to:

- 20% reduction in pupil numbers year on year

We are acutely aware that the associated drop of 20% in overall budget will have a significant impact upon the planning of the school.

We have considered the impact upon our budget based upon maintaining as far as possible a maximum teaching staff to deliver the curriculum and provide for the needs of our pupils.

We have considered the steps that would need to be taken to produce a balanced budget as they impact year 3 i.e. when the school has all year groups. The key impacts will be:

- Staff training costs reduced until the school can generate pupil numbers
- All other costs reduced by 20%
- Reduce admin support
- Ensure that the 'Other Income' from Medway is retained past 2018 to account for the lack of pupil numbers.

Assuming the SLT remains broadly unchanged although SLT members may be required to take up some of the teaching load which overall will be reduced by 20%. Due to the needs of the students, we have worked hard on the budget to ensure that teacher/student ratios are maintained.

Our discussions with Medway LA regarding the top up funding for each place have indicated that they would be willing to help support the school if sufficient student numbers were not achieved. Therefore, in the financial plans we have indicated that Medway will [REDACTED]. We would expect this diseconomies funding from Medway to reduce as the school reaches capacity.

It should also be noted that we have at this stage not factored into any of our budget projections, the potential impact of savings to each school from shared services achieved due to being sited at Delce Academy alongside the existing education provision.

Whilst we have completed this sensitivity analysis, it is worth noting that this proposal is based upon significant parental demand for a high quality special school for young people with BESD, as well as a high level of support from Medway LA.

Due to the support of Medway, and the identification of the need for this provision, we fully expect that the school will reach, and may even exceed the stated capacity within the first three years.

Therefore, whilst we understand the need to consider such sensitivities and we acknowledge that maintaining pupil numbers is the key to any school budget, we cannot in reality foresee such a situation arising. Castle Trust confirms their commitment to managing and maintaining a balanced budget.

Our approach to budget issues generally

It can be seen that not achieving pupil numbers will have a significant effect on the budget if the pupil reduction is across the full school. It is important that the school understands this sensitivity and, whilst costs can be cut, any serious inroads into such a deficit will only be achieved by significant staff cuts, or significant additional funding from Medway. As mentioned elsewhere the likelihood of a 20% reduction across the school is considered unlikely and it could be argued that such a reduction from planned numbers shows either a flaw in the reasoning behind the school in the first place or a failure to generate the standards that will make the school popular.

We do not envisage that there will be a significant drop in student numbers as Medway LA and parents of children currently attending The Bridge pilot are fully committed to the new school. In addition, we have a significant number of pupils awaiting placement in the Bridge from September 2105. With significant rise in pupil need locally, Castle Trust believes the school will be full and the growing capacity will be required to meet local need.

Should Castle Trust be faced with the situation of pupil reduction, the matter will be taken very seriously. The Trust has a sound financial history and an outstanding reputation for delivering best value for money. However, in the unlikely event of pupil numbers falling, the trust is mindful that staff costs cannot be cut quickly and will, in the short term, attract additional severance costs. Therefore the school must avoid any 'knee jerk' reactions to fluctuating pupil numbers, rather identify the reasons for falling rolls and address those issues. Key to this will be discussions with Medway to identify why the school is not providing education appropriate to students with BESD needs.

It is important also to understand and plan around the break- even point, i.e. what is the point at which the full- size school will not achieve a balanced budget? The budget could very quickly become unaffordable and, therefore, the importance of maintaining the development plans, as well as close communication with Medway

to be aware of the educational landscape and plan for the upcoming BESD students as appropriate.

Finally we would stress again that the evidence of demand, the need as articulated by Medway LA for a BESD provision as well as predictions of future numbers of young people with BESD are more secure than for many schools in the Free School programme.

On a very positive note, as Medway have committed to naming The Bridge AP Free School for approximate 15 students in the first year, as well as a minimum of 15 in the following years, we feel that this provides us with a strong basis for the school. We would then expand the year groups/key stages as appropriate. Our staffing plan is deliberately flexible enough to allow the school to accept students of any age. The pilot has been widely acclaimed locally and schools are regularly in contact regarding placements for their vulnerable pupils. The pilot has ensured that the Bridge Free School already has a good local reputation and is seen as a positive option for pupils. This provides an excellent platform from which to grow, supported by the Castle Trust.

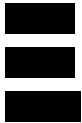



In conclusion, it is considered that the revenue element of the budget is affordable, subject to suitable start-up support and diseconomies of scale funding being made available. However, the budget, even when full, remains sensitive to pupil numbers lower than planned.

Further detailed work on the overall budget will be undertaken during pre- opening to refine costs and to target a specific surplus as a set-aside fund for possible fluctuations in pupil numbers until such time as the future and popularity of the school is secured.

G3 Financial resilience to reductions in income

You should include an overview explanation of how you approached making 30% savings and your rationale for suggesting the changes that you have made. You must show how you made 30% savings for each year up to and including the year your school reaches steady state. As part of this, you should explain how your amended plans would continue to support delivery of your education vision and plan.

In the table below you should explain in detail the actions you would take to reduce costs, the reasons for these and the approximate savings that would result. Please add additional lines as required. The boxes will expand as you enter text.

| Budget Line (area of expenditure) | Description of how expenditure would be modified/plans adapted – top [10] changes | Year(s) savings would apply | Savings in each year against original budget (£k) |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Teachers | HoS with teaching commitment | 2016 2017 2018 |  |
| Inclusion | Reduction of Inclusion Manager to 0.6 | 2017 2018 |  |
| Family Liaison | Reduction of HSSW to 0.4 | 2017 2018 |  |
| TOTAL | | 2016 2017 2018 |  |

As stated in G2 when evidencing our reflections on the budget sensitivities, we have considered the sensitivity of our budget to:

- 30% of the overall budget

We are acutely aware that the associated drop of 30% in overall budget will have a significant impact upon the planning of the school. We have considered the impact upon our budget based upon maintaining as far as possible a maximum teaching staff to deliver the curriculum and provide for the needs of our pupils. We have considered the steps that would need to be taken to produce a balanced budget as they impact year 3 i.e. when the school has all year groups. The key impacts will be:

- Requirement by the HoS to continue with a teaching commitment.
- Reduction in inclusion capacity
- Reduction in Home School Support.

The reduction in these areas does not remove the capacity within the school to deliver the quality of education, pupil and family support. The capacity is over a whole year, and the inclusion and home support issues can spike through the year. The flexibility in contracts will allow for these spikes to be managed effectively. Any additional capacity can be supported through the wider Castle Trust expertise at peak times, if required.

Our approach to budget issues generally

It can be seen that not achieving pupil numbers will have a significant effect on the budget if the pupil reduction is across the full school. It is important that the school understands this sensitivity and, whilst costs can be cut, any serious inroads into such a deficit will only be achieved by significant staff cuts, or significant additional funding from Medway. As

mentioned elsewhere the likelihood of a 30% reduction across the school is considered unlikely and it could be argued that such a reduction from planned numbers shows either a flaw in the reasoning behind the school in the first place or a failure to generate the standards that will make the school popular.

We do not envisage that there will be a significant drop in student numbers as Medway LA and parents of children currently attending The Bridge pilot are fully committed to the new school. In addition, we have a significant number of pupils awaiting placement in the Bridge from September 2105. With significant rise in pupil need locally, Castle Trust believes the school will be full and the growing capacity will be required to meet local need.

Should Castle Trust be faced with the situation of pupil reduction, the matter will be taken very seriously. The Trust has a sound financial history and an outstanding reputation for delivering best value for money. However, in the unlikely event of pupil numbers falling, the trust is mindful that staff costs cannot be cut quickly and will, in the short term, attract additional severance costs. Therefore the school must avoid any 'knee jerk' reactions to fluctuating pupil numbers, rather identify the reasons for falling rolls and address those issues. Key to this will be discussions with Medway to identify why the school is not providing education appropriate to students with BESD needs.

It is important also to understand and plan around the break- even point, i.e. what is the point at which the full- size school will not achieve a balanced budget? The budget could very quickly become unaffordable and, therefore, the importance of maintaining the development plans, as well as close communication with Medway to be aware of the educational landscape and plan for the upcoming BESD students as appropriate.

Finally we would stress again that the evidence of demand, the need as articulated by Medway LA for a BESD provision as well as predictions of future numbers of young people with BESD are more secure than for many schools in the Free School programme.

On a very positive note, as Medway have committed to naming The Bridge AP Free School for approximate 15 students in the first year, as well as a minimum of 15 in the following years, we feel that this provides us with a strong basis for the school. We would then expand the year groups/key stages as appropriate. Our staffing plan is deliberately flexible enough to allow the school to accept students of any age. The pilot has been widely acclaimed locally and schools are regularly in

contact regarding placements for their vulnerable pupils. The pilot has ensured that the Bridge Free School already has a good local reputation and is seen as a positive option for pupils. This provides an excellent platform from which to grow, supported by the Castle Trust.

In conclusion, it is considered that the revenue element of the budget is affordable, subject to suitable start-up support and diseconomies of scale funding being made available. However, the budget, even when full, remains sensitive to pupil numbers lower than planned.

Further detailed work on the overall budget will be undertaken during pre- opening to refine costs and to target a specific surplus as a set-aside fund for possible fluctuations in pupil numbers until such time as the future and popularity of the school is secured.

Section H: Premises

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

Please complete the Excel application form.

We understand the need to ensure that premises for the school meet all required Value for Money criteria as assessed by DfE/Education Funding Agency (EFA). We further understand and accept that a full feasibility and value appraisal will need to be carried out if our application is successful. Therefore, we have not entered into any commercial negotiations relating to proposed sites.

The Trust believes that building the Bridge AP Free school provision within the grounds of Delce Academy would be suitable for a number of reasons:-

- Local provision for Medway children with BESD EHCPs;
- Provision is central to geography of the LA and is accessible by public transport supporting the pupils and their families;
- The pilot project has already been successfully co-located and developed in partnership with Delce Academy, albeit in a smaller space; therefore, it is expected that there will be some sharing of resources which will help to provide savings and Value for Money.
- Free school has access to mainstream school to support the transition pedagogy, before children return to chosen/home mainstream school;
- Delce Academy site has room for expansion on existing footplate, without compromising playing fields or green space for a specifically designed and built nurture school including green space which will be dedicated to the free school;
- As the site is already used for specialist provision, little or no opposition is expected from residents in regards to planning/access and transport arrangements

- Substantially reduced site development costs for the EFA; existing site can be developed to meet the need [REDACTED]
- Delce Academy site already owned by Castle Trust

Medway legal department have confirmed that there are no existing covenants or planning restrictions on the site, and it is believed that there is sufficient space on the site to accommodate the Bridge AP Free School. Although we would expect that the EFA would need to undertake an appropriate feasibility study to ensure that the site is suitable for this provision.

The site map is detailed below:-

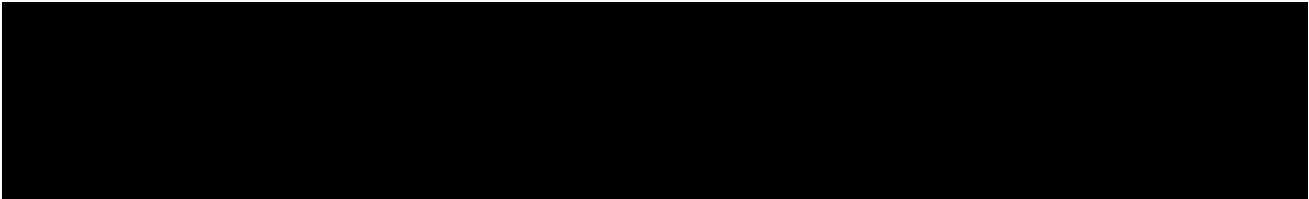
See attachments

Annexes

In this section you should only provide CVs of key individuals. The annex is excluded from the page limit but should be submitted as part of your application, i.e. as one Word document.

This section will need to be completed by both route 1 and 2 applicants.

CVs exist for all people involved in the project as Castle Trust and Inspire have both been created in the last 365 days.



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